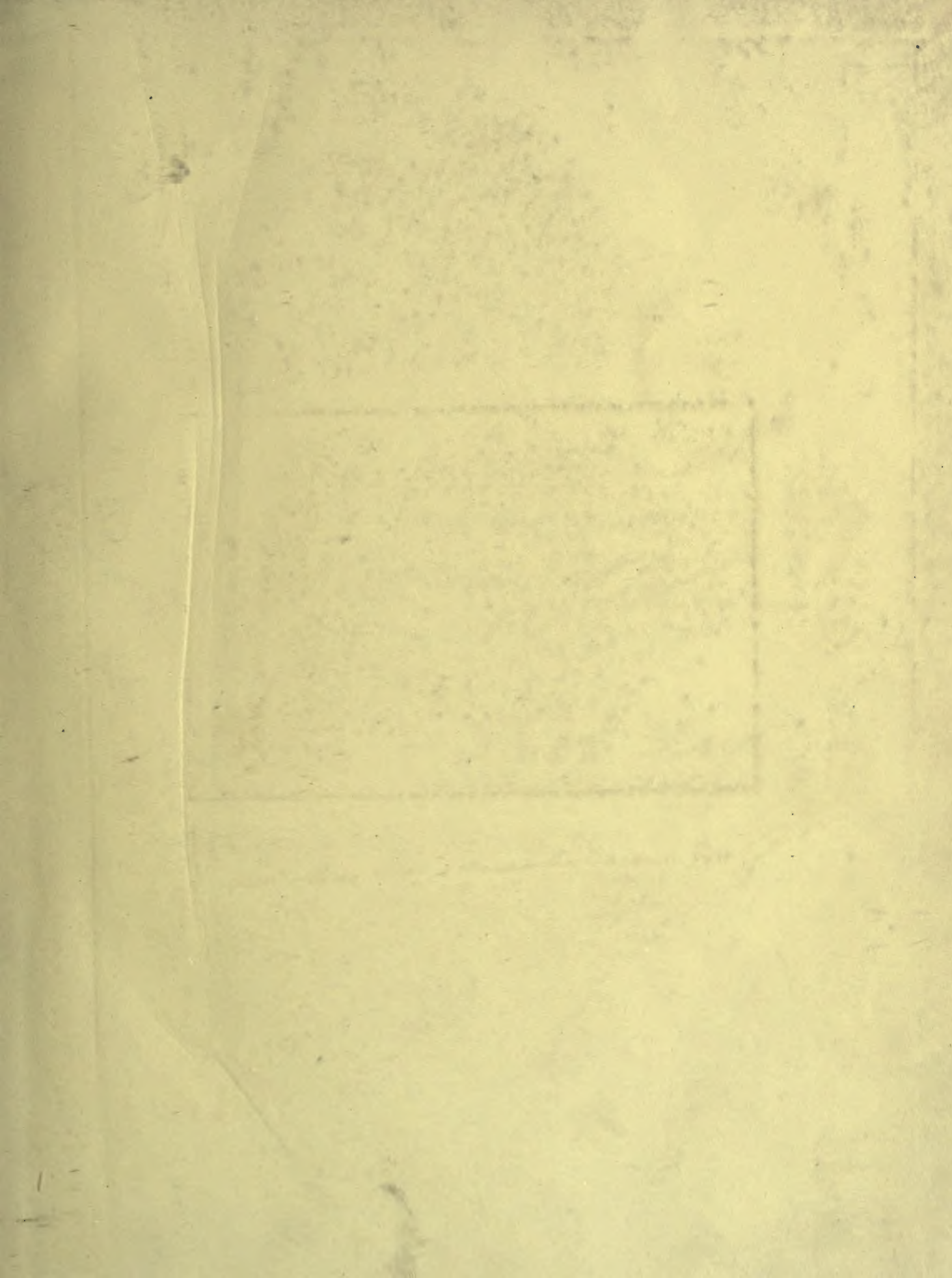





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REV. THOMAS SCOTT'S  
COMMENTARY  
ON THE HOLY BIBLE.

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VOLUME I.



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THE

# HOLY BIBLE;

CONTAINING

THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS,

ACCORDING TO THE AUTHORIZED VERSION;

WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES, PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS,  
AND COPIOUS MARGINAL REFERENCES,

BY THE LATE REV.

THOMAS SCOTT,

RECTOR OF ASTON SANDFORD, BUCKS.

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A NEW EDITION,

WITH THE AUTHOR'S LAST CORRECTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS; AND  
EIGHTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIVE MAPS AND ENGRAVINGS.

VOLUME I.

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# HOLY BIBLE;

## THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS



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LONDON

# PREFACE;

CONTAINING ESPECIALLY

A COMPENDIOUS VIEW OF THE EVIDENCES THAT THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, AND EVERY PART OF THEM,  
AS THEY STAND IN OUR BIBLES, WERE GIVEN BY INSPIRATION FROM GOD.

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WHOEVER seriously reflects on the powers and capacities of the human mind, regarding them as the work of Him who doeth nothing in vain, and comparing them with those of the inferior creatures, will readily perceive that man alone was created to be RELIGIOUS. Of all the inhabitants of this earth, none else are capable of obtaining any knowledge of their Creator, or of rendering him worship and praise. Man alone possesses the capacity of distinguishing between truth and falsehood, between moral good and evil; and of receiving instruction in social and relative duties, with the obligations under which he lies to perform them, and the advantages of doing it. He alone is capable of being governed by a law, and of being influenced by the proposal of rewards and punishments; of acting as under the eye of an invisible Observer, and with reference to a future season of retribution. From these premises we infer with absolute certainty, that the all-wise Creator thus constituted our minds, and conferred on us these distinguishing endowments, in order to render us capable of Religion, for the purpose of his glory, and of our own felicity in the most intimate connexion with that of our fellow creatures.

When further, we consider what this word RELIGION implies; and understand it, according to its most general acceptation, to be such an habitual regard to the one, true, living, and eternal God, the Creator, Governor, and Judge of all, as influences us to seek his favour, to do his will, and to aim at his glory, in the temper of our hearts, and the regulation of our actions, both in the worship which we render to him, and the duties which we perform to man, for his sake and according to his will; we shall be constrained to allow, that it is most reasonable and excellent.—Doubtless, the exercises of true devotion form the noblest employment of the human mind, which in them emulates the angelick nature. A conscientious regard to the all-seeing eye of a righteous and omnipotent Judge is the best bond of human society, and regulator of our relative conduct; insomuch that if this principle of action were universal and complete, human laws and tribunals would be entirely unnecessary. This would likewise most effectually moderate our appetites and passions; and produce the greatest possible proportion of peace, contentment, and felicity, personal and social, of which our nature, in its present state, is capable. And when we look forwards, beyond the grave, to that immortality and future state of recompence, which reason itself pronounces at least highly probable; the absolute necessity of religion to our felicity appears evident beyond all dispute.

Hence, we determine with certainty, that religion is that great business, to which all men ought to attend; and that blessing, after which all men should seek, whatever else be neglected, or superseded, or postponed.

While, however, it is demonstrable, that man is capable of religion, and in duty and interest bound to it by the most indispensable obligations; stubborn facts, in every age and nation of the world, un-

## PREFACE.

deniably prove, that, left to himself, man would never be truly religious. According to the statement above given, where shall we find religion on earth, in any age or nation, which has not possessed, in a greater or less degree, the advantage of those writings, which we will now take for granted to be a divine Revelation, and which will hereafter be shewn to be so? An assemblage of the grossest idolatries in varied forms, and of the wildest absurdities in opinion; the most vain and irrational superstitions in worship; and the most dangerous mistakes, as well as the most horrible cruelty, and abandoned licentiousness, in morals; form that religion, (if it may be dignified by so venerable a name,) which forces itself upon our observation, wherever the light of revelation has not shone. Nor can so much as a single nation, or city, or family, be excepted from this general charge. If there have been a few individuals, who have manifested something not wholly dissimilar from true religion; and any be disposed to allow, that indeed it was such: it must be far more rational to ascribe it to the remains of original tradition, or even to a personal revelation afforded to them for their own benefit, though not authenticated for the good of others; than to make it an exception to the general rule, *That without revelation, there never was any true religion on earth, since the fall of Adam.*

Those indeed, who live under the light of revelation, and make what use they choose of that light, may draw up systems of natural religion, sufficiently plausible, and apparently rational. But it should be remembered, that this light is originally, through one channel or another, derived from the Bible; though too often, with equal absurdity and ingratitude, set up in opposition to its sacred and sublime truths: and universal experience demonstrates, that no such natural religion ever was discovered, and *delineated*, by men of any nation, who had never seen any part of the Bible, or any thing deduced from that source.

However reasonable and excellent many of those truths and precepts are, which are proposed to us as *the oracles of reason*; not one of them ever was proposed by reason without revelation, with such certainty, clearness, and authority, as to become a constant principle and rule of action, in secret and in publick, towards God and towards man, to any company of men on earth, perhaps not to one individual.

Indeed, after all the supposed improvements and discoveries of modern times, if we exclude the peculiar instructions of the *Bible*, what darkness and uncertainty rest upon points of the greatest imaginable importance!—Even in respect of the immortality of the soul, when Reason, at her best advantage, has done her utmost, her boasted power of demonstration fails: for even, were the arguments indisputably conclusive, by which the natural immortality of the soul is supported; who knows, or can know without revelation, how it may please a just and holy God to deal with the souls of his offending creatures? ‘He can create, and he destroy.’—But far greater obscurity and uncertainty rests on those subjects, which relate to the nature of the future world, and the rule of judgment, with which our whole conduct, and our hope and peace, are inseparably connected. It is difficult, if not impossible, to perceive by the light of nature, the consistency of perfect justice with boundless mercy: it still remains dubious, except to those who possess and believe revelation, whether God will punish at all, or pardon at all; or by what rule he intends to punish, or pardon: and indeed, wherever we turn, a thick cloud darkens our view, and discourages our enquiries, if we leave “the sure testimony of God,” and bewilder ourselves in speculations on matters evidently too high for us.—But how much worse has the case been of almost all the nations of the earth, and generations of men! Indeed so far have they been, from advancing in religious knowledge, where revelation has not been afforded; that they have evidently sunk deeper and deeper into ignorance, and several of them almost into absolute atheism: as if the little glimmering which once shone among them, being the effect of original tradition, was gradually expiring and leaving them in utter darkness.

## PREFACE.

The most complete information, however, respecting doctrines and duties, would be wholly inadequate to the production of the desired effect; except such information were enforced by sufficient authority, gave necessary encouragement, and proposed effectual assistance. The knowledge of duty and of its reasonableness is utterly unavailing, whilst men are under the dominion of their lusts and passions; as the laws and judicial proceedings of every civilized nation sufficiently manifest. In this case there is no *disposition* to perform the dictates even of conscience or prudence. A heathen could say, *Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor*. The proposal of virtue as amiable and excellent, by the feeble recommendation of the moralist's pen, is infinitely inferior in energy, to the authoritative command and sanction of the Almighty, denouncing his awful and eternal indignation against the transgressor: and yet facts undeniably shew, that men venture upon sin, even with the threatenings of everlasting misery sounding in their ears; nay, with the trembling apprehensions of it dismaying their hearts: for divine as well as human laws "are weak through the flesh,"<sup>1</sup> and, with all their sanctions and barriers, are unable to affix boundaries to the swelling tide of human depravity.

Indeed, were men fully acquainted with all the glorious perfections of God; with his holy law, with the nature and malignity of sin, with their own real character and situation as sinners, and with the rule and consequences of the future judgment; and were they, at the same time, left utterly destitute of the encouragements and assistances, which the Gospel proposes, and which form the grand peculiarity of the Bible; their knowledge, so far from rendering them religious, would probably, by leaving them without hope, annihilate all appearances of religion.<sup>2</sup> Wherever any semblance of religion is found, which has no respect at all to the mercy of God, as revealed in the gospel, through the righteousness, atonement, and mediation of Emmanuel, and to the effectual teaching and assistance of the Holy Spirit, it seems to have its foundation, not in men's knowledge, but in their ignorance, of God, of themselves, of his law, and of the evil of sin; and this might easily be evinced to be the case even upon rational principles.

But the proposal of suitable encouragements and assistance is entirely out of the province of reason: these are "heavenly things,"<sup>3</sup> of which we can know nothing, except by immediate revelation; and of which we can have no assurance, but the express declaration and faithful promise of God. He alone can inform us, on what terms, or in what manner, his honour permits him, and his sovereign pleasure disposes him, to forgive his offending creatures; and to communicate those gracious influences, which may produce a holy disposition of heart, and enable sinners to overcome all the obstacles, which retard the progress of those who endeavour to lead "a sober, righteous, and godly life."

From such considerations, the necessity of a revelation from God, in order to true religion among men, may be decidedly inferred: and it might reasonably have been expected, that he would afford such a revelation, if he intended to accept of any worship and service from them. Indeed this expectation has been very general in the world. And as counterfeit coin proves the existence of sterling money, and the value which men put on it; so counterfeit revelations, (instead of invalidating the argument,) if they do not *prove* the existence of a real revelation, yet evince that men have felt their need of one, have been sensible that it would be a most valuable acquisition, and have been generally disposed to expect it.

All the counterfeits, which hitherto have advanced a claim of being divine revelations, have also been successively exposed, and have sunk into general contempt or neglect: and, in this age and nation, it may be asserted, without hazard of contradiction, that there is but **ONE BOOK** in the world, which so much as appears to be of divine original. This we call, **THE BIBLE**, that is, by way of eminence, **THE BOOK**: and such is the internal and external evidence, which authenticates its claim; that I am persuaded,

<sup>1</sup> Note, Rom viii. 3, 4

<sup>2</sup> Note, Ps. cxxx. 3, 4.

<sup>3</sup> John iii. 12, 13.

## PREFACE.

were men as open to conviction on this subject, as they are in mathematical investigations, they could no more, after due examination, reject it, than they could contradict an evident demonstration.

It may therefore not be improper to insert, in this place, a few of the most obvious reasons, which the more studious Christian is "ready to give of the hope which is in him;"<sup>1</sup> and which is grounded upon this first principle, 'THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD;' in order to shew that it is highly reasonable to believe the Bible to be a divine revelation; and if so, then equally reasonable to take all our measures of truth and duty from it, and to bow our understandings and inclinations to its teaching and governance.

Let it be here carefully observed, that the DIVINE INSPIRATION, and not merely the *authenticity*, or *genuineness*, of each part of the sacred writings, is intended.—Each part, and every part, may be authentick, or genuine; the work of the authors whose names they severally bear; or true and unsophisticated narratives of the times to which they refer: and yet they may be merely *human*, and of no authority in matters of doctrine and duty. The Odes of Horace, and Cæsar's Commentaries, are authentick: probably the first book of Maccabees is genuine history: yet they are not, on that account, in any degree the authoritative guides or standards of our faith and practice.—Many able and admired writers, who apparently have stood forth, as the champions of the Bible, appear to the author of this Exposition, to have (he hopes undesignedly) betrayed the cause. An ancient warrior, having murdered his predecessor, and usurped his throne, was some time after requested to permit him to be numbered among the gods; and it is said that he answered, '*Sit divus, modo non sit vivus*:' 'Let him be a god, provided he be not living.' These apologists for the Bible, seem to reverse the words, and to say, '*Sit vivus, modo non sit divus*;' 'Let it be *genuine*, provided it be not *divine*.' It would, however, be waste of time, to attempt to prove either the authenticity or the genuineness of the sacred writings; unless in entire subserviency to the demonstration that they are divinely inspired. All the works and words of mere men are *fallible*, and may be erroneous: and the *desideratum*, that which is especially wanted, is an INFALLIBLE STANDARD; to which all other books, and instructions of every kind, may be referred, with which they may be compared, and by which they may be judged. Now, if the sacred writings are indeed "THE WORD OF GOD," if "all scripture is given by inspiration of God," we have this *desideratum*; and have nothing further, in this respect, to expect or desire. But if the books, called by the apostles "The oracles of God,"<sup>2</sup> are merely the authentick writings of Moses, David, Isaiah, and others in former times, and not the infallible word of God; we are as far off from the *desideratum* above-mentioned as ever. We may indeed learn what these sages of Israel thought, as well as what the sages of China, Egypt, and Greece maintained, concerning God and religion; and we may examine the testimony of each, and bring in our verdict, some in favour of the one, and some of the other: but we are still far from an *infallible standard*; as far, as if the Bible had never been written; whatever value, in other respects, may be attached to such ancient, venerable, and interesting records.

With this view of the subject, gathering strength from year to year,<sup>3</sup> the Author of this work is decided against any compromise; and he ventures to stand forth, as vindicating '*the divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures*.' He wishes indeed to see far abler champions enter the lists against the Goliath of modern scepticism: but as most of those learned and eminent men, who take up the challenge, seem in some measure to compromise the main point, or to decline the discussion of it; he takes his sling and his stone, and says, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. iii. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Rom iii. 2. Heb. v. 12. 1 Pet. iv. 11.

<sup>3</sup> This part of the preface was written above thirty years ago; and the expression, here used, may be considered as the author's *present* deliberate judgment.

## PREFACE.

By ‘*the divine inspiration of the Scriptures*, the Author would be understood to mean, ‘Such a complete and immediate communication, by the Holy Spirit, to the minds of the sacred writers, of those things which could not have been otherwise known; and such an effectual superintendency, as to those particulars, concerning which they might otherwise obtain information; as sufficed absolutely to preserve them from every degree of error, in all things, which could in the least affect any of the doctrines or precepts contained in their writings, or mislead any person, who considered them as a divine and infallible standard of truth and duty.’ Every sentence, in this view, must be considered as “the sure testimony of God,” in that sense in which it is proposed as truth. Facts occurred, and words were spoken, as to the import of them, and the instruction contained in them, exactly as they stand here recorded: but the morality of words and actions, recorded merely as spoken and done, must be judged of, by the doctrinal and preceptive parts of the same book.—On this ground, all difference or disparity between one and another of the sacred writers is wholly excluded: Moses, Samuel, David, and Isaiah; Paul, James, Peter, and John, are all supposed to speak, or write, “as they were moved by the Holy Ghost:” they are *the voice*, but the divine Spirit is every where the *SPEAKER*. They wrote indeed in such language, as their different talents, educations, habits, and associations suggested, or rendered natural to them: but the Holy Spirit so entirely superintended them, when writing, as to exclude every improper expression, and to guide them to all those which best suited their several subjects: “Which things also we speak, “not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.”’ Many particulars, which philosophers, orators, or criticks, think inaccurate, may consist with this complete inspiration: but every kind and degree of misrepresentation, as springing from personal, popular, or national prejudices or opinions, or as calculated to mislead the humble believer, or to sanction error, must be totally excluded.

It will also appear, in the course of the work, that the few passages, (and they are but few, compared with the whole,) in which errors or interpolations have taken place, through the mistakes of transcribers, form no formidable difficulty, in thus regarding the Holy Scriptures. Nearly all such interpolations and errors may be detected and pointed out, by sober and well-informed criticks, in this, as well as in other books: and if a few escape detection, it is because they do not so immediately affect the sense, as to make it evident to the most acute, penetrating, and accurate student, that they deviate from the style and sentiment of the writer, in whose works they are found.

The Author has indeed, to this present time, always decidedly rejected all emendations of the sacred text, which are adduced either on conjecture, or without adequate authority: and even where the authority is respectable, he has chosen to abide by the present text, when there appeared no evident necessity, nor any very cogent reasons, for the contrary: being aware, how far such alterations may, and often do, lead men from the Scriptures; and how directly they tend gradually to substitute another book in the place of the Bible. Yet it is proper to observe, that if all the various readings, for which any respectable *authority* can be given, were adopted; they would not alter either the standard of truth, or the rule of duty, in one material point: but whither *conjectural* emendations might lead, he cannot undertake to prognosticate.

These things having been premised, he proceeds to state some of the leading reasons, which any intelligent man may assign, for believing the Scriptures, as we now have them, to be the infallible word of God.

I. Great numbers of wise and good men, through many generations and in distant countries, have agreed in receiving the Bible as a divine revelation. Many of them have been distinguished and generally

## PREFACE.

approved, for seriousness, erudition, penetration, and impartiality in judging of men and things. With much labour and patient investigation, they detected the impostures, by which their contemporaries were duped: yet the same assiduous examination confirmed them in believing the Bible to be "THE WORD OF God;" and induced them, living and dying, to recommend it to all others, as the source of all true wisdom, hope, and consolation. In this view, even 'the tradition of the church' has great weight: for, whatever abuse has been made of the term, by such as generally were no part of the true church; yet it must be allowed to be a consideration of vast importance, that the whole company of those, who have "worshipped the living God in spirit and truth," (including those who ventured and laid down their lives for conscience' sake, and who were the most pious, holy, and useful men in every age,) have unanimously concurred in handing down to us the Scriptures as a divine revelation, and have very little differed about the books, which form that sacred deposit. And I cannot but suppose, that if a being of entire impartiality, of sound mind, and holy disposition, should be shewn the two companies, of those who have received, and of those who have rejected the Scriptures; and should compare the seriousness, learning, patient investigation of truth, solid judgment, holy lives, and composure in a dying hour, without unmanly terror or indecent levity, of the one company, with the character and conduct of the other; he would be induced to take up the Bible with profound veneration, and the strongest prepossession in its favour.

II. The agreement of the sacred writers among themselves is another cogent argument of their divine inspiration. Should an equal number of contemporaries, of the same country, education, habits, profession, natural disposition, and rank in life, and associating together as a distinct company, concur in writing a book on religious subjects as large as the Bible, each furnishing his proportion, without comparing notes together; the attentive reader, whose mind had been long inured to such studies, would be able to discover some diversity of opinion among them. But the writers of the Scripture succeeded each other, during the term of fifteen hundred years: some of them were princes or priests, others shepherds or fishermen; their natural abilities, education, habits, and employments, were exceedingly dissimilar; they wrote laws, history, prophecy, odes, devotional exercises, proverbs, parables, doctrines, and controversy; and each man had his distinct department: yet they all exactly coincide in the exhibition which they give us of the perfections, works, truths, and will of God; of the nature, situation, and obligations of man; of sin and salvation; of this world and the next; and in short of all things connected with our duty, safety, interest, and comfort, and in the whole of the religion inculcated by them. They all were evidently of the same judgment, aimed to establish the same principles, and applied them to the same practical purpose. *Apparent* inconsistencies may indeed perplex the superficial reader; but they vanish after a more accurate and persevering investigation: nor could any charge of disagreement, among the sacred writers, ever be substantiated; for it can only be said, that they related the same facts with different circumstances, which are perfectly reconcileable; and that they gave instructions suited to the persons whom they addressed, without *systematically* shewing the harmony of them with other parts of divine truth. They did not write by concert, and they bestowed no pains to avoid the appearance of inconsistency: yet the exact coincidence, which is perceived among them by the diligent student, is most astonishing, and cannot be accounted for on any rational principles, without admitting that they wrote "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. i. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Mohammed, to serve present purposes, produced his Koran by a little at a time: this occasioned an evident inconsistency of one part with another: concerning which he only said, that God had a right to change his laws as he saw good.

## PREFACE.

'To this we may add, that the scriptural history accords, in a wonderful manner, with the most authentic records which remain, of the events, customs, and manners of the countries and ages to which it stands related. The rise and fall of empires; the revolutions which have taken place in the world; and the grand outlines of chronology, as mentioned or referred to in the Scriptures, are coincident with those stated by the most approved ancient writers: whilst the palpable errors in these respects, detected in the apocryphal books, constitute one most decisive reason for rejecting them as spurious. But the history of the Bible is of far greater antiquity, than any other records extant in the world: and it is remarkable that, in numerous instances, it shews the real origin of those absurd fables, which disgrace and obscure all other histories of those remote times; and this is no feeble proof, that it was derived from some surer source of information, than human tradition.'

III. The miracles, by which the writers of the Scriptures confirmed their divine mission to their contemporaries, afford us also a most convincing proof in this matter. The narratives of these miracles may be clearly shewn to have been published, very soon after the time, and at the places, in which they were said to have been wrought in the most conspicuous manner, and before very great multitudes, enemies as well as friends. This constituted a publick challenge to every man, to contradict or disprove them, if he could: yet this publick challenge never called forth a single individual to deny that they were really performed; nor was an attempt of the kind ever made till long afterwards.—Can any man of common sense think, that Moses and Aaron could possibly have persuaded the whole nation of Israel, that they had witnessed all the plagues of Egypt, passed through the Red Sea with the waters piled on each side of them, gathered the manna every morning for forty years together, and seen all the wonders recorded in their history, had no such events taken place? If then, that generation could not be thus imposed on, when could the belief of these extraordinary transactions be palmed upon the nation? Surely, it would have been impossible in the next age, to persuade them, that their fathers had seen and experienced such wonderful things, when they had never before heard a single word about them; and when an appeal must have been made to them, that these were things well known among them! What credit could have been obtained to such a forgery at any subsequent period? It would have been absolutely necessary, in making the attempt, to persuade the people, that such traditions had always been current among them; that the memory of them had for ages been perpetuated, by days and ordinances observed in every succeeding age by all the nation; and that their whole civil and religious establishment had thence originated: nay, that the very tenure, on which they held their estates was grounded on it! And could this have possibly been effected, if they all had known, that no such memorials and traditions had ever before been heard of among them? The same might be shewn concerning the other miracles recorded in Scripture, especially those of Christ and his apostles; and the sacrament of the Lord's supper in remembrance of his death, and the observance of the Lord's day on the first day of the week, in commemoration of his resurrection, in all ages to this present time. If not instituted at the time, immediately succeeding the events on which they are grounded; at what subsequent period could they have been introduced, so as to persuade multitudes in very many nations, that they and their fathers and fathers' fathers had always observed them? So that it might be made evident, that the man, who denies that the miracles were actually performed, must believe more wonderful things, without any evidence, than those are which he rejects, though established by unanswerable proof. To evince this, as to one most important instance, namely, the resurrection of Christ, which, being once proved, undeniably establishes the divine original and authority of Christianity, let the reader consult the latter part of the note on *John* xx. 24—29.

## PREFACE.

On this subject, it may again be demanded, When could the belief of the resurrection of Christ, and the miracles wrought by his apostles and disciples in proof of it, have been obtruded on mankind, if they had never happened? Surely not in the age, when they were said to have been witnessed by hundreds of thousands, who were publicly challenged to deny them if they could! certainly not in any subsequent age; for the origin of Christianity was expressly ascribed to them, and millions must have been persuaded, that they had always believed those things, of which they had never to that time so much as heard! We may indeed venture to assert, that no past event was ever so fully proved as our Lord's resurrection; and that it would not be half so preposterous to doubt whether such a man as Julius Cæsar ever existed, as it would be to question whether Jesus actually rose from the dead. What then do they mean, who oppose some trivial apparent variations, in the account given of this event by the four Evangelists, (which have repeatedly been shewn capable of an easy reconciliation,) to such an unparalleled complication of evidence that it did actually take place?

IV. The prophecies contained in the sacred Scriptures, and fulfilling to this day, fully demonstrate that they are divinely inspired. These form a species of perpetual miracles, which challenge the investigation of men in every age; and which, though overlooked by the careless and prejudiced, cannot fail of producing conviction proportioned to the humble and reverential attention paid to them. The prophecies of the Messiah, which are found in almost all the books of the Old Testament, when compared with the exact accomplishment of them, as recorded in the authentick writings of the Evangelists, abundantly prove them to have been written under the guidance of the Holy Spirit: while the existence of the Jews as a people differing from all others upon the face of the earth, and their regard to these writings, as the sacred oracles handed down from their progenitors, sufficiently vouch for their antiquity: though that admits of full and clear proof of another kind. According to the predictions of these books, Nineveh has been desolated;<sup>1</sup> Babylon swept with the besom of destruction;<sup>2</sup> Tyre become a place to dry nets in;<sup>3</sup> Egypt the basest of the kingdoms, which has never since been able to "exalt itself above the nations."<sup>4</sup> These, and many other events, fulfilling ancient prophecies, very many ages after they were delivered, can never be accounted for; except by allowing, that He, who sees the end from the beginning, thus revealed his secret purposes, that the accomplishment of them might prove the Scriptures to be his word of instruction to mankind.

In like manner, there are evident predictions interwoven with the writings of almost every writer of the New Testament, as a divine attestation to the doctrine contained in them. The destruction of Jerusalem, with all the circumstances predicted in the Evangelists; (the narrative of which may be seen in Josephus's History of the Jewish wars;) the series of ages, during which that city has been "trodden down of the gentiles;"<sup>5</sup> the long continued dispersion of the Jews, and the conversion of the nations to Christianity; the many antichristian corruptions of the gospel; the superstition, uncommanded austerities, idolatry, spiritual tyranny, and persecution, of the Roman hierarchy; the division of the empire into ten kingdoms; the concurrence of those who ruled those kingdoms during many ages, to support the usurpations of the church of Rome; and the existence of Christianity to this day, amidst so many enemies, who have used every possible method to destroy it:—all these occurrences, when diligently compared with the predictions of the New Testament, do not come short of the fullest demonstration, of which the case will admit, that the books, which contain those predictions, are the unerring word of God.

<sup>1</sup> The Jews, at this day, do not deny, that the miracles recorded in the New Testament history were actually performed; but they absurdly ascribe them all to enchantment.—See *Answer to Rabbi Crooll, by the Author*

<sup>2</sup> Nah. i, ii, iii.

<sup>3</sup> Is. xiii, xiv.

<sup>4</sup> Ez. xxvi. 4, 5

<sup>5</sup> Ez. xxix. 14, 15

<sup>6</sup> Luke xxi 24.

## PREFACE.

There are two further observations, on this subject, which seem of great importance.

1. The predictions of Scripture, if carefully examined, will be found to contain a prophetic history of the world, as to all the grand outlines, from the beginning to this present time ; not to speak of such, as are yet unfulfilled. Who can deny, that the history of Abraham's posterity ; of Israel especially ; of Judah and Joseph, the most renowned sons of Jacob ; and of the Jews, in their present dispersions ; and their preservation, as a distinct people, " dwelling alone, and not reckoned among the nations," might be clearly and particularly stated in the very words of prophecy ?<sup>1</sup> Does not almost the whole of ancient profane history, as distinguished from that contained in the sacred Scriptures ; and also a large proportion of modern history, consist principally of the records of the four great empires, the Chaldean, the Medo-persian, the Grecian or Macedonian, and the Roman ? And are not these predicted in the book of Daniel so exactly and particularly, as to give some plausibility to the objection, which is demonstrated to be unfounded, that they were written after the event ?<sup>2</sup> But especially, " the testimony of Jesus is the " spirit of prophecy."<sup>3</sup> The changes which have taken place in the state of the world, in consequence of the birth of Jesus at Beth-lehem, and of his claim to be the Messiah, the Son of God, which has by some been virulently opposed, by others zealously supported, have been great, extensive, and durable beyond comparison with all other revolutions : but is there one particular, in all the history of Jesus, and of the subsequent establishment of Christianity, with all the opposition made to it, and the corruptions afterwards introduced, which is not expressly predicted in Scripture ? And might not a narrative, in many instances very circumstantial, of our Lord, from his birth to his death, be drawn up in the words of prophecy ?

2. From the preceding consideration another arises, as inseparably connected with it. The prophecies of Scripture are not detached or insulated predictions, but constitute a grand system of previous information, as to the secret designs of Providence, extending from the earliest ages even to the consummation of all things ; and accompanied by such distinct notations of order, place, and time, as may well be called the *geography* and the *chronology* of prophecy. Insomuch that any one, in any age, who well understood the prophecies extant in his day, might have known what to expect, at the specified times, and in the specified countries. As one prediction received its accomplishment, others were given, connecting prophecy with history ;<sup>4</sup> till the Revelation of St. John concluded the whole. Events have hitherto, in every age and nation, corresponded with these predictions. This is well known to each individual, in exact proportion to the degree in which he becomes acquainted with Scripture and with historical records, and to the care and impartiality with which he compares the prophecies with those records. As it is the manifest and avowed plan of prophecy, to predict events, occurring in their own place and season to the end of the world ; the circumstance of several prophecies being yet unfulfilled, does not in the least deduct from the proof of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, derived from this source : for on such a plan, some must remain unfulfilled, till the end shall come.—It may also be added, that, in respect of the state of the Jews, and in many other particulars, there is an evident preparation made for the accomplishment of all the prophecies, which yet remain to be fulfilled. Now, I ask, is there any thing in the least coincident with such a system of prediction, from age to age, in any other book in the world, except the Bible ? And could so many and so extraordinary and improbable events, through so many ages and nations, have occurred, in so undeniable a manner, as foretold in the Scriptures, had not the Omniscient God himself inspired the Scriptures ? The grand outline of prophecy generally takes in all

<sup>1</sup> Notes, Gen. xii. 1—3. xvi. 12. xlix. 8—12. 22—26. Num. xxiii. 9. Deut. xxviii. 65—67.

<sup>2</sup> Notes, Dan. ii. 38—45. vii. viii.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xix. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Notes, Is. xli 26—29. xlii. 8, 9.

## PREFACE

that space of time, which was included between the period when the prophet wrote and the end of the world; and as subordinate predictions, concerning Israel and the nations, and which form a kind of episode to the main design, were fulfilled, other prophecies were delivered from age to age; till St. John closed the whole, in *The Revelation*.<sup>1</sup> Can any reasonable man conceive that a design of this kind could ever have entered into the thoughts of an uninspired writer; that he could form the astonishing idea into a regular plan; and that during more than fifteen hundred years, he should have successors, who entered fully into his views, and assisted in carrying them into effect? Or can it be conceived, that such a plan, however formed, could have been so executed, as to have even a plausible appearance of being successful? He, who can believe this, has no right to call those credulous, who receive the Bible as the word of God.

V. The Bible alone, and such books as make it their basis, introduce the infinite God speaking in a manner worthy of himself, with simplicity, majesty, and authority. His character, as there delineated, comprises all possible excellence without any intermixture; his laws and ordinances accord to his perfections; his works and dispensations exhibit them; and all his dealings with his creatures bear the stamp of infinite wisdom, power, justice, purity, truth, goodness, and mercy, harmoniously displayed. The description given in the sacred oracles, of the state of the world and of human nature, widely differs from our previous ideas of them; yet facts on full investigation unanswerably prove it to be exactly true. The records of every nation, the events of every age, and the history of every individual, most entirely confute the self-flattery of man in this respect; and prove that the writers of the Bible knew the human character immensely better, than any philosopher, ancient or modern, ever did. Their account teaches us what men are actually doing, and what may be expected from them: while all, who form a different estimate of human nature, find their principles inapplicable to facts; their theories incapable of being reduced to practice; and their expectations strangely disappointed. The Bible, well understood, enables us to account for those events, which have appeared inexplicable to men in every age: and the more carefully any one watches and scrutinizes all the motives, imaginations, and desires of his own heart, during a length of time; the more manifest will it appear to him, that the Scriptures give a far more just account of his disposition and character, than he himself could have done. In short, man is such a being, and the world is in such a state, as the Scriptures have described: yet multiplied facts, constant observation, and reiterated experience, are insufficient to convince us of it, till we first learn it from the Bible; and then comparing all which passes within us, and around us, with what we there read, we become more and more acquainted with our own hearts, and established in the belief of the divine original of this most wonderful book. To this we may add, as a most convincing internal proof that the Bible is the word of God, who “knoweth what is in man;” that it is exactly suited to our *real* state, character, and wants; and proposes an adequate remedy, or supply, to all of them; which in proportion as self-knowledge increases, we see more and more. While others, through ignorance and self-flattery, cannot perceive that its proposals and promises suit their case, the experienced Christian is deeply convinced, that he wants all that is thus proposed and promised, to render him happy, and that he wants nothing more.

The mysteries contained in Scripture rather confirm than invalidate this conclusion: for a book, claiming to be a revelation from God and yet devoid of mystery, would, by this very circumstance, confute itself. Incomprehensibility is inseparable from God and from all his works, even the most inconsiderable; such as, for instance, the growth of a blade of grass. The mysteries of the Scriptures are sublime, inter-

<sup>1</sup> Note, Is. xl. 21—24

## PREFACE.

esting, and useful; they display the divine perfections; lay a foundation for our hope; and inculcate humility, reverence, love, and gratitude. What is incomprehensible must be mysterious: but it may be intelligible as far as it is revealed; and though it be connected with things above our reason, it may imply nothing contrary to it. So that, in all respects, the contents of the Bible are suited to convince the serious enquirer, that it is 'The word of God.'

VI. The *tendency* of the Scripture constitutes another unanswerable proof. Did all men believe and obey the Bible, as a divine revelation; let us seriously enquire, to what tenour of conduct it would lead them, and what would be the effect on society? Surely if repentance, and renunciation of all vice and immorality, when combined with the spiritual worship of God in his ordinances; faith in his mercy and truth, through the mediation of his Son; and all the fruits of the Holy Spirit, as visible in the life of every true believer, were universal, or even general, they would form the bulk of mankind to such characters, and would produce such effects, as the world has never yet witnessed. Men would then habitually and uniformly do justice, speak truth, shew mercy, exercise mutual forgiveness, follow after peace, bridle their appetites and passions, and lead sober, righteous, and godly lives. Murders, wars, slavery, cruel oppressions, rapine and fraud, and unrestrained licentiousness, would no more desolate the world, or fill it with misery; and bitter contentions would no more destroy domestick comfort: but righteousness, goodness, and truth would bless the earth with a felicity exceeding all our present conceptions. This is, no doubt, the direct tendency of the scriptural doctrines, precepts, motives, and promises: nothing is wanting to remedy the state of the world, and to fit men for the worship and felicity of heaven, but to believe and obey the Scriptures. And if many enormous crimes have been committed, under colour of zeal for Christianity; it only proves the depravity of man's heart: for the Scripture, soberly understood, most expressly forbids such practices; and men do not act in this shameful manner because they duly regard the Bible, but because they will not believe and obey it.

The tendency of these principles is exhibited in the characters delineated in the sacred writings; while the consistency between the doctrines and precepts of Scripture, and the actions of men recorded in it, implies another argument of its divine original. The conduct of ungodly men, as there related, entirely accords to the abstract account given of human nature: and it appears, that believers conducted themselves exactly in that manner, which the principles of the Bible might have led us to expect. They had naturally like passions with other men; but these were habitually restrained and regulated by the fear and love of God, and by other holy affections. Their general behaviour was good, but not perfect; and sometimes their natural proneness to evil broke out, and made way for bitter repentance and deeper humiliation: so that they appear constantly to have perceived their need of forgiveness and divine assistance; to have expected felicity from the rich mercy of God; and, instead of making a bad use of that consideration, to have deduced from it motives for gratitude, zeal, patience, meekness, and love to mankind.

But *one character* is exhibited, in the simplest and most unaffected manner, which is perfection itself. Philosophers, orators, and poets, in their several ways, have bestowed immense pains to delineate a faultless character: and they have given us complete models of their own estimate of excellence, and sufficient proof that they had laboured the point to the uttermost of their ability. But the four Evangelists, (whose divine inspiration is now frequently doubted on the most frivolous pretences,) without seeming to think of it, have done that, in which all other writers have failed. They have set before us a perfect human character, by recording facts, without making any comment on them, or shewing the least ingenuity in the arrangement of them. 'They have given the history of one, whose spirit, words, and actions were, in every particular, what they ought to have been; who always did the very thing which

## PREFACE.

‘ was proper, and in the best manner imaginable ; who never once deviated from the most consummate wisdom, purity, benevolence, compassion, meekness, humility, fortitude, patience, piety, zeal, or any other excellency : and who in no instance let one virtue or holy disposition entrench on another, but exercised them all in entire harmony, and exact proportion.’—‘ This subject challenges investigation, and sets infidelity at defiance. Either these four men exceeded, in genius and capacity, all other writers that ever lived ; or they wrote under the guidance of divine inspiration : for, without labour or affectation, they have performed what hath baffled all others, who have set themselves purposely to accomplish it.’<sup>1</sup> This is a fact which cannot be denied : no perfect character is elsewhere delineated, and probably no mere man could have drawn one ; and no one would have thought of such a character as that of Jesus. This alone, I apprehend, joined to their entire consistency in this respect with one another, demonstrates that the Evangelists wrote under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

It has often been observed, that Satan would never have influenced men to write the Bible ; for then he would have been divided against himself : wicked men would not have written a book, which so awfully condemned their whole conduct ; and good men would never have ascribed their own inventions to divine inspiration, especially as such forgeries are most severely reprobated in every part of it. But indeed, it is a work as much exceeding every effort of mere man, as the sun surpasses those scanty illuminations, by which his splendour is imitated, or his absence supplied.

VII. The *actual effects*, produced by the Scripture, evince their divine original. These are indeed far from being equal to its *tendency* ; because, through human depravity, the gospel is not generally or fully believed and obeyed : yet they are very considerable ; and we may assert, that even at present, there are many thousands, who have been reclaimed from a profane and immoral course of conduct, to sobriety, equity, truth, and piety, and to good behaviour in relative life, simply by attending to the sacred oracles. Having been “ made free from sin, and become the servants of God, they have their fruit unto holiness ; ” and after “ patiently continuing in well-doing, ” and cheerfully bearing various afflictions, they joyfully meet death, being supported by the hope of eternal life “ as the gift of God through Jesus Christ : ” while those who best know them, are most convinced, that they have been rendered more wise, holy, and happy, by believing the Bible ; and that there is a reality in religion, though various interests and passions may keep them from duly embracing it. What a different nation would Britain become, if all its inhabitants were rendered as upright, sincere, peaceable, beneficent, and active in doing good to mankind, as a remnant of them are on scriptural principles ? How would the state of the whole earth be changed, if all men every where thus “ denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, and lived “ soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world ? ” This alone would do much towards introducing a state of things, resembling that of the millennium.<sup>2</sup>—There are indeed enthusiasts ; but they become such, by forsaking the *old* rule of faith and duty, for some *new* imagination : and there are hypocrites ; but they attest the reality and excellency of religion, by deeming it worth their while to counterfeit it.

VIII. *Brevity* is so connected with *fulness* in the Scriptures, that they are a treasure of divine knowledge, which can never be exhausted. The things, that are absolutely necessary to salvation, are few, simple, and obvious to the meanest capacity, provided it be attended by a humble, teachable disposition : but the most learned, acute, and diligent student cannot, in the longest life, obtain an entire knowledge of this one volume. The more deeply he works the mine, the richer and more abundant he finds the ore : new light continually beams from this source of heavenly knowledge, to direct his conduct, and illustrate

<sup>1</sup> The author's Answer to Paine's Age of Reason, p. 66, 2 ed

<sup>2</sup> Note, Rev. xx. 4—6

## PREFACE.

the works of God, and the ways of men; and he will at last leave the world confessing, that the more he studied the Scriptures, the fuller conviction he had of his own ignorance, and of their inestimable value.

IX. Lastly, "He that believeth hath the witness in himself."<sup>1</sup> The discoveries which he has made by the light of the Scripture; the experience which he has had, that the Lord fulfils its promises to those who trust in them; the abiding effects produced by attending to it, on his judgment, dispositions, and affections; and the earnestness of heaven enjoyed by him in communion with God, put the matter beyond all doubt: and though many believers are not at all qualified to dispute against infidels, they are enabled, through this inward testimony, to obey the gospel, and to suffer for it: and they can no more be convinced, by reasonings and objections, that uninspired men invented the Bible, than they can be persuaded, that man created the sun, whose light they behold, and by whose beams they are cheered.

And now, if an objector could fully invalidate more than one half of these arguments, (to which many more might easily be added,) the remainder would be abundantly sufficient.—Nay, perhaps, any one of them so far decides the question, that, were there no other proof of the Bible's being the word of God, a man could not reject it, without acting in direct opposition to those dictates of common sense, which direct his conduct in his secular affairs.—But in reality, I have a confidence, that not one of these proofs can be fairly answered; at least it has never yet been done: and the combined force of the whole is so great, that the objections, by which men cavil against the truth, only resemble the foaming waves dashing against the deep rooted rock, which has for ages defied their unavailing fury. But, though these can effect nothing more, they may beat off the poor shipwrecked mariner, who was about to ascend it, in hopes of deliverance from impending destruction.

A very small part of the evidences, which, with combined force, establish the divine original and authority of our holy religion, has here been adduced. Many books have, of late years, been published on the important subject; the writers of which have treated it in different ways: yet, in general, the arguments advanced by each seem separately to be conclusive. It does not appear, that any view of the subject, materially new, remains to be exhibited: but the following particulars have not, as far as the Author has observed, been as yet brought forward, in that prominent manner, and to that advantage, of which they are capable.

I. Many, in these days, allow the sacred writers to have been *wise* and *good* men; but they hesitate, and speak doubtfully, as to their *divine inspiration*. Yet, do not all the prophets, in the Old Testament, speak most decidedly of themselves and of their predecessors, as declaring, not their own words, but the word of God?<sup>2</sup> Do not the apostles, and other writers of the New Testament, speak concerning the prophets who wrote the Old Testament, "as holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost?"<sup>3</sup> Do they not adopt language, which, in its most obvious meaning, claims the attention of their readers to their own instructions, as to the WORD OF GOD? Do they not thus attest and sanction one another's writings?<sup>4</sup> Do they thus attest and sanction any other books? The answer to these questions at least effectually confutes the sentiment above stated. If the sacred writers were indeed *wise* men, but *not inspired*; how were they *deluded* into the false imagination, that they and their predecessors and

<sup>1</sup> Note, 1 John v. 9, 10.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2. Neh. ix. 30. Ps. xix. 7—11. Is. viii. 20. Jer. xx. 7—9. xxv. 3, 4. xxvi. 12—19. Ez. i. 1—3. xxxviii. 16, 17. Dan. ix. 12, 13. Mic. iii. 8—12. Zech. i. 5, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Notes, Rom. iii. 1, 2. 2 Tim. iii. 14—17. Heb. i. 1, 2. 2 Pet. i. 19—21

<sup>4</sup> Notes, 1 Cor. vii. 39, 40. 1 Thes. iv. 6—8. v. 23—28, v. 27. 2 Pet. iii. 1—4. 14—16. 1 John iv. 4—6

## PREFACE.

coadjutors were inspired? If they were *good* men, but *not inspired*, would they have thus confidently asserted their own inspiration, and sanctioned that of each other; knowing that this was contrary to the truth, and that they merely delivered their own private sentiments?

II. There are also very many, who so far reverence the name of our Lord Jesus, as to suppose his words to be divine and infallible; and yet they speak of the writers, both of the Old and New Testament, in more hesitating language. Now our Lord himself, in numerous instances, has quoted and referred to the Old Testament, and the several parts of it, as “of divine authority;” and this in a manner which directly tended to mislead the people, if the passages referred and appealed to, were merely the private opinion of some venerable men of former ages, but not the infallible word of God. And his appointment of the apostles, and his giving them the power of the keys, of opening and shutting the kingdom of heaven;<sup>1</sup> must imply, that in their writings, and in those which they sanctioned, his doctrine and religion might be found unmixed and genuine. Indeed, if it cannot be found there, where are we to look for it? These considerations shew, that he himself has attested the divine inspiration of both the Old and the New Testament.

An argument, comprising so many and important transactions, cannot here be fully discussed; but a few specimens may not improperly be annexed, of the manner in which the author supposes that the position might be maintained, with great effect, by any man who had talents and leisure for such an attempt.

When the divine Redeemer was tempted by the devil, he selected all the texts, with which, as ‘by the sword of the Spirit,’ he put the enemy to flight, from one of the Books of Moses.<sup>2</sup> Does he then quote these books as the words of man? Surely not. He says repeatedly, “It is written.” And had any one enquired, Where? Would he not have answered, “In the word of God?”—In his sermon on the mount he continually refers to the law given by Moses; declaring that “till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled;” for he came not to destroy “the law, . . . but to fulfil.”<sup>3</sup> Now who can deny that our Lord came to fulfil the types of the ceremonial law, and the requirements of the moral law? And who can imagine, that the Son of God was manifested, thus to honour any institutions of mere human authority?—Yet many learned writers speak of the laws of Moses, as if they had originated with him.

The Pharisees and Scribes in general maintained, that JEHOVAH spake by Moses, and that his writings were the word of God: but does our Lord ever so much as intimate that this opinion was unwarranted, or held in too absolute and unrestricted a manner?<sup>4</sup> Nay, when he saw good to expose the traditions of the elders, he charges them with rejecting and “making void the commandment of God by their traditions:”<sup>5</sup> but where was that commandment of God to be found, except in the books of Moses? for he expressly referred to the fifth commandment.—Again, when the Pharisees proposed<sup>6</sup> a question to him respecting divorces, he referred them to the Mosaick history of the creation, and to the original institution of marriage; saying, “Have ye never read, that he which made them at the beginning, made them ‘male and female?’” Does not this method of appealing to these records imply an express attestation to the indisputable truth of them? And does not that attestation amount to a declaration, that they were written by divine inspiration?

Who was intended by the Householder, that inclosed the vineyard of Israel, but JEHOVAH? By whom did he inclose it, but by Moses? What Moses enacted and performed, was done in the name and by the

<sup>1</sup> Notes, Matt. xvi. 18—20.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. iv. 4—11.

<sup>3</sup> Note, Matt. v. 17, 18

<sup>4</sup> Notes, John v. 45—47. ix. 27—34.

<sup>5</sup> Notes, Matt. xv. 1—14. Mark vii. 1—9.

## PREFACE.

authority of **JEHOVAH**: and can his writings be treated as the word of man, by any who consider the testimony of Christ as "the word of God?"<sup>1</sup>

The Sadducees proposed a case to Jesus, which they imagined inconsistent with the resurrection of the dead: but he decisively answered, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God;" and he then referred them to the Books of Moses, as a confutation of their error. But did the Son of God in reality appeal to the writings of an uninspired man? or did he not appeal to "the oracles of God?" This however is not all; for he says expressly, "Have ye not read, that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, &c.?"—What Moses recorded was spoken by God.<sup>2</sup>

On another occasion he inculcated a regard to the Scribes and Pharisees, as sitting in Moses's seat, that is, teaching according to his law; though, at other times, he exposed their instructions, when, following their own traditions, they disannulled that law: what could this mean, but that the one was a divine revelation, the other a mere human invention?<sup>3</sup>

In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, (if indeed it be a parable,) our Lord introduces Abraham saying to the rich man concerning his brethren, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them:" and again, "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."<sup>4</sup>—But would he have thus called the attention of his hearers, and of all through revolving ages who read his words, to the writings of Moses, if *any part of them* had been erroneous and the mere opinion of a fallible man?—It is worthy of notice, that our Lord also expressly attested the truth of the Mosaick history, in some particulars which have not been most implicitly credited, in their evident and literal import: I mean the account given by Moses of the universal deluge, and Noah's preservation in the ark while all else were drowned; and of the destruction of Sodom by fire and brimstone from heaven, with the sudden and awful doom of Lot's wife.<sup>5</sup>

When discoursing with Nicodemus, he referred to the Mosaick history of the brazen serpent, in such a manner as both attested the typical import of that transaction, and the reality of the miracle recorded by Moses.<sup>6</sup>

On another occasion, probably before the Sanhedrim, our Lord says to the Jews, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"—Hence we may infer, that an intelligent belief of the words of Moses necessarily leads to faith in Christ; and that it could not be expected, that the Jews, who did not believe the testimony of Moses in this particular, would believe in him of whom he spake.<sup>7</sup> Let this suffice, in respect of the Books of Moses.

It may be proper also to adduce a few specimens, respecting the other parts of the Old Testament. When the Pharisees condemned the disciples for rubbing the ears of corn on the sabbath-day, our Lord said unto them, "Have ye not read what David did?" "Have ye not read so much as this, what David did?"<sup>8</sup> and directly referred also to the law in the same sentence.<sup>9</sup> Now this surely authorizes us to conclude, that he regarded both the law and the Books of Samuel, as equally "the word of God."—In like manner he called the attention of his hearers to the history of the queen of Sheba, as of undoubted authority; and this is recorded both in the Books of the Kings and in the Chronicles.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxi. 33—46. Mark xii. 1—12. Luke xx. 9—18.

<sup>3</sup> Note, Matt. xxiii. 1—4.

<sup>6</sup> Note, John iii. 14, 15.

<sup>9</sup> Lev. xxiv. 5—9. 1 Sam. xxi. 1—6

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings x. 1—13. 2 Chr. ix. 1—12. Note, Matt. xii. 41, 42.

<sup>2</sup> Notes, Matt. xxii. 23—33, v 31.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xxiv. 37—39. Luke xvii. 26—34.

<sup>8</sup> Matt. xii. 1—5. Luke vi. 3, 4.

## PREFACE.

When he anticipated the objection of the Nazarenes, by referring them to the conduct of the Lord in sending Elijah to Zarephath, to a Zidonian woman, rather than to any of the widows in Israel ; and in cleansing Naaman the Syrian, by Elisha, rather than any of the lepers in Israel ; he not only authenticated the historical records of those facts as *genuine*, but *attested the miracles* recorded in them ; which, admitted in their full extent, can never be separated from the divine inspiration of those who wrought them.\* It should also be observed, that our Lord never referred to any writings in this manner, except those received by the Jews as the word of God ; he opposed oral traditions, and has not once quoted the Books of the Apocrypha, some of which were then extant. It may therefore be fairly inferred, that he expressly designed to confirm the opinion of the Jews on that subject, by his repeated attestations, and to establish exclusively the divine inspiration of their sacred books.

JEHOVAH had given commandment by Moses, that the people should offer sacrifices, exclusively at the place which he should appoint : and Joshua after his death, by divine direction, as the Jews supposed, placed the tabernacle at Shiloh, where it continued till the ark was taken by the Philistines. Afterwards David removed the ark to Jerusalem, and Solomon built the temple on mount Zion, which was from that time regarded as exclusively the place appointed by God for sacrifice.—A large proportion of the Old Testament, from the Books of Moses to the end of it, relates to this tabernacle and temple ; to the sins of the people in offering sacrifice elsewhere, or in hypocritically attending on the ordinances there administered ; to the judgments of God upon them for these sins ; to the destruction of the temple by the Chaldeans ; to the rebuilding of it by Zerubbabel ; and to events of a similar nature.—These things are so interwoven with the historical records of the Old Testament ; that to deny the divine authority, by which Joshua separated Shiloh, and David appointed mount Zion, as the exclusive place for offering sacrifice, according to the command given by Moses, would tend to invalidate the whole narrative ; as it would imply, that the Lord inflicted tremendous judgments on the nation, merely for violating the appointments of uninspired men.—The Samaritans indeed argued, that “ men ought to worship ” on mount Gerizim, and not at Jerusalem : but our Lord declared to the woman of Samaria, that the Samaritans “ knew not what “ they worshipped ; for salvation was of the Jews.”† Now, who can doubt, that this declaration of Jesus Christ, and his own constant attendance on the worship performed at Jerusalem, fully attest the divine inspiration of those books, in which the appointment of this place and the building of the temple are recorded, as having been done by the directions and command of God himself ?

Let us also very briefly consider our Lord’s testimony to the writings of the Prophets, and to the Book of Psalms. The Psalms are indeed ascribed to different writers ; but it is evident that they constituted a book of the Scriptures among the Jews at that time, as they now do :‡ so that a quotation from that book, as the word of God, without adding any limitation, is in fact an attestation of the whole.

When the children in the temple cried, “ Hosanna to the Son of David ; ” the chief priests said to Jesus, “ Hearest thou not what these say ? ” To which he answered, “ Yea ; have ye never read, Out of “ the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise ? ”§ Did not this attest the words of David, as the language of inspiration, and of prophecy ?

On another occasion he demanded of the Pharisees, “ how David *in Spirit*, ” or, “ by the Holy “ Ghost,” “ called the Messiah Lord : ” ¶ which is equivalent to David’s declaration concerning himself : “ The Spirit of God spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.”‡ And accordingly our Lord, after

\* Luke iv. 23—27.

† John iv. 20—22.

‡ Luke xxiv. 44. Acts i. 20. xiii. 33

§ Ps. viii. 2 Matt. xxi. 15 16.

¶ Notes, Ps. cx. 1. Matt. xxii. 41—46. Mark xii. 35—37.

‡ Note, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2

## PREFACE.

his resurrection, declared that "all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, "and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning him." <sup>1</sup>—But why *must* this have been, except as the writings referred to were inspired by God himself? Could there be any *necessity*, that the words of fallible men, however wise and good, should be fulfilled, in such extraordinary events, as the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ?

Referring to a passage, in the Psalms, <sup>2</sup> he asks, "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? "If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came; and the Scripture cannot be broken, &c." <sup>3</sup> Who called the magistrates gods, but *JEHOVAH*? And why could not the Scripture be broken, but because it is "the word of God?"

I shall only, in a general way, refer the reader, to some of our Lord's attestations to several of the Prophets, whose writings form a part of our Scriptures. The texts referred to are surely a sufficient attestation to the prophecy of Isaiah. <sup>4</sup> When our Lord says, "Well did Esaias prophesy of you;" could he mean any thing less than St. Paul did, in saying, "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet?" <sup>5</sup>—Christ gives similar attestations to the prophecy of Daniel: <sup>6</sup> and to Hosea. <sup>7</sup> He also expressly attests the history contained in the book of Jonah, which is often treated very irreverently. <sup>8</sup> He evidently refers to the words of Micah, in predicting the persecutions, to which his disciples would be subjected. <sup>9</sup> And he explicitly attests the prophecy of Malachi. <sup>10</sup> Several others of the prophets are quoted by the evangelists: but none are here adduced, except those who are mentioned by our Lord himself, in a manner attesting the divine inspiration of the writers, or their language, as "the word "of God"

It only remains to mention his attestation to the Scriptures in general, and to the division of them which was received at that time, into "the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms." Thus he says to the Scribes, "Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The Stone which the builders rejected, the same is become "the Head of the corner?" <sup>11</sup> And when he adds, "Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God "shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof;" he evidently shews, that he quoted the passage as the word of God, which "cannot be broken."—"How then shall "the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" and again, "All this was done that the Scriptures "of the prophets might be fulfilled." <sup>12</sup>

Would we know more particularly what Scriptures he meant? Let us hear his words to the apostles: "All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the "Psalms concerning me." <sup>13</sup>

The words of our Lord are very remarkable; "Search," says he, "the Scriptures, for in them ye think "ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." <sup>14</sup> Now what could the Jews suppose Jesus to mean by "the Scriptures," but the books which they had been accustomed to distinguish by that appellation? They had thought, that in these the way of eternal life was to be found; these testified of Jesus as the Messiah; and yet they rejected him, without whom they could not obtain eternal life!—Thus one testimony confirms indubitably the divine revelation of the whole Old Testament, as it stood at that

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiv. 44—46.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. lxxxii. 1. 6, 7.

<sup>3</sup> Note, John x. 32—39.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xiii. 13—15. xv. 7—9. xxi. 13. Mark vii. 6, 7. Luke iv. 17—21.

<sup>5</sup> Acts xxviii. 25.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xxiv. 15. Mark xiii. 14.

<sup>7</sup> Hos. vi. 6. Matt. ix. 13. xii. 7.

<sup>8</sup> Matt. xii. 39—41. xvi. 4. Luke xi. 29—32.

<sup>9</sup> Mic. vii. 6. Matt. x. 35, 36.

<sup>10</sup> Mal. iii. 1. Matt. xi. 10, &c. Luke vii. 27 —Mal. iv. 5, 6. Matt. xvii. 10—12. Mark ix. 11—13.

<sup>11</sup> Ps. cxviii. 22, 23. Matt. xxi. 42, 43.

<sup>12</sup> Matt. xxvi. 54—56.

<sup>13</sup> Luke xxiv. 27. 44—46.

<sup>14</sup> John v. 39, 40.

## PREFACE.

time, to all who truly believe the words of Christ : but, reversing his conclusion in another case, we may fairly say to men who call themselves Christians, ‘ If ye believe not his words, how can ye believe the writings of the Old Testament ? ’

When the Jews went about to stone him, because he had said, “ I and my Father are One ; ” he quoted a passage from the Psalms, adding, “ The Scripture cannot be broken.”<sup>1</sup> But what can we understand by “ the Scripture,” in this connexion, but the canonical books of the Old Testament as then received by the Jews ? And who can deny this to be a complete authentication of them, as the unfailing word of the unchangeable God ? Indeed all those passages, in which Christ speaks of his sufferings, death, and resurrection, with the various circumstances connected with them, as what “ must be,” with reference to the types and prophecies of the Old Testament, prove, as far as men regard his testimony, that not one tittle of those sacred records could pass away, till the whole had received its full accomplishment : for which no other satisfactory reason can possibly be given, than this, that the whole is a divine revelation ; “ for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man : but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

But, should it be granted that our Lord’s own words demonstrate the whole Old Testament to be “ given by inspiration from God,” as far as men reverence and believe his testimony ; yet it may still be asked, Does it follow, that the books of the New Testament admit of the same kind of proof from the words of Christ himself ?—Let us briefly examine this subject also. It is not indeed practicable to adduce so large a body of evidence, as has been brought in the former case ; nor is it necessary : yet I apprehend that the argument may in a short compass be made very conclusive.—When Peter confessed Jesus to be “ the Christ, the Son of the living God,” He answered, “ I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”—Peter had spoken in the name of the other apostles, as well as in his own ; and it is generally allowed, that the answer included them also : indeed this appears by other passages of similar import, in which they were all addressed.<sup>2</sup>

If it be allowed, that this absolute promise was given exclusively to the apostles ; we must next enquire, how they could exercise this power of binding or loosing, especially after their decease, except by their doctrine ? And where must the church or the world look for that doctrine, if not in their writings ? Should we suppose, that the exercise of this exclusive authority was confined to the short time of their continuance on earth ; then the church has ever since been left destitute of any rule, either for censures or absolutions, even of a declarative nature ; and also of all *criteria* for the discrimination of true Christians from other men, either for the purpose of self-examination, or for the regulation of our conduct “ towards the household of faith,” and the world around us. But if this promise was not exclusively made to the apostles, nor the authority given by it intended to be exercised according to their doctrine ; the consequence must be, either that there are in every age, ministers of religion possessed of this absolute power of binding and loosing ; or that the words of Christ have not received their accomplishment. And, as it does not seem to accord with the prevailing sentiments of this age, to invest ministers, of any kind or description, with such an infallible and decisive authority ; we may, I apprehend, be allowed to conclude, that the promise was made exclusively to the apostles ; and was fulfilled, when they were inspired by the Holy Spirit to deliver that doctrine to the church, according to which the state of all men, in respect of acceptance or condemnation, is and will be finally decided. If this be allowed, it will

<sup>1</sup> John x. 34, 35.

<sup>2</sup> Notes, Matt. xvi. 13—19. xviii. 18. John xx. 19—23.

## PREFACE.

*inevitably* follow, that our Lord's express testimony proves that their writings are a *divine revelation*; for in them especially they delivered to the church what they received from the Lord; and these have been, and will be to all subsequent generations, exclusively 'the doctrine of Christ.'

On the night before his crucifixion, our blessed Saviour repeatedly promised to send to his apostles, "the Spirit of Truth, who should guide them into all Truth," and "shew them things to come;" who should "teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever he had said unto them," and who "should receive of his and shew it to them." There is a subordinate sense, in which these promises are, in a measure, accomplished to all true Christians: but the persons, who advance doubts respecting the divine authority of the books contained in the New Testament, will scarcely deny that they are addressed in a far superior sense, to the apostles and those immediately connected with them.<sup>1</sup> Now the Spirit was given to them, as well as to others, "to profit withal:" and it is undeniable, that genuine Christianity, without unremitted miracles, could be delivered down to future ages for the profit of mankind, only by writings, in which it should be stated without error or corrupt mixture, and preserved as a sacred deposit in the church from generation to generation. What then could the Holy Spirit, promised in this energetick language to the apostles, be so rationally supposed to do for them, as to guide their minds by an immediate superintending inspiration, when they dictated those writings, by which it was evidently the design of Providence that the doctrine of Christ should be perpetuated in the church? Indeed, either they did deliver to mankind the doctrine of their Lord and Master, pure and uncorrupted, or they did not: if they did not, the revelation, which God made of himself by his well-beloved Son, has answered very little purpose; as no man, without a new revelation properly so called, can or ever could distinguish the truths of Christ from the errors of the apostles: but if they did deliver their doctrine pure and uncorrupted to mankind; why should we maintain, that they were preserved from error when preaching the gospel, in which one generation of men alone was immediately concerned; and yet left to fall into errors in their writings, in which all future ages and nations were most deeply interested? If when they were brought before governors for a testimony to them, it was not they that spoke, but the Holy Spirit who spake by them;<sup>2</sup> we may surely conclude, that what they wrote for a testimony to all future ages and nations, was arranged under the same efficacious teaching and superintendency.

Our Lord, just before his ascension, renewed and ratified his commission to the apostles: "All power," says he, "is given unto me in heaven and earth: go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always even to the end of the world." "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."<sup>3</sup> Yet none, those alone excepted, to whom the apostles personally preached, can have any concern in this important declaration; unless the doctrine of Christ, delivered to the apostles, may be *certainly* found in their writings.—Our Lord just before his crucifixion intercedes for his whole future church in these words, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me *through their word*:"<sup>4</sup> and indeed all real Christians in every age have believed in him, not so much through the word of the ministers who preached to them, as through that of the apostles, by which their doctrine must be tried; from which, if sound, it is deduced, and to which it is properly their custom to make an unreserved appeal. In this sense St. Paul says, that believers are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief Corner

<sup>1</sup> Note, John xiv. 25, 26.

<sup>2</sup> Notes, Matt. xxviii. 18—20. Mark xvi. 15, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Notes, Matt. x. 19, 20. Luke xxi. 12—19.

<sup>4</sup> Note, John xvii. 20, 21.

## PREFACE.

“ Stone : ” for the Old Testament written by the prophets, and the New Testament by the apostles, under “ the inspiration of the Holy Spirit,” contain that doctrine, which is the foundation of the faith and hope of the whole church, as resting on Christ, and united in him into an holy temple, “ an habitation of God “ through the Spirit.” ’

The several books of the New Testament were written by the apostles themselves, excepting the gospels of Mark and Luke, and the Acts of the Apostles : and these were penned by the attendants on the apostles, and under their immediate inspection, and consequently were equally authenticated by them, as if they had themselves written them. If any should object, that Paul was not one of those apostles, to whom Christ gave his express testimony, and yet he wrote a great part of the Epistles: it may be answered, first, that there is no alternative between denying all the facts recorded concerning him, and allowing his apostolical authority in its fullest extent, or that at least “ he was not a whit behind the very “ chiefest apostles : ” and secondly, that Peter has attested his Epistles to be a part of the Scriptures, in these remarkable words, “ Even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto “ him, hath written unto you ; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things ; in which are “ some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do “ *also the other scriptures*, unto their own destruction.” <sup>2</sup> If therefore, our Lord’s own words authenticate the writings of the other apostles as a divine revelation ; Peter, who in some respects might be called the chief of the apostles, authenticates by divine inspiration the writings of his beloved brother Paul.

Finally, the only portion of Scripture, of which our Lord can in any sense be called the Writer, is that which contains the epistles to the seven churches in Asia, which he dictated to the apostle John as his amanuensis. All his *discourses* (as well as his miracles, and the events of his life, death, resurrection, and ascension,) were written, not by himself, but by the evangelists, two of whom were not apostles. What greater assurance then have we, that they recorded faithfully his words, than that the apostles faithfully delivered his doctrine to mankind ? If the evangelists were not inspired in recording his words, we are not infallibly sure, that he spoke what they ascribe to him : and why should we allow the divine inspiration of his historians, in recording his words ; and yet doubt the divine inspiration of his apostles, in communicating his doctrine to the church and to the world ? This opinion therefore is, in fact, both hostile to the whole of the sacred oracles, and at variance with itself.

The consequences of our present conduct, according to the Scriptures, are so immense, that if there were only a bare possibility that these were divine truth, it would be madness to run the risk of rejecting them, for the sake of gaining the whole world. What then shall we think of those who having such unanswerable demonstrations of their being the word of God, that they cannot reasonably doubt of it for a moment, yet disobey the commands, and neglect the salvation, revealed in them, for the veriest trifle which can be proposed ! Especially, as it may be shewn, that, (besides the eternal consequences,) the *firm* belief of the Scriptures, and the conscientious obedience which true faith always produces, will render a man far happier in this present life, even amidst trials and self-denying services, than any other man can be made, by all the pomp, pleasure, wealth, power, and honour, which the world can bestow on him.

If these arguments, which certainly contain a complete moral demonstration of the divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, excite in any reader a greater attention to the sacred volume, and dispose him to

Note, Eph. ii. 19—22.

• Note, 2 Pet. iii. 14—16.

## PREFACE.

read it with more strict impartiality, and larger expectations of improvement; if they induce any one, who has not hitherto turned his attention to the subject, to examine it carefully for himself; if they obviate the unhappy prejudices, or confirm the wavering faith, of one individual; if they stir up any one to seek and wait for "the witness in himself;" the Author's object, in prefixing them to this publication, will be thus far attained.

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We must next proceed to consider the nature of a divine revelation, and the reception to which it is entitled.—Knowledge, in different degrees, may be acquired by us in various ways. We know some things by intuition, or the testimony of our senses; and other things by demonstration, or undeniably conclusive arguments. Many things, which do not admit of this kind of proof, may be shewn to be *probable*, in so great a degree that it would be absurd to doubt of them, and madness not to regulate our conduct according to them. A very small proportion of men's actions are directed by intuitive knowledge, by demonstration, or even by the higher degrees of probability. A moderate degree of probability is generally sufficient to excite them to activity, and to direct their conduct. TESTIMONY, especially, influences by far the greatest part of human actions; and forms the main spring of men's vigorous, self-denying exertions, their daring attempts, and their persevering labours. By crediting the assertions, and relying on the engagements, express or implied, of one another, all the grand concerns of nations are conducted; causes, in which life and death are involved, receive their final determination; and commerce, in all its branches, is directed and influenced: and the same regard to testimony, and confidence in our fellow-creatures, is inseparable from the most ordinary affairs of human life.

Now, "if the testimony of man be great, the testimony of God is greater,"<sup>1</sup> infinitely greater. Indeed his testimony, when fully ascertained, is the highest possible degree of demonstration: and when the Bible is proved, by adequate evidence, to be "the testimony of God," the information contained in it is *sure*, far beyond all other information, from whatever quarter or in whatever manner it is obtained.—The judge and the jury in court, the merchant on the exchange, the commander of a fleet or army, the minister of state in council, (not to mention cases of subordinate importance,) are fully aware, that no testimony or information can be useful to direct their conduct, in their respective concerns, except it be *credited*. To appreciate its credibility and its import, is the first consideration; and the next, when it is believed and understood, should be to form the plan of conduct according to it. Thus almost all human actions, and those especially of the greatest importance, are performed and regulated by *faith*, by that same principle, which is the main spring of human activity, in the great concerns of religion: with this sole difference, that belief of human testimony, and reliance on human faithfulness to promises and engagements, by word or on paper, and in very many cases, as in that of physicians, lawyers, and even those who prepare our food, by what is regarded as a *professional* engagement, influence men in their secular concerns; the belief of God's testimony, and reliance on his faithfulness to his promises, as written in the Scriptures, influence Christians in their spiritual and eternal concerns.—These things are obvious: but they are seldom duly considered, in this connexion.

The Bible is the "testimony of God" to truths and facts, many of which are not otherwise discoverable; or not with sufficient clearness and certainty, to become principles of our habitual conduct. Things past, future, and invisible; truths most important, sublime, and mysterious, are thus brought to our knowledge, attested by him, who cannot mistake, who cannot deceive. But *faith* is the only exercise of

<sup>1</sup> Note, 1 John v. 9, 10.

## PREFACE.

our rational faculties, the only operation of the human mind, by which we can avail ourselves of this information. Faith, receiving and appropriating the testimony of God, is to reason, not unlike what the telescope is to the eye of the astronomer; who by it discerns objects invisible to all others; and sees, clearly and distinctly, those things, which to others appear obscure and confused. Reason, thus appropriating, by faith, the information communicated by revelation from the "only wise God," adds immensely to her former scanty stock of knowledge; possessing at the same time *certainty* instead of *conjecture*: and thus, in the posture of a humble disciple, she receives that instruction, which must be for ever withheld from her, while she proudly affects to be the teacher. Thus, even the most illiterate of mankind, believing and becoming more and more acquainted with the sacred oracles, acquire a knowledge in the things of God and religion, far more certain and useful, than ever was possessed by the wisest and most learned unbeliever: in the same manner as the bosom friend or confidential counsellor of the prince, who is informed of his real purposes and designs, exceeds in practical knowledge of state-affairs the most sagacious speculating politician; who merely supposes that those things have been done, or will be done, which he thinks ought to be done, or in some way conjectures to be most probable.

When, relying on the veracity of God, we receive the Scriptures, as in every proposition infallibly true; the whole of the instruction contained in them becomes our own: and we may consider them as a mine of precious ore, which will more and more enrich us, in proportion to our diligence in exploring them, and, so to speak, in working the mine.

But this faith differs widely from the mere assent of the understanding to any proposition, without respect to its importance, and to our own concern in it. Noah, for instance, was informed, that the deluge would come; and we are informed that it actually came: but he was immediately interested in the event; we are not. We may therefore assent to the truth of it, as an historical fact, without being influenced by it in our habitual conduct; but if he truly believed the divine testimony and monition, this belief must necessarily influence his conduct. "By faith, Noah, moved with fear, prepared the ark." The truths of revelation, (wholly unlike the reports of the day, which, whether true or false, are of little consequence to us,) all relate to our eternal interests; and therefore have an inseparable connexion with our practice. The Bible, received in true faith, becomes the foundation of our hope, the standard of our judgment, the source of our comfort, "the lantern of our feet, and the light of our paths:" and implicit faith always produces unreserved obedience.

The province of reason therefore, in respect to revelation, is, first to examine and decide, (with modesty and caution,) on the evidences by which it is supported; to understand and explain the language in which it is conveyed; to discern, in many things, the excellency of the things revealed to us; and to use them as motives, encouragements, and rules of obedience: and, in things evidently mysterious, to bow in humble submission to the divine teaching; to receive in adoring faith and love what we cannot comprehend; to rest satisfied with what is revealed; and to leave secret things with God, to whom alone they belong.—Should any one indeed presume to interpret a text of Scripture, in a sense which contradicts the testimony of our senses or clear demonstration; we may venture to reject this interpretation: for nothing can possibly prove that to be true, which we *certainly know* to be false. But when the doctrines of revelation, or the obvious interpretations of them, according to the common use of language, are only mysterious, but involve no real contradiction; when they are merely above our comprehension, or contrary to the general notions, and preconceptions, or ordinary reasonings, of mankind; but are not opposite to the testimony of our senses, or to any *demonstrated* truth: to reject, on such grounds, the testimony of God, must be *irrational* in the highest degree; unless man be indeed wiser than his Creator.

Seeing therefore, that the Bible may be unanswerably proved to be the word of God, we should reason

## PREFACE.

from it, as from self-evident principles, or demonstrated truths : for “ His Testimony is sure, making “ wise the simple.”

Many parts of Scripture accord so well with the conclusions of our rational powers, when duly exercised, that either they might have been known without revelation, or else men have mistaken the capacity of *perceiving* truth, for that of *discovering* it. Hence various controversies have arisen about *natural religion*, which many suppose to be rather taken for granted by revelation, than made known by it. But the term is ambiguous : for the word *natural* includes the *propensities of our hearts*, as well as the *powers of our understandings* ; and the same truths, which accord to the latter, are often totally opposite to the former. The gentiles might have known many things concerning God and his will, if they had “ liked to “ retain him in their knowledge ; ” but their alienation of heart from him prevailed to keep them in ignorance, or entangle them in error. So that the term, “ The religion of reason,” would express the idea much more intelligibly, if any such distinction be deemed necessary.

This however is obvious, that many truths and precepts, which are found in the Bible, have been maintained by persons who were ignorant of that divine revelation, or who did not choose to own their obligations to it : and many others, professing to receive the Scriptures as the word of God, assent to some truths contained in them, not so much because they are revealed, as because they think that they may be proved by other arguments ; while they reject, neglect, or explain away those doctrines, which are not thus evident to their reason, or level with their capacities. So that at last it comes to this, that they discard all which is deemed peculiar to revelation ; and refuse to believe “ the testimony of God,” if their own reason will not vouch for the truth of what he says.<sup>1</sup>

It may indeed be questioned, whether those opinions, which men so confidently magnify as ‘ The oracles of reason,’ were not originally, without exception, borrowed from revelation, as far as there is any truth in them : and it is evident, that they cannot possess sufficient certainty, clearness, and authority, to render them efficacious principles of action, except as enforced by revelation and its awful sanctions. And the wildest enthusiast never dreamed of a grosser absurdity, than those persons maintain, who suppose that the only wise God has given a revelation to man, confirmed by miracles and prophecies, and established in the world by the labours and sufferings of his servants, and by the crucifixion of his well-beloved Son ; and that this revelation at last is found to contain nothing, but what we might have known as well without it ! Nay, that it is expressed in such language, as has given occasion to those, who have most implicitly believed and reverentially obeyed it, to maintain sentiments and adopt practices, erroneous and evil in themselves, and of fatal consequence to mankind !

We might therefore have previously expected, that the revelation from God should illustrate, confirm, and enforce such things, as seem more level to our natural powers : and that it should make known to us many important matters, which we could not have otherwise discovered ; and which would be found exceedingly different from all our notions and imaginations ; seeing that our contracted views and limited capacities are infinitely distant from the omniscience of God. So that it is most reasonable to conclude, that the doctrinal truths, which more immediately relate to the divine nature, perfections, providence, and government, to the invisible and eternal world and the mysteries of redemption, constitute by far the most important part of revelation ; as discovering to us such things, “ as eye hath not seen, nor ear “ heard, neither have they entered into the heart of man ; ” and yet they are essentially connected with our present hope, worship, and duty, and with our future happiness or misery.<sup>2</sup>

He therefore cannot, according to the common use of language, be called a believer, who only holds

<sup>1</sup> Note, 1 John v. 9, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Notes, John iii. 12, 13. 1 Cor. ii. 6—9.

## PREFACE.

those doctrines, which he deems the dictates of reason as well as of revelation ; whilst he rejects the testimony of God, whenever he deems it *unreasonable*. And we may hence learn what judgment we ought to form of those, who affirm, without hesitation, that the moral precepts with the annexed penal sanctions, and the more evident truths of the Bible, are the only important part of it ; that it is of little consequence what men believe, especially concerning those things which are in any degree mysterious ; and that none but narrow-minded bigots, and weak and ignorant people, lay any stress upon speculative opinions.—“ He that believeth not, maketh God a liar ;” especially “ he that believeth not the testimony, which “ God hath given of his Son,” and of eternal life bestowed on sinners through him. This is the uniform doctrine of Scripture ; and to contradict it is equivalent to a total rejection of divine revelation.<sup>1</sup> Can it be supposed, that the prophets and apostles were commissioned, and that the Son of God was “ manifested in the flesh,” died on the cross and rose from the dead, merely to inform mankind, that the Lord approved honesty, temperance, truth, and kindness ; and disapproved the contrary vices ? or, that the unnumbered testimonies which the Scriptures contain to the mysteries of the Divine Nature, the Person of the Redeemer, the work of Redemption, and the influences of the Holy Spirit, may, without any criminality, be disbelieved, derided, or reviled ; provided men are moral in their conduct towards one another ? Or, that God is equally pleased with those who thus affront his veracity, as with those who implicitly submit to his teaching and credit his testimony ? If this be the case, in what does the difference between the infidel and the believer consist ? All, except avowed atheists, will allow the propriety of many precepts, and the truth of some doctrines, coinciding with those contained in Scripture : but the infidel admits them as the dictates of reason, not as “ the testimony of God ;” and many professed believers reject all, without hesitation, that does not appear to accord to the same standard. So that both of them believe their own reasonings, “ lean to their own understandings,” and “ make God a liar,” when his testimony contradicts their self-confident decisions ! The prevailing notion therefore, of the comparatively small importance of doctrinal truth, is subversive of revelation ; and in fact is only a more plausible and more dangerous species of infidelity. The decided belief of the “ sure testimony of God,” on the most important doctrines of revelation, and those most intimately connected with our eternal salvation, our rejoicing hope, and our adoring gratitude ; is often, under the word *speculative*, or *speculation*, confounded with the boldest investigation of things unrevealed, by the most presumptuous efforts and conclusions of reasoning unbelievers : and this sometimes by pious men, whose excessive antipathy to controversy will not allow them to admit the difference, or come near enough to perceive it.

If we believe the Scriptures to have been written by “ inspiration from God,” and have any suitable apprehensions of his omniscience, veracity, and perfections ; we must be convinced, that it is the height of arrogance for us, short-sighted, erring creatures of yesterday, to speak of any doctrine contained in them as false or doubtful, because it is not coincident with our reasonings or conceptions. Surely, a small portion of modesty and humility might suffice to induce a confession, that *we* are more likely to be mistaken, than that the only wise God should attest what is not exactly true ! In rejecting his authenticated testimony, we must either advance our knowledge above his omniscience, or impeach his veracity, or deny the Scriptures, altogether or in part, to be his word ; reserving to ourselves the determination, what part is of divine authority, and what is not ! If, on the other hand, we deem any part of the Scriptures, though true, to be of little or no importance, or of dangerous tendency ; what do we, but affront the infinite wisdom or goodness of God, as if he did not know what truths were proper to be revealed to man ; or as if he purposely discovered those matters, which it would have been better for mankind

<sup>1</sup> Notes, John iii 17—21. 31—36. 1 John v. 9—12.

## PREFACE.

never to have known? And, seeing it is evident that the Lord has, in the Scriptures, required the belief of certain doctrines, as absolutely necessary to salvation; <sup>1</sup> to insinuate that these doctrines are either false, doubtful, or of no value, must involve in it the grossest and most affronting blasphemy imaginable.

We do not indeed maintain, that all the truths of revelation are of equal importance; because they are not stated in Scripture to be so: but none can be wholly unimportant, and we are not always competent to decide upon their comparative value. Some things are more obvious than others; and such as are more hard to be understood, are not so well adapted to those persons, “who are unstable and unlearned” in the school of Christ: yet we are not authorized to reject, or even to doubt, any of them. We may indeed demur as to the true interpretation of them, whilst, in humble, reverent teachableness and prayer, we wait for clearer light upon the subject: and we must remain for some time in partial ignorance or error, because we cannot at once become acquainted with all the truths which are revealed, even when we possess a disposition implicitly to believe them. There are some things, which relate to the very life and essence of true religion; and others are rather necessary to our stability, comfort, and holy conduct: these we must by no means reject, or treat with indifference; but it is possible, even that the teachable and diligent Christian may to the last be mistaken or ignorant about some of them, and yet be found among “the heirs of salvation:” nay, there is ground to conclude, that this is indeed the case with great numbers, in one way or other.

The importance of revealed truth may be shewn in another way; for it is the seed or principle in the soul, whence all inward or real holiness proceeds. “Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.” <sup>2</sup> “Beholding as in a glass,” (namely in the person, redemption, and doctrine of Christ,) “the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image.” <sup>3</sup> “Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh.” This doctrine was, in the judgment of the apostle, “the great mystery of godliness;” and indeed all the holy dispositions and affections towards God, all the genuine spiritual worship, all the willing obedience of filial love, and all the cheerful acquiescence in the divine will, and affiance on the divine truth and mercy, which have been found in the world since the fall of man, have arisen from a proper reception of this great truth, and the doctrines connected with it. <sup>4</sup> Spirituality, which consists in a supreme valuation of the holy excellence of spiritual things, and a disposition to seek pleasure and satisfaction in religion, is intimately connected with a believing dependence on the promised influences of the Holy Spirit. And that view of the worth of the soul, the evil of sin, the justice and mercy of God, the vanity of the world, and the believer’s obligations to a Saviour, “who loved him, and redeemed him to God with his blood,” which the doctrine of the cross communicates; is fundamental to deep repentance, genuine humility, gratitude, patience, meekness, forgiveness of injuries, love of enemies, and other parts of the Christian temper and character. Without this, a proud morality, and a pharisaical task and form of godliness, will comprise the sum total of man’s religion; except as he is brought under those impressions and that guidance, which will in due time influence him to embrace “the truth as it is in Jesus;” or as he is carried away, into the mazes of anti-scriptural enthusiasm and delusion.

The Holy Scriptures should likewise be considered as a *complete* revelation: so that nothing needs be known, believed, or practised, as essential to religion, except what may be plainly proved from them. On the other hand, it should be carefully observed, that the *whole* word of God is our rule; and that all preference of one part to another, (except as some parts are more immediately connected with our faith and

<sup>1</sup> Notes, Mark xvi. 14—16. John iii. 27—36, v. 36. 1 John ii. 20—25. v. 11, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Note, John xvii. 17—19.

<sup>3</sup> Notes, Matt. xiii. 18, 19. 33. Mark iv. 26—29. 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18. iv. 3—6. Jam. i. 19—21. 1 Pet. i. 23—25

<sup>4</sup> Note, 1 Tim. iii. 16.

## PREFACE.

practice, than others,) derogates from the credit of the whole; and implies a latent and indulged doubt, whether the Bible be altogether of divine authority; and whether only that part of it be so, which coincides with the favourite tenets of the person concerned.—True and intelligent faith receives the whole “testimony of God;” gives every part its proper place and measure of attention, and applies it to its proper use: for “all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”<sup>1</sup>

But all unwritten tradition, and apocryphal additions to the word of God, must be decidedly rejected. Tradition is so uncertain a way of conveying the knowledge either of truths or facts, that no dependence whatever can be placed on it; so that it is highly improbable, that, without written revelation, any one thing revealed to the prophets and apostles, would have been transmitted to us uncorrupted. Indeed there is some probability in the opinion, that the art of writing was first communicated by revelation, to Moses, in order to perpetuate, with certainty, those facts, truths, and laws, which he was employed to deliver to Israel. Learned men find no traces of *literary* or alphabetical writing, in the history of the nations, till long after the days of Moses; unless the book of Job be regarded as an exception.<sup>2</sup> The art of expressing almost an infinite variety of sounds, by the interchanges of a few letters or marks, seems more like a discovery made to man from heaven, than a human invention; and its beneficial effects, and almost absolute necessity, for the preservation and communication of true religion, favour the conjecture.

But however that may be decided, all who love the Bible, will be thankful to God for this most important advantage; and also for the invention of printing, by which copies of the Scriptures are rendered cheap and plentiful, beyond all calculation, or comparison with the state of things, before printing was discovered. This gives modern Christians advantages for disseminating the knowledge of divine truth among the nations, in some respects even beyond what the apostles themselves possessed: and how noble and Christian is that grand design, which has lately been grounded on this circumstance by ‘The British and Foreign Bible Society,’ which is no less, than that of causing prophets and apostles to speak to the inhabitants of every country on earth, to each in their own language. May God accomplish to its full extent this grand, pious, and beneficent purpose!

We do not need any apocryphal additions to the Scripture. Considered as *human writings*, the apocryphal books have their use: but if *custom* sanction any of them being bound up in the same volume with the sacred oracles; *truth* requires that we explicitly declare, that they are not THE WORD OF GOD. Should it be enquired, how we may distinguish between the genuine books of Scripture, and those which are apocryphal; we answer, that not only some, but all the books, contained in our authorized version of the Scriptures, have many or all of those evidences of a divine original, which have been insisted on: but there is not one, of those called the *Apocrypha*, which may not be proved destitute of such evidence; and most of them contain internal proof that they are spurious.

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The sacred writers often express themselves in language, taken from their own habits of life and the scenes with which they were conversant. Knowledge therefore, of various kinds, must be very advantageous, and in some instances necessary, in order fully to understand them: and the knowledge of eastern manners, and the local customs of the nations, in that part of the world, is doubtless useful to an expo-

<sup>1</sup> Notes, Deut. xxix. 29. 2 Tim. iii. 14—17.

<sup>2</sup> Preface to the Book of Job.

## PREFACE.

sitor; though not to that degree, which many suppose. But I own, I am *deliberately of opinion*, that what is called *Rabbinical learning*, is rather a *hindrance* than a *help* to the understanding of the sacred writings, in their spiritual meaning and practical import: ' and this conviction grows stronger, in proportion to the opportunity which I have had in later years, of becoming more acquainted with it. The writers, as their predecessors of old did, "make void the commandment of God, that they may keep their own tradition."

We are, in the sacred Scriptures, addressed as rational creatures, endued with understanding; and as required to employ it, with diligence and earnestness, in deducing instruction, both doctrinal and practical, from what we read; "comparing spiritual things with spiritual." If we do not so value divine truth, as willingly to apply labour in "searching for it, as for hid treasure;" revelation must be "a price put into the hands of a fool to get wisdom, who has no heart to it." A humble and teachable spirit is above all things requisite; for "except we receive" the testimony of God, concerning "the kingdom of heaven, as little children, we shall not enter into it." This will lead us to ask heavenly wisdom from God, by daily fervent prayer; and as "he giveth liberally to all men, and upbraideth not," we shall in this way "be made wise unto salvation:" and this will appear in our habitual conduct; for all our researches will be found vain, unless we endeavour to practise what we have already learned.

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The Author of Revelation, "the Giver of every good and perfect gift," has endued men with talents, differing both in their nature and degree. He has also afforded some men far more advantages, by education, by leisure, and by opportunities for study, than others have. Some of these persons, in every age, are induced, by divine grace, to devote their endowments and advantages to the acquisition and communication of religious knowledge; for the benefit of those, who are necessarily employed in another manner, whose talent is of another kind, whose time is otherwise occupied, and who need exciting to consider, and help in understanding, those things which belong to their eternal peace.

This is, especially, the object and service of the Christian ministry, when conscientiously and ably fulfilled. Men, previously endowed with suitable qualifications of mind and heart, by the great Source of all good, giving themselves up wholly to this one thing, become "mighty in the Scriptures," "scribes well instructed in the kingdom of God:" and are made useful, in diverse ways, in calling the attention of mankind to the sacred Scriptures, and assisting them to understand the things contained in them, and in animating them to a correspondent tenour of conduct.

The bare reading of the Scriptures, no doubt, is frequently blessed to the souls of men, in making them "wise unto salvation;" and few more egregious absurdities have by Antichrist been palmed upon mankind, than the persuasion, that unlearned men will learn heresy from the Scriptures, if put into their hand 'without note or comment,' or without some 'guard' to counteract the danger: yet commonly "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." This is his appointed ordinance; and *general*, if not *universal*, experience and observation shew, that vital religion has uniformly prospered, in almost exact proportion to the measure, in which the word of God, *unadulterated* and *unmutilated*, has been earnestly and publicly preached, by those persons, whose disinterested labours and holy lives have "adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour," which they testified.

But though *oral* preaching is the grand means of promoting true religion; *written* preaching, (if I may be allowed the expression,) has been rendered exceedingly useful. A large proportion indeed of the

## PREFACE.

Scriptures themselves, were occasional epistles or messages, sent to those, whom the writers could not address by preaching; and many pious and eminent men, who died long since, still speak to us, with great effect, by the books which they left behind them.—Provided, what is written is *truly scriptural*, the multiplication of religious books is not more justly a cause of complaint, than the increase of faithful ministers; and false or superficial religion is, at least, as likely to be disseminated from the pulpit, as from the press.

No method of conveying truth seems more advantageous, than that of plain expository lectures on Scripture, with animated addresses to the heart and conscience. Now if this be allowedly true in respect of preaching, it cannot be far otherwise in respect of writing. When the word of God is kept in sight, and the hearer or reader perceives, that he is not amused with ingenious fancies or speculations, but instructed in the true meaning and import of the sacred oracles; an authority over his conscience may be exercised, beyond what can in any other way be obtained.

I would not be understood, to depreciate *critical* comments of the Scripture; these have an important use: yet *practical* expositions are more directly suited to edification. Indeed expositions of every kind may be perverted to bad purposes, by such persons as “wrest the Scriptures themselves to their own destruction:” but the pious, diligent, and impartial commentator is no more to be blamed for this, than the labour of the husbandman is to be considered as the cause of the intemperate use, which men make of the productions of the earth. Indeed, if expositions, *really* and *fully* explaining the Scriptures, and not attempting to exalt human authority, learning, genius, tradition, reasoning, or conjecture, above the “sure testimony” and authoritative law of God; if such expositions were multiplied ten-fold, there would be no redundancy: unless some one had exhausted the subject, which in fact is inexhaustible; and unless this one comment was in every person’s hands, and read by all. But as it is impossible, that all men should hear the same preacher; so it is in the highest degree improbable, that all men should read the same book.

The formation of men’s minds, and their habits of thinking, are so various, that ministers of different endowments, who take diverse methods of delivering and enforcing the same truths, advantageously engage the attention of distinct descriptions of hearers. In like manner, some are suited with the style, method, and *peculiarity* of one writer; while others are more pleased and profited by another, whose *peculiarity* is very different. Every man likewise has his connexions. Some will read, with candour and attention, what he writes; who have not so favourable a disposition towards others, who may be even of superior excellence.—Thus some read one man’s books, and some another’s; and a few have leisure and inclination to read and profit by many of them: and so knowledge is dispersed, and it may reasonably be hoped that good is done.

There are indeed a considerable number of persons, who avowedly disparage all commentators and their labours, and profess to read the Scriptures alone. But if knowledge, in a variety of things, be useful, (not to say absolutely needful,) in order to understand the Scriptures, and to make the best application of them to practical purposes; and if these persons have not that knowledge, and despise the labours of those who have; it is not likely that they should make much proficiency, even in understanding the book to which they exclusively confine themselves. And surely, a man, who has daily and for a long course of years been traversing an intricate path through a forest, may, without arrogance, propose to give some useful directions and cautions, to those who are beginning to explore the same path. Nor would it savour either of wisdom or humility, if such persons should contemptuously refuse to avail themselves of the experience and observation of him, who had long traced and retraced the way; and determine to proceed on their journey, without a guide, or a chart of the road.

A man’s main object indeed should be, to approve himself to God and to his own conscience, as to his

## PREFACE.

motives and intentions in any undertaking : yet, when so many comments on the Scriptures are already extant ; the bold undertaking of adding one more to them, may seem to require an apology. The preceding observations may properly introduce that of the Author. Experiencing the benefit and comfort, arising from that measure of acquaintance with the sacred oracles, with which he has been favoured ; he longs that, were it possible, all others should enjoy the same felicity ; and he would contribute, according to his ability, to promote so desirable an object.

It is in no degree the design of this publication, to detract from the merit of former commentators, or to intimate that any thing will here be added, which has never before been advanced : but the Author having, for many years, made the Bible his daily and principal study ; and having bestowed great pains to satisfy his own mind, as to the meaning of most parts of Scripture, and the practical use which should be made of them ; and supposing also that his talent chiefly lies, in speaking plainly and intelligibly to persons of ordinary capacity and information ; he adopts this method of communicating his views of divine truth, in connexion with the Scriptures themselves, from which he has deduced them.

Some comments are far too learned for common people, and some too voluminous : while others are too compendious, to admit either any adequate explanation or application of the several subjects, which fall under consideration. Some are in very few hands, and not likely to be more generally read ; and others, however excellent, are to numbers antiquated, through that fastidiousness, which disrelishes the style and manner of former and perhaps better times. Were the present attempt therefore made almost entirely upon the plan of former expositions, it would not, if duly executed, be found supernumerary. But, in arranging old truths, the Author purposes to adopt something of a new method. Not indeed entirely *new* : for Browne's self-interpreting Bible suggested the idea ; and the improvements in Doddridge's family-expositor of the New Testament, were proposed, as, *in some respects*, models for imitation. He has often remarked, that some persons so confine their interpretation of Scripture, to its meaning and use, with respect of those who were immediately addressed ; as to leave the reader in doubt, whether he is at all concerned in it, or can derive any instruction from it : while others, so immediately and abruptly apply to the persons whom they address, the passages which they undertake to explain and enforce ; without enquiring whether they be, in character and situation, similar to those, whom the prophets and apostles taught, warned, or encouraged ; that their instructions seem rather more like an immediate revelation from God, than the explanation and practical improvement of a revelation given many ages ago. As this must be unsatisfactory to men of reflection, and as it is frequently connected with inattention to the primary meaning of the passage, (if it be not a fanciful misinterpretation of it ;) many are ready to conclude, that the Scriptures have no precise meaning in themselves, but may be modelled almost to any thing, by men of lively imaginations and superior ingenuity. It therefore occurred to the Author, that one remedy of these evils, (if not the best remedy,) would be, to keep the two parts distinct : and first to explain in the notes, the primary meaning, as addressed to the writer's contemporaries ; and then, in practical observations, to shew what we may learn from each passage, allowing for all difference in circumstances, and in every other respect. It is indeed far more easy to form a plan of this kind, than duly to execute it ; but this has been the purpose of the present attempt : and if some abler hand should, either in any portion of the sacred volume, or on the whole, more completely realize the idea ; he cannot but think, it would be found the best method of expounding Scripture. The applications of each chapter are entitled, *Practical Observations* ; not as excluding doctrine and experience, but as referring the whole to the practical effect on the heart and life. The reader must therefore expect, that the main object of the exposition is to lead him to the true meaning of the sacred Scriptures, his own concern in them, and the proper use which he ought to make of them to his edification, and that of others connected with

## PREFACE.

him ; without any attempt of the Author, to give him information on a variety of subjects, at most only collaterally connected with the right understanding and use of the Scripture.

When the Author published the first edition of this work, he proposed almost entirely to comment on the translation, without calling the reader's attention to the original languages : but during a course of thirty years, in which he has been almost constantly employed in this work, or in studies relative to it ; he has turned a considerable share of his attention to those languages ; and has ventured to deviate from his first design. He hopes however, that he has done this with caution and diffidence ; and in very few instances, in that measure, which can perplex the unlearned reader, or interrupt his progress, or interfere with his edification. He has neither learning, nor leisure, nor inclination, to engage in merely critical discussions ; and he has not gone into any investigations, concerning even chronology, history, or similar subjects, further than he thought subservient to the main design of the work.—The contents of each chapter are chiefly intended to assist the reader, in finding any subject which he wishes to consider.

Upon the whole, to store the understanding with the knowledge of divine truth, to awaken and direct the conscience, to affect and improve the heart, to promote the comfort and fruitfulness of true Christians, and to assist young students in divinity, in acquiring those endowments, which may qualify them for future usefulness, are the leading objects which the Author had in view, and which he hopes he has never lost sight of, from his first engaging in this work to the present day. He has therefore purposely avoided sharp and eager controversy, and studied exactness and consistency ; choosing rather to follow the leadings of Scripture, than to press it into the service of a pre-established system ; and preferring the satisfaction of promoting the edification of persons, who differ in some things from each other, to the reputation of being exclusively the approved expositor of any party.

Whatever acceptance this work may find from man, the Author hopes to be satisfied with the testimony of his own conscience, and at length to meet the gracious approbation of his Saviour and Judge : and he would conclude with intreating the reader, to join with him in praise and thanksgiving to God, who has spared and enabled him to bring this work to a conclusion and to superintend so many editions of it ; and in prayers, that he would pardon all that he has seen sinful in the writer, and prevent the bad effect of whatever may be erroneous in the publication ; and also render what is true and right abundantly useful, by his special grace and blessing To Him, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the God of our Salvation, be everlasting praise and glory. Amen.

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## POSTSCRIPT.

As the Marginal References formed no part of the original plan of this publication ; but have, with very great labour, been added to the subsequent editions ; it may be proper here to state some particulars respecting them.

They are arranged, according to the following method : The *numeral letters* always denote the *chapter* ; and the *figures*, the *verse*. When a *figure* is found directly after the *letter* which marks a new set of references, it points to a verse in the same chapter ; when *numeral letters* follow, without any book being mentioned, they refer to a chapter in the same book : and afterwards, the references are made in the order of the books, as they stand in the Bible. For example, on Gen. xxxi. 28 : r 55. xxix. 13. Ex. iv. 27. Ruth i. 9. 14, &c. Here 55. refers to the 55th verse of Gen. xxxi : and xxix. 13. to Gen. xxix. 13. and so on in regular order. This method is invariably adhered to ; and it has so many advantages, as abundantly to compensate any supposed disadvantages. Especially, it relieves the reader from perplexity, and prevents

## PREFACE.

confusion by a regular arrangement: and it so greatly saves room, that more references may be adduced in a column very little crowded, than could on any other plan, by very much under-running. In pursuance of this plan, no more letters are used for marking any book, than are necessary clearly to distinguish it from all others: and as the prophecy of Ezekiel is referred to so much more frequently, than the book of Ezra; the letters Ez. mark the former, and the latter is printed at full length. A little habit will render this easy and familiar to the reader.

The Author has availed himself of the pious labours of his predecessors, in selecting Marginal References; especially of the later Editions of the Oxford Bible in Quarto, of Mr. Browne's Bible, and Mr. Canne's; yet he has by no means taken their references as such: on the contrary he has omitted many, (especially of the two latter,) which did not appear to bear on the subject, or to elucidate it; in numerous instances the references are entirely original, and in almost all many are so.—The degree of labour and attention, which has been used to render the printing of the references correct, cannot easily be conceived: yet probably some errors still remain.

In some of the original references, the Author's idea may not at once be perceived by the reader: but, if the several places referred to be consulted, it will generally appear. He has sometimes proceeded by way of *contrast*, that the reader, by comparing the opposite characters or conduct of the persons mentioned, may more clearly perceive the excellency or evil of the case in question: or by comparing the different language of Scripture, used on the same subject, he may more readily see the true interpretation, especially on controverted subjects; or at least be better enabled to judge for himself.—The meaning of scriptural phrases may also be often fixed, by comparing the several places where they are used. This is the intent of many sets of references; while others refer to the doctrine or promise inculcated in the passage, and tend to establish a scriptural interpretation. Where several sets of references are adduced on one verse, they are generally of the former kind.—Some pains have likewise been taken, even on those parts of Scripture which chiefly consist of names, to point out other passages, in which the same persons or places are mentioned; and to mark the difference in spelling the same name, or the different names for the same person or place which occur in different parts, and the different places and persons called by the same name. Sometimes the unlearned reader is perplexed or misled by these variations; and this part of the references often contains all, which even the most learned know upon the subject, especially in the genealogies.

It is a great discouragement, in the laborious task of collecting marginal references, that it may be feared, but few, in comparison, will take the pains to consult them: indeed many persons may not have leisure to do it, in every part, or fully. But though the Author had, for many years, previously studied the Scriptures as his one grand business; he can truly aver, that the insight which he has thus obtained into many parts, which before he had not so carefully noted, is so great, as abundantly to repay his labour, and to convince him, that, along with other means, (for none should be recommended exclusively,) consulting well selected marginal references forms one of the best helps for fixing the word of God in the memory, leading the mind to a just interpretation of it, and in many cases rendering it most affecting to the heart. It tends powerfully to counteract all sceptical doubts, when every part of Scripture is thus found, (like the stones in an arch,) to support and receive support from the rest, and to constitute one grand whole; the divine inspiration of which is proved by every prophecy or miracle, and all kinds of internal and external evidence. It serves also to satisfy the mind, as to the meaning of disputed passages, when one sense is found manifestly to accord with the rest of the sacred word, and other interpretations evidently run contrary to them. And in many cases the Author has found a kind of delightful surprise in striking coincidences, which he had not before at all noticed.

## PREFACE.

To those, who desire to study the Scriptures, accurately and deeply ; (especially to young men, either intended for the sacred ministry, or newly engaged in it ;) he would very earnestly recommend to set apart an hour, or half an hour, every day, when it can be done ; and regularly to go through the Scriptures, carefully consulting all the references.—When it is considered, that the Author has for eight or nine years, spent at least twice as much time each day in arranging them ; this will not appear unreasonable to those who favour his attempts : and he has no doubt, that it will eventually be found amply to repay their labour.

He would also advise those, who only occasionally consult the references, to examine all referred to under any one letter : for very frequently, those from the Old Testament are principally adduced, to make way for some still more pertinent in the New ; to shew the coincidence of both Testaments ; and to point out similar language concerning JEHOVAH in the one, and JESUS in the other ; and in various ways to prove, that the same doctrine pervades the whole.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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THE following is a brief account of the principal points in which the present edition differs from the preceding :—

1. In the first place, it is in *stereotype*. To this laborious and expensive process it was submitted under the conviction (which has proved too well founded), that it was the last which the revered Author would be able to superintend. From the great pains, also, with which it was determined that the revision in every part should be conducted, it was anticipated that this edition might deserve, by its *accuracy*, the distinction thus conferred upon it, of being rendered permanent and nearly unalterable. And though, in the course of so long a work, it is scarcely possible but that some errors should have escaped detection, it is confidently hoped, that, upon the whole, this expectation has been realized.—It may be added, that should any mistakes be discovered of sufficient consequence to require it, the plates are not *so* unalterable as to render the correction impracticable.

2. It appears that during the lapse of two centuries, sundry small variations have crept into our common English Bibles. This was some time since pointed out by Bishop Horsley in the instance of “*thy doctrine*” substituted for “*the doctrine*,” 1 *Tim.* iv. 16; and it has since been shown concerning the change of the stop, from a full point to a semicolon, at the close of the verse, *Heb.* xiii. 7.—Hence considerable pains have been taken, by the collation of different editions, to exhibit an accurate copy of the sacred text according to the authorized version.

3. Not only have the Marginal References throughout been revised with the utmost care, but it will be found that the Author has inserted, in the Notes and Practical Observations, frequent references to other parts of his Commentary. To this improvement he attached considerable importance: and its value will, no doubt, be felt by those readers, who may bestow sufficient pains upon the subject to enter into his design.—The student may be advantageously referred to the Book of Proverbs for a specimen of this addition to the work.

4. But the most important improvement, which it has received, consists in the copious critical remarks which have been introduced. Many of these occur in the Old Testament, in all which the original words, in Hebrew characters, pointed, have been substituted for the English letters, by which they had been before expressed, wherever anything of the kind occurred. In the New Testament these remarks are numerous. Here also new authorities are adduced in support of the criticisms which had been previously made, particularly from Schleusner, to whose valuable Lexicon of the Greek Testament the Author was indebted for much assistance.—The critical remarks, it is also to be observed, are now uniformly carried to the end of the note, instead of being interspersed in the body of it.



*The Names and Order of all the Books of the Old and New Testament.*

OLD TESTAMENT.

Genesis <i>hath Chapters</i> .....	50	Ecclesiastes.....	12
Exodus .....	40	The Song of Solomon .....	8
Leviticus .....	27	Isaiah .....	66
Numbers .....	36	Jeremiah .....	52
Deuteronomy .....	34	Lamentations .....	5
Joshua .....	24	Ezekiel .....	48
Judges .....	21	Daniel .....	12
Ruth .....	4	Hosea .....	14
I. Samuel .....	31	Joel .....	3
II. Samuel .....	24	Amos .....	9
I. Kings .....	22	Obadiah .....	1
II. Kings .....	25	Jonah .....	4
I. Chronicles .....	29	Micah .....	7
II. Chronicles .....	36	Nahum .....	3
Ezra .....	10	Habakkuk .....	3
Nehemiah .....	13	Zephaniah .....	3
Esther .....	10	Haggai.....	2
Job .....	42	Zechariah .....	14
Psalms .....	150	Malachi .....	4
Proverbs .....	31		

NEW TESTAMENT.

Matthew <i>hath Chapters</i> .....	28	I. Timothy .....	6
Mark .....	16	II. Timothy .....	4
Luke .....	24	Titus .....	3
John .....	21	Philemon .....	1
The Acts.....	28	The Hebrews .....	13
Epistle to the Romans .....	16	The Epistle of James.....	5
I. Corinthians.....	16	I. Peter .....	5
II. Corinthians .....	13	II. Peter .....	3
Galatians.....	6	I. John .....	5
Ephesians .....	6	II. John .....	1
Philippians .....	4	III. John.....	1
Colossians .....	4	Jude.....	1
I. Thessalonians .....	5	Revelation .....	22
II. Thessalonians .....	3		



# INTRODUCTION

## TO THE OLD TESTAMENT, AND TO THE BOOKS OF MOSES.

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IT does not appear, that the distinction of the two parts of the sacred Scripture by the appellations of the Old Testament and the New Testament, is of divine authority; though it is of very ancient use in the Christian Church. The original word, both in the Hebrew, and in the Greek, rendered *Testament*, in this connexion, is more generally rendered *Covenant*, and perhaps ought always to be so.\* It refers to the condescending manner, in which it has pleased God to deal with men, by covenant-transactions and engagements: and not merely by commands and sanctions. *The covenant of works*, as distinguished from *the covenant of grace*, does not seem to be intended by “the Old Testament:” for the covenant of grace and mercy was introduced, immediately after the fall of Adam, by the promise that “the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head:” the hopes of believers in every age have arisen from that source alone: and all unbelievers, even under the Christian Dispensation, remain under the condemnation of that covenant, which Adam transgressed; the terms of which are simply, ‘Do this and live; transgress and die.’—But of the covenant of mercy and grace, there have been, so to speak, several editions; yet that which Christianity has made known to mankind, is by far the most full, clear, and enlarged. Above four hundred years after God had established his covenant with Abraham, as ‘the father of the faithful,’ (which the apostle refers to, as the same in substance, as that made with Christians under the gospel,†) it pleased him to make a covenant with Israel, as a nation, at mount Sinai. The Mosaical dispensation, and the writings of the prophets, chiefly related to that period, during which this national covenant was in force; and the prophets themselves speak of the change, which would take place in the days of the Messiah, as “a new covenant,” distinguishing it from that which was made with Israel when brought out of Egypt. This, St. Paul says, “waxed old and was ready to vanish away.”‡—At the opening of the Christian dispensation, these predictions were fulfilled: and as the writings of the apostles and evangelists relate principally to the dealings of God with his church, in the days of the Messiah, the “Mediator of the new covenant;” this part of the sacred volume has received the appellation of ‘the New Testament,’ or *New Covenant*; and that part which was published before his coming, is called the Old Testament, or *Covenant*.—Thus they are distinguished from, but are by no means opposed to, each other. The same discoveries of the glorious God, and the same views of true religion, pervade both. They reciprocally establish the authority and illustrate the meaning of each other: and even those parts of the Mosaick Law, which we are not now required to obey as commands, are replete with important instruction.—In short, the whole is the unerring WORD OF GOD.

\* Note, Heb. ix. 15—17.

† Notes, Gal. iii. 15—29.

‡ Notes, Ex. xix. 5. Jer. xxxi. 31—34. Heb. viii. 7—13.

## INTRODUCTION.

The Preface to each of the books of Moses, with which the sacred Volume opens, renders it superfluous to add much in this place respecting them *collectively*. They are generally in the New Testament, as well as in uninspired writers, called “the Law;” as distinguished from the other parts of the Old Testament. Yet a great proportion of them is historical; they contain several most extraordinary prophecies; \* and some devotional compositions, exquisitely sublime and beautiful. † If the single book of Job be excepted, (and concerning it there are different opinions, ‡) the books of Moses are, beyond comparison, the most ancient writings extant; and certainly by far the most ancient authentick records. Immediate revelation alone could make known to the writer, or to those from whom he had his information, very many of those events which he records: and on this account, the Author of this publication is at least *doubtful*, whether the endeavours, which many persons have used, to shew how, by tradition or other similar means. Moses might receive the knowledge of the facts which he narrates, are of salutary tendency. For instance, Adam could not know the particulars of the creation of the world, or of his own creation, except by immediate revelation. Adam might indeed make these things known to Methusaleh, Methusaleh to Shem, Shem to Isaac, Isaac to Levi, or Amram, and Amram to Moses: I am not sure, that the chain might not be made shorter, by a link or two. But does it *strengthen*, or does it not rather greatly *weaken*, the proof, or rather the *impression*, of the divine original of the Mosaick History; to suppose that it was derived from traditional revelation, handed down from father to son, through a few generations; rather than from a revelation made directly from God to Moses? Nothing is conveyed down by oral tradition, without alteration and deviation: Moses informs us, that “God spake with him face to face:” the prophecies extant in his books, compared with their accomplishment during three thousand years, as fully confirm his testimony to us, as his miracles did to his contemporaries: and the simplest as well as the most ancient method of stating the case, is the most rational. Whatever he might have known or collected otherwise, he wrote under the infallible superintendency of the Holy Spirit, or by immediate divine inspiration.

\* Notes, Gen. ix. 24—27. xii. 1—3. xvi. 12 xxvii. 27—29. xlix. 8—12. Num. xxiv. 17—24. Deut. iv. 25—28. xxviii. 15—68.

† Notes, Ex. xv 1—21. Deut. xxxii. 1—43.

‡ Preface to Book of Job.





# THE FIRST BOOK OF MOSES,

CALLED

## GENESIS.

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THE original Hebrew distinguishes this Book merely by the first word of it, viz. בְּרֵאשִׁית, or *In the beginning*: but the Greek translation, called the Septuagint, names it GENESIS, *The Beginning*, or *Original*; that is *of the world*.—The sacred historian first records the creation of the heaven and the earth, the formation of Adam and Eve after the image of God, and the institution of marriage. He then relates how “sin entered into the world, and death by sin;” and how the first promise of a Redeemer was given to our fallen progenitors.—He next illustrates the effects of the fall; which were manifested in the conduct of Cain, who murdered righteous Abel his brother, and in the general and almost universal prevalence of wickedness; and he likewise illustrates the power of divine grace in the examples of Abel, Enoch, and Noah.—A few hints are dropt concerning some of Cain’s descendants, and their inventions and actions; but a genealogy of the descendants of Seth to Noah, with the age to which each person lived who is mentioned in the genealogy, is carefully given.—At length, at the end of 1656 years, the Lord, provoked by man’s wickedness, desolated the earth by a flood of waters, preserving his servant Noah and his wife, with his three sons and their wives, in the ark; of which extraordinary catastrophe all nations retain some traditions and vestiges. The re-peopling of the earth by the descendants of Noah’s sons is next recorded: and the genealogy is continued from Shem, in the line of Abraham, to Jacob and his sons.—Indeed, this narrative, though very compendious, throws more light on the original of nations and on many coincident subjects, than can be obtained from all other records of antiquity taken together: and its agreement with such as have the greatest claim to authenticity, conclusively proves that it gives a true account of those ancient times, which the pagan historians had only heard of by obscure tradition, and which they mutilated, or blended with most absurd fables; while the interspersed prophecies, fulfilling through all succeeding generations even to the present day, fully attest its divine inspiration. (*Notes*, xii. 1—3. xlviii. xlix.) Many particulars indeed, in this part of the history, must be beyond the investigation of the unlearned: but the founding of Nineveh and Babylon, two of the greatest cities the world ever saw; the source of the vast variety of languages, which has in all ages interrupted the intercourse of mankind; and the original of the two most remarkable people which have ever appeared on earth, namely, the Jews and the Ishmaelites, are clearly and satisfactorily shewn. Important information is also given concerning the Moabites, Ammonites, Midianites, Edomites or Idumeans, all descended from Abraham. The most ancient war known to genuine history is here recorded; and the awful destruction of Sodom and the neighbouring cities, as producing the Dead Sea, the peculiarities of which have always excited the attention of travellers.—The mass of interesting historical materials contained in this wonderful Book, concerning those remote ages of which we have no other even plausible records, must ever render it an invaluable treasure of ancient erudition to the sober scholar. But the copiousness with which the history of Abraham, “the father of the faithful,” the repository of the promises, and the ancestor of Christ, is given, with that of Isaac and Jacob the heirs of the same promises, shews what is deemed most important by him, whose “judgment is according to truth:” and the story of Joseph exceeds applause, being inimitably written, and unparalleled in the annals of the world.—The impartiality also of the sacred historian, in recording the imperfections of the most approved characters, though his own ancestors; and the strong expressions of abhorrence, with which he marks the crime of his immediate progenitor Levi, are worthy of an inspired writer, and hitherto almost entirely peculiar to the Scriptures. The narrative is thus continued to the death of Joseph, about 713 years after the deluge, or 2369 from the creation. And the important religious instruction contained in this book, concerning God our Creator, our fallen condition, the promise of a Saviour, and the redeemed sinner’s walk with God, must more endear it to the pious Christian, than all its immense and invaluable literary treasures can possibly recommend it to the learned antiquary or historian.—‘Without this history the world would be in total darkness, not knowing whence it came or whither it goeth. In the first page of this sacred book, a child may learn more in one hour, than all the philosophers in the world learned without it in thousands of years.’ Fuller.

## CHAP. I.

God creates heaven and earth, 1; forms the light, and the firmament, 2—8; separates the dry land from the waters, and produces the vegetable tribes, 9—13; forms the sun, moon, and stars, 14—19; causes the waters to produce fishes and fowls; and the earth to bring forth cattle, wild beasts, and creeping things, 20—25; creates man in his own image; blesses him; gives him dominion; grants the fruits of the earth for food; and pronounces the whole “very good,” 26—31.

Prov. viii. 22, 23. John i. 1—3. Heb. i. 10. 1 John i. 1. Job xxxviii. 4. Ps. lxxxix. 11, 12. ci. 25. cxlvi. 6. cxlviii. 4, 5. Is. xl. 26. xlii. 5. xlv. 24. li. 13. Jer. xxxiii. 17. li. 15. Zech. xii. 1. Acts xiv. 15. xvii. 24. Rom. i. 20. Col. i. 16. Heb. iii. 4. xii. 3. Rev. iv. 11. x. 6.

**IN** <sup>a</sup>the beginning <sup>b</sup>God created the heaven and the earth.

## NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. It is natural and unavoidable for us, who are but of yesterday, to enquire about those things which have been before us, and to form conjectures even about the original of all things: but our reason is evidently incompetent to enquiries of this kind; and uncertainty, contrariety, and absurdity, always bewildered the wisest of the heathens on this subject. However rational it is to conclude, that all things were at first created by the eternal, self-existent, and almighty God; yet man has in every age lamentably failed of drawing this conclusion: and after all, it is “by faith we understand that the worlds “were framed by the word of God; so that things, which “are seen, were not made of things which do appear:” Heb. xi. 3. Reason is indeed capable of approving, appropriating, and applying, the information conveyed to us by the word of God, but not of anticipating it. The knowledge imparted by revelation is useful and necessary: but nothing is mentioned about ‘eternity *a parte ante*,’ (a past eternity,) that abyss which swallows up all our thought, and involves all our reflections and discourse in inextricable perplexity; for this could only have gratified curiosity, and increased our stock of barren notions. The Scriptures, in perfect harmony with the conclusions of our reason when soberly exercised, declare that God is “from ever—“lasting to everlasting.” (*Marg. Ref. Note, Ex. iii. 14.*) All else had a beginning. With this the inspired historian opens his narration, and, in most sublime abruptness, breaks forth, “In the beginning:” as if he had said, ‘This, O man, is enough for thee to know; here stop thy presumptuous enquiry; call back thy intruding thoughts from things too high for thee, and learn to adore thy Creator.’—The Scriptures are especially intended to teach us “the knowledge of God,” which is done, in the manner best suited to inform and affect us, by recording his works. From the creation of the world, we learn “his eternal power and Godhead;” and discern, in the things which he hath made, his infinite wisdom and goodness: while the simplicity and harmony, subsisting in the midst of the richest variety, lead the mind in the easiest manner, to conceive of the Creator, as “the ONE LIVING “and TRUE GOD.”—It is well known that the original word, commonly translated God, is plural, in a language which has three numbers; and that *when thus used* it is joined to singular verbs. The Hebrew seems to have been at least a dialect of the original language; and it is evident

2 And the earth was <sup>c</sup>without form, and void, and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep: <sup>d</sup>and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

3 ¶ And <sup>e</sup>God said, ‘Let there be light: and there was light.’

4 And God saw the light, <sup>f</sup>that it was good: and God <sup>g</sup>divided the light from the darkness.

5 And God called the light <sup>h</sup>Day, and the darkness he called Night. <sup>i</sup>And the evening and the morning were the first day.

c Jer. iv. 22. Nah. ii. 10. d Job xxi. 12. Ps. xxxiii. 6. civ. 30. Is. xl. 12, 13. e Ps. xciii. 9. Matt. viii. 3. John xi. 43, 44. f 2 Cor. iv. 6. Eph. v. 14. g (0. 12. 18. 25. 31. Ec. ii. 13. xi. 7. Heb. Between the light and between the darkness. h Ps. lxxiv. 16. civ. 20. Is. xiv. 7. i Heb. And the evening was, and the morning was. 8. 13. 19. 23. 31.

that the Lord made choice of it, for the first written revelation of himself to man: so that this grammatical anomaly, at the very opening of the Scriptures, seems intended to give us some intimation concerning that mystery, which is afterwards more fully revealed; namely, the *Plurality* in the *Unity* of the Godhead. It would indeed be improper to rest a doctrine, which is of such importance in the Christian system, on these intimations; yet this should not be rejected as a mere verbal criticism.—God created the heaven and the earth, or the whole universe, visible and invisible. The word *heaven* is sometimes used in Scripture for that place, where the divine glory is especially displayed, and where angels and happy spirits have their residence; at other times for the boundless expanse, in which the sun, moon, and stars are placed; and at others for the circumambient air, even to the very surface of the earth; it must therefore be interpreted as the context requires.—This general account warrants no conclusions respecting the angels, or the inhabitants of other systems, except that they are all the creatures of God. But this visible world was formed in six days.—The chaotick mass seems to have been first instantaneously created out of nothing, and then gradually reduced to order and beauty.

V. 2. The matter, from which this earth, and the solar system connected with it, were created, was at first a confused mass of component elements, *without form*; and void, empty, or destitute of plants, trees, or animals; and it was covered with thick darkness resting on the abyss, or the unformed chaos, till dispersed by the agency of “the Spirit of God;” to which the subsequent effects are ascribed, by a remarkable word, taken from the manner in which the fowls brood on and hatch their eggs. Thus, at the very first opening of the Sacred Volume, we have an intimation of that divine Spirit, whose influence and operations form so conspicuous and distinguishing a part of Revelation: for, as the efficient cause of the creation, “He moved upon the surface of the waters.”—Let the impartial reader here turn his attention to those texts of the New Testament, which expressly ascribe all creation to Jesus Christ, the Son and Word of God: and, comparing them with this account of the agency of the Spirit in creation and with those Scriptures which declare that God created all things; he must allow, that, from the beginning of the Bible, there is a real foundation for the doctrine of three divine Persons in the unity of the Godhead.

V. 3—5. The sublimity of the language, here used,

14. 20. vii. 11, 12. **6 ¶** And God said, 'Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

**7** And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament, from the waters which *were* 'above the firmament: " and it was so.

**8** And " God called the firmament Heaven: ° And the evening and the morning were the second day.

**9 ¶** And God said, 'Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry-land appear: and it was so.

**10** And God called the dry-land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: 'and God saw that *it was good*.

**11** And God said, 'Let the earth bring forth 'grass, the herb yielding

seed, *and* the fruit-tree yielding 'fruit after his kind, whose seed *is* in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

**12** And 'the earth brought forth grass, *and* " herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed *was* in itself, after his kind: and God saw that *it was good*.

**13** And the evening and the morning were the third day.

**14 ¶** And God said, 'Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide 'the day from the night: 'and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

**15** And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

**16** And God made two great lights; the greater light 'to 'rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: *he made* the stars also.

has been universally admired by men of learning and taste; and indeed the simplicity of the whole narrative is unspeakably more majestick, than those studied ornaments which are generally employed and admired.—Before the formation of the sun, moon, and stars, there was, in some way which we cannot explain or understand, a regular succession of light and darkness on the chaotick *mass*, which thus measured out "the first day." "God saw the light "that it was good;" good in itself, and admirably adapted to the benefit of his creatures.—How wonderful and inexplicable is light! How indispensably necessary to all the purposes of human life!

V. 6—8. The word, translated *firmament*, and *expansion*, (*Marg.*) is used for the whole space which surrounds the earth, even to the fixed stars, which are "set in the "firmament of heaven;" as "the fowls" are said "to fly "in the open firmament of heaven;" and "he called the "firmament, heaven."—It must therefore be understood according to the context: but it is generally in this place interpreted to mean the atmosphere, or air, in which the clouds are suspended, and from which they water the earth.

V. 9. The waters, being separated from the dry ground, which they had hitherto overspread, or been mixed with, were divided into those "under the firmament," which are deposited in the oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, brooks, fountains, and subterraneous receptacles; and those "above "the firmament," which are suspended in the air, form the clouds, and descend in rains and dews.—Instead of attempting a further explanation of the terms here used, I would rather call the reader's attention to the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, displayed in this part of creation. In the vast reservoir of the oceans and seas, the waters are treasured up, being preserved from putridity by their saltness and incessant motion. These facilitate commerce and friendly intercourse betwixt distant nations,

supply immense quantities of wholesome provisions, and are in many ways serviceable to mankind. From them originally, by various modes of conveyance, the whole earth is supplied with water, which is rendered fresh and fit for use, and communicated in the gentlest method. With this all living creatures "quench their thirst;" by this the surface of the earth is thus rendered fertile, and all the purposes of cleanliness are answered: and the same waters, continually returning to the sea, by brooks and rivers, enrich and beautify the adjacent countries, and confer manifold benefits upon mankind through the whole of their course.

V. 10. It is observable that God himself gave names to those creatures, over which Adam could not exercise dominion; but left him to give names to the rest.—Without doubt, the original names were expressive of the nature of the creatures.

V. 11, 12. Hitherto the whole was inert and lifeless: but the vegetable system was next produced, in all its varied and numerous tribes, for the use of man and beast: and each was created with the surprising power of propagating, and multiplying almost infinitely, its peculiar species, by seeds, often very minute, and scarcely discernible from each other; and yet never failing to produce plants of the same species as those from which they sprang, each after his kind! "God has secured the seeds of all plants with 'singular care; some of them being defended by a double, 'nay, a triple inclosure.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Thus creation is still carried on from year to year; and, in an incomprehensible manner, the earth is filled with the riches and liberality of the Lord!

V. 14—19. By the word of the omnipotent Creator the light was, as it were, treasured up in the heavenly orbs, (as water is in the seas;) and with it warmth and fertility have ever since been conveyed to the different regions of the globe; while, by the regular circuits of the celestial

a 12. 3. Ps. viii. 1.  
Acta xiii. 47.

17 And God <sup>a</sup> set them in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth;

18 And to rule over the day, and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness; and God saw that *it was* good.

19 And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

b 22 ii. 19. viii. 17.  
Ps. civ. 24, 25.  
cxviii. 10. Acta  
xvii. 25.

c Or, *creeping*  
1 Kings iv. 33.  
† Heb. *a living*  
soul. 30. Ec. iii  
21.

‡ Heb. *let fowl fly*.  
§ Heb. *face of the*  
*firmament*  
*heaven*. 7. 14.

¶ Job vii. 12. xxi. 5.  
Ps. civ. 26.  
Ez. xxxii. 2.  
Jon. i. 17. ii. 10.  
Matt. xii. 40.

d viii. 17. ix. 7.  
Ex. i. 7. viii. 3.  
e 18. 25. 31.

20 ¶ And God said, <sup>b</sup> Let the waters bring forth abundantly the <sup>a</sup> moving creature that hath <sup>†</sup> life, and <sup>‡</sup> fowl *that* may fly above the earth in the <sup>§</sup> open firmament of heaven.

21 And God created <sup>a</sup> great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters <sup>d</sup> brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: <sup>e</sup> and God saw that *it was* good.

22 And God blessed them, saying, <sup>g</sup> Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.

23 And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

24 ¶ And God said, <sup>g</sup> Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.

25 And God <sup>b</sup> made the beast of the earth after his kind: and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that *it was* good.

26 ¶ And God said, <sup>h</sup> Let us make man <sup>k</sup> in our image, after our likeness: and let them <sup>i</sup> have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the

g 28. viii. 17. ix. 1.  
xxx. 27. 30. xxxv.  
11. Lev. xxvii. 9.  
Ps. cvii. 38.

g vi. 20. vii. 14.  
viii. 19. Job  
xxxviii. 39. 40.  
xxxix. i. 5. 9.  
19. xl. 15. Ps. i.  
9. 10. civ. 18—  
23. cxlviii. 10.

h ii. 19. 20. Job  
xii. 8—10. xxvii.  
13.

i iii. 22. xl. 7.  
John v. 17. xiv.  
23.

k v. 1. ix. 6. Ec.  
vii. 29. Acta  
xvii. 28. 29.  
1 Cor. xii. 7.  
2 Cor. iii. 18. iv.  
4. Eph. iv. 24.  
Col. i. 15. iii. 10  
Jam. iii. 9.

l 2. 3. Job v.  
13. Ps. viii. 4—8  
civ. 20—24. Jer.  
xxvii. 6. Heb.  
ii. 9—9. Jam.  
iii. 7.

bodies, time is measured out for our convenience in various respects. 'By times are meant the spring, summer, autumn, and winter; and by consequence, the seasons for plowing, sowing, planting, pruning, reaping, vintage, sailing; and by a swift motion round in twenty-four hours, to make a day; and by a longer to make years, and the grateful variety of seasons.' Bp. Patrick.—The moon is undoubtedly an opaque body, much smaller than the primary planets; and it is with great probability supposed, that the fixed stars are lights themselves, immensely large: yet the moon is here called a *great light* in distinction from the stars; which proves that the sacred writers were not inspired to speak of natural things with philosophical exactness; but were left to use popular language, and to discourse of them according to their appearance. As a light *to us*, with reference to whom the sacred writer speaks, the moon is greater than the stars: and indeed a modern Astronomer, when not purposely expressing himself *scientifically*, would use similar language. Ignorance or error in these respects is not fatal, and the most exact knowledge is *comparatively* of small value: "Unto man" he said, Behold, the fear of the LORD, that is wisdom; "and to depart from evil, is understanding." Job xxviii. 28.

V. 20—25. The earth, reduced to order and beauty, replenished with vegetable treasures, and lighted up with unspeakable splendour, had yet remained destitute of inhabitants: but in these verses we have a concise account of the formation of the various species of animals, which inhabit the waters, the air, and the dry land. The similarity between fishes and birds, in the general manner of producing their young, and moving in their respective elements, is supposed to mark the common original of both from the waters. (ii. 19.) The word rendered *whales* may include all the large inhabitants of seas and rivers.—A very superficial acquaintance with the numerous tribes of animals, of different sizes, immensely large, or invisibly minute; their distinct modes of existence, in different elements and on different sustenance; the surprising exact-

ness and kind contrivance, with which the organized body in every species is formed; and the various ways in which they subserve the use and pleasure of man; may suffice to shew us that we have abundant reason to admire and adore the great Creator: while the nature of life itself, and its production, continuance, and propagation, in every distinct species, forms a very proper subject for our speculations; if we would be convinced how incomprehensible the works of God are, and how ignorant man is.—The great Creator had no occasion minutely to enumerate his works, in order to display his glory; though *we* may properly descend to the minute investigation of them. There is therefore no particular mention here made of many things, which are to us of the greatest importance. The air, which modern experiments have evinced to be of absolute necessity to animal and vegetable life, and in which surprising traces of divine wisdom and goodness are discovered, is not particularly mentioned; though doubtless it is implied in the general term *expansion*. (6. Marg.) While the surface of the earth is constantly replenished with vegetable riches, and inhabited by useful animals; underneath it most valuable treasures are stored up, placed thus out of our way, but not out of our reach. "O LORD, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches."

V. 26, 27. The language, here used, is that of *consultation*, and not of *deliberation* only; and it intimates far more than the superior excellency and dignity of the creature about to be formed. It is not to be conceived, that the infinite God, by speaking in the plural number, should employ a language assumed by many princes; which is indeed, as thus used, more ostentatious than dignified. But it is still more intolerable to suppose, that the eternal God addressed any of his own creatures, as fellow-workers with him in the creation of man. Yet these seem the only expedients for interpreting this language, which can be adopted, by those who allow the divine inspiration of the whole Scripture, and still refuse their assent to the

air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 So God created man in his *own* m ii. 21—25, v. 2. Mal. ii. 15. Matt. xix. 4. Mark x. 6. 1 Cor. xi. 8, 9. image; in the image of God created he him; <sup>m</sup> male and female created he them.

doctrine of the Trinity: whereas, admit this doctrine to be scriptural, and the expressions are suitable, natural, and need little explanation. The three Persons in the sacred Trinity at first concurred, in counsel and operation, in the creation of man, as afterwards in his recovery from the fall. And let it not be said, that, in avoiding one difficulty, we run ourselves into another and a greater; for it can never be shewn impossible, that the same infinite Being should be *Three* in one respect, and *One* in another. We know, and it is absurd to deny it, that the soul and body are distinct substances; yet they form one man, who is *two* in one respect, and *one* in another: but who can comprehend the bond of union betwixt his own soul and body, or explain how they mutually operate on each other? And if we are incomprehensible to ourselves, how should it be possible for us to comprehend our great Creator? This indeed seems the limitation of human knowledge: by experiments the natural philosopher discovers, that things are *so*, and have *such* and *such* properties and powers; but *how* and *why* they are *so* and *operate* as they do, remains still an impenetrable secret. The process of nature in vegetation, from a grain of corn being cast in the earth until the gathering of harvest, is no more comprehensible by us than the doctrine of the Trinity; and he who will believe no more than he can comprehend, must, to be consistent, question his own existence. The authenticated testimony of God is surely as sufficient to establish the *doctrine*, as to its truth and certainty, in matters of revelation; as experiments are to establish the *fact* in philosophy: and the *manner how* is no more matter of *faith* in the one case, than of *science* in the other; nor are the difficulties greater, except as infinity exceeds the grasp of our finite capacities.

The great Creator said, “Let us make man, in our image, after our likeness.” The expression is doubled and varied, that it may the more engage our attention, and ensure our belief. This image and likeness of God cannot be in the body; for God is a *Spirit*, which no bodily shape can in any respect resemble. We must therefore look for it in the rational soul. Even in the present state of human nature, the soul of man bears some faint resemblance to its Maker: the understanding, memory, and imagination, in their several operations, exhibit a faint shadow of the divine wisdom and knowledge; the will, as exciting and directing our activity in all respects, bears a similitude to the almighty effects of the divine volitions, and shews that *mind* can act on *matter* in some inexplicable manner; nay, conscience, in the exercise of her dictatorial and judicial functions, gives a feeble reflection of the justice and holiness of the Judge of all: whilst the derived and dependent immortality of the human soul reminds us of Him who is self-existent and eternal. But fallen angels, who possess these powers in a higher degree, are never said to bear the image of God; and few places in Scripture can be fairly interpreted of *fallen* man’s being like his Maker, till renewed by divine grace. There must then be a nobler sense, in which Adam was formed in the image and likeness of God.—No adequate conception indeed can be formed of man’s

primæval state and powers, from the brief account given of him in Scripture. But we may also avail ourselves of the revelation given us, concerning the moral attributes of God; we may contemplate the character of Jesus Christ, who in human nature displayed the divine image in full perfection; we may examine the moral law which describes, and the Christian’s character, which, being “renewed in knowledge,” “righteousness, and true holiness,” exemplifies, the image of God. And the expression *renewed*, implies that it is the same image which sin had defaced. (*Marg. Ref. k.*) From these sources of information satisfactory conclusions may be deduced. God alone can have perfect, infallible, immutable knowledge: but Adam was created after the divine image, both in the capacity of receiving, and in the disposition of heart to entertain, true knowledge; and he actually possessed, from the gift of God, a right understanding and a competent knowledge of his Creator, of himself, of his own situation, his duty, his interests, his obligations to obedience, and the odious nature and evil consequences of disobedience.—In these and similar concerns, we may be assured, that he knew and judged according to the knowledge and judgment of his Maker; though not *infallibly* or *immutablely*.—Resulting from this state of his understanding and judgment, he doubtless possessed a disposition to value or condemn, to approve or disapprove, to love or detest, every object which presented itself to his mind, according to its real excellency, worthlessness, or hatefulness.—In such a state of the heart, that is, of the judgment, will, and affections, the divine image evidently must consist: and we may thence certainly infer, that in these things Adam resembled his Maker. Knowledge in a creature must be limited; error may follow, and thence a change of judgment and heart may be induced; that is, a holy creature may fall, and become unholy: but imperfection in the *original disposition of the heart*, supposes the creature to be formed unholy, and is inconsistent with its being created after the image of God.—We determine then, that the image of God, in which Adam was created, consisted in an understanding prepared to imbibe true knowledge, a judgment free from corrupt bias, a will disposed to obedience, and affections regulated according to reason and truth: nor can we conceive that it could consist in any thing else. From such a state of mind, godliness, in all its internal exercises and external expressions, righteousness, truth, benevolence, purity, and an exact regulation and government of every appetite and passion, must necessarily result, and every duty to God and man be constantly and delightfully performed. The same disposition would ensure belief of every truth which God should afterwards reveal, obedience to every precept which he should enjoin, a cordial acceptance of every proposal which he should make, and admiration of every discovery of the divine glory at any time vouchsafed: and could it have been possible for man to sin, without losing the divine image, it would have disposed him to repent; and, with faith, love, and joy, to receive the Mediator in whom believers trust; and to exercise all those graces, and practise all those duties, which spring from the character of a redeemed sinner.—

28 And <sup>a</sup> God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that <sup>\*</sup> moveth upon the earth.

29 ¶ And God said, Behold, <sup>o</sup> I have given you every herb <sup>†</sup> bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit

of a tree yielding seed: <sup>†</sup> to you it shall be for meat.

30 And <sup>a</sup> to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is* <sup>†</sup> life, *I have given* every green herb for meat: and it was so.

31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was* <sup>†</sup> very good. <sup>\*</sup> And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Man, thus created in the divine image, was constituted ruler over the other creatures. This dominion has been frequently termed a part of the divine image: but it seems more natural, to consider the capacity for exercising dominion as the result of that image; and that the actual grant of dominion was made to man, in consequence of that capacity, and as shadowing forth the sovereignty of God over all his works. The subjection of the animals, had not sin entered, would doubtless have been far more entire and voluntary, and the exercise of man's authority far more benign and gentle, than they are at present. For man is now, too generally, a severe tyrant over the animals, which are within his reach and under his power; and many creatures seem to have shaken off, or fled from, his abused dominion.

V. 28. It appears from this verse, that both the man and the woman were created on the sixth day; and that the subsequent account is only a more circumstantial recapitulation of the interesting event.—The beneficent Creator, having formed them with capacities for enjoyment, and furnished them with all things externally conducive to it, assured them of his favour and blessing, to consummate their felicity and secure its continuance: and it is probable Adam was taught to expect, that, after a term of probation upon earth, he and his descendants, if they persevered in obedience, would be translated into heaven, or favoured with some confirmation in happiness equivalent to it. The increase of the human species formed a part of the Creator's benediction; and, had not sin entered, it would have been a progressive communication and multiplication of endless felicity.—In this method creation is still carried on, and the divine perfections are exercised and displayed in the continuance, as well as in the first production, of the creatures; though the former excites little surprise, because custom leads us to expect it.

V. 29, 30. Our wants and inclinations give us no right to use the creatures of God, however suitable they may be to supply and gratify them: the grant of the great Proprietor alone confers it. In this grant the animals are joined, as equally entitled to provision from the Creator's bounty.—Animal food seems not to have been generally allowed, till after the flood, or to have been desired or thought of before the fall. But it is not certain, either that no part of the sacrifices offered after that event were eaten, or that a rebellious race did not *take the liberty* of using animal food, before it was *granted* them.

V. 31. *Very good.*] Each production of creative power had before been pronounced *good*:—but after man's creation, the whole was declared to be *very good*. A superior

excellency, from an harmonious connexion of perfect parts in one perfect whole, was produced by each part deriving beauty from, and reflecting beauty upon the rest: and the creation of man, the image and vicegerent of his Maker, the only worshipper in this august temple, who in reasonable adoration might render him the glory of the whole, completed the design, and stamped it “very good.”—The perfections of God are worthy of being exercised, displayed, contemplated, admired, and adored. Man was formed capable of perceiving that manifested glory, of rendering the tribute of vocal praise, and of finding felicity in his Maker's worship and love: this was well pleasing to the Lord, who was most perfectly satisfied with his work, “while the morning-stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” Thus the creation of the heaven and the earth was completed in six days, which doubtless the Creator could have effected in an instant; but he deemed it more suited to his majesty and wisdom to do it gradually, and by progressive advances; that we, leisurely contemplating these wonders, might note more carefully the glories displayed in them; and, seeing each majestically rise superior to all that went before, might be more suitably affected with admiring gratitude, and excited to adoring praise.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The account given us in this chapter, of the Author and Original of all things, is so rational, satisfactory, and sublime; and the visible creation, as it subsists at this day, displays such wise contrivance, powerful operation, and beneficent attention to the wants and welfare of all creatures; that atheists, and all others who, with the Bible in their hands, and the creation before their eyes, “honour not the Creator as God, neither are thankful,” must be for ever left without excuse: and infidelity and impiety must at length manifestly appear to be as absurd and foolish, as they are wicked.—The Creator of all things is, without controversy, the sole Proprietor and sovereign Lord of all. Our very bodies and souls are his, and not our own; for “he made us, and not we ourselves.” He has therefore an undoubted right to dispose of us, and of all creatures, as he pleases. To him an account must be rendered of the use which we make of all his gifts: nor should we ever allow ourselves to lose sight of this important truth; which is suited, not only to restrain us from abusing the work and gift of God in the practice of sin, but also to quicken us in employing all that we possess and enjoy, in the service of our liberal Benefactor. We should also accustom ourselves, to contemplate his glory in every object

## CHAP. II.

The sabbath is instituted, 1—3. Farther particulars concerning the production of the vegetables, and the creation of man, 4—7. The garden of Eden, how planted, and where situated, 8—14; man is placed in it; and permitted to eat of the fruit, with a solemn interdiction of one tree, 15—17. The animals are named by Adam; and an account given of the creation of woman, and the institution of marriage, 18—25.

a 4. i. 1. Ps. civ. 2  
Is. xiv. 18. iv.  
9. Is. xv. 17. Heb.  
iv. 3.

b Deut. iv. 19.  
xvii. 3. 2 Kings  
xxi. 3—5. Ps.  
xcviii. 6. Is. xl.  
26—28. xlv. 12  
Jer. viii. 2. Luke  
ii. 18. Acts vii.  
42.

c i. 31. John v.  
17.

THUS the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

2 And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made:

and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

3 And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made.

4 ¶ These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth, when they were created: in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens;

5 And every plant of the field, before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field, before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain

d Ex. xvi. 22—30.  
xx. 8—11. xxxi.  
13—17. xxxv. 2.  
3. Lev. xxv. 2.  
3. Deut. v. 12—  
14. Neh. ix. 14.  
xiii. 15—22. Is.  
lvi. 2—7. lviii.  
13, 14. Jer. xvii.  
21—27. Mark ii.  
27. Heb. iv. 4—  
10.  
e Heb. created to  
make.  
f v. 1. x. 1. xi.  
10. xxxv. 12. 19  
xxxvi. 1. 9. Ex.  
vi. 16.  
g i. 12.

h Job v. 10.  
xxxviii. 26—28.  
Ps. lxxv. 9—11.  
Jer. xiv. 22.  
Matt. v. 45.

which we behold, and to taste his bounty in all our comforts and enjoyments. As our obligations are so vast, his largest demands of love, worship, and service, are perfectly reasonable: yet, tried by this plain rule, our own hearts must certainly condemn our past and present conduct.—In our own private history, as well as in that of the world through every age, we may read what havoc sin has made in the creation of God, once by infallible wisdom pronounced “very good;” especially in man, created in his own image and likeness! Let us then bless his name for the Gospel of Christ; and take warning from the consideration of the almighty power of that God against whom we have sinned, (the stupendous effects of which we have been contemplating,) to “flee from the wrath to come,” and to seek reconciliation to him, that his powerful arm may be employed for our salvation, and not for our destruction. And what deliverances, supports, and consolations may we not expect, in our greatest distresses and perils, from the most powerful enemies; if the omnipotent Creator be our Father and our Friend? Being thus rendered victorious over all our enemies, and new created unto the image of God in holiness; we shall at length obtain admission into the “new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

## NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1. *Host.*] All the parts of the visible creation occupy their proper places, like soldiers in a well-disciplined host, or army: so that number and variety connect with regularity and beauty, and conduce to the perfection of the whole. (*Marg. Ref.*)—The sacred historian, having given a brief account of the orderly production of all things, explains in this chapter some particulars more fully, which would otherwise have interrupted the order of his narration.

V. 2. The Lord was pleased to complete his design, just when the sixth day ended and the seventh commenced; and then he rested from all his work: not that the exertion of creating power had caused weariness, or that his rest was inactivity; for he still upholds, preserves, renovates, and governs the whole; in which sense Christ says, “The Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” But he ceased from creating, and added no more; and he rejoiced with perfect satisfaction in the whole, as worthy of himself and manifesting his glory.

V. 3. The sacred writer here both records the appoint-

VOL. I.

ment of the sabbath, and assigns the reason for it: “Be- cause that in it the LORD rested from all his work.” This is evidently *historical*, and not by *anticipation*: for the reason subsisted from the beginning; and was more cogent immediately, than it could be at a distance of more than two thousand years, when the command was solemnly renewed from Mount Sinai, long after sin had marred the beauty of the great Creator’s works: and it concerns the whole human race, as much as the nation of Israel. This is confirmed by the custom of measuring time by weeks, which has generally prevailed in the world; and which is most reasonably accounted for, by supposing it to have arisen from an original tradition, handed down from Adam and Noah to all their posterity. And the silence of Moses concerning the observation of the sabbath by the patriarchs, so far from proving that they were not commanded to observe it, will not render it so much as probable that they did not actually keep it, to those who attentively consider how much darkness rests upon many similar subjects, in the scriptural history of the Church. Yet some intimations are given in this book, which shew that the patriarchs divided time into *weeks*, and regarded the seventh day. (*Notes*, viii. 6—14. xxix. 27.)—The “sabbath, being made for man,” was no doubt coeval with his creation.—Even in the state of innocence, Adam and Eve were employed in dressing and keeping the garden: and though exempt from sin and suffering, yet their rational nature was capable of a far more exalted state; and they were taught to consider themselves as preparing for it by progressive improvement. The seventh day therefore, being blessed and sanctified by God, separated from common employments, and consecrated to religious worship; on it especially they were required to remember their Creator, to contemplate his works, and to render him their tribute of thankful praise; and this would, even in Paradise, be conducive to the glory of God, and beneficial to them; perhaps absolutely necessary to their safety and felicity. (*Notes*, Ex. xvi. 22—27. xx. 8—11.)

V. 4. This is the real and true account of the origin of the heavens and the earth; and may therefore be opposed to the fables of poets, and the fancies of speculating philosophers.—The word *JEHOVAH*, the peculiar name of the living God, is here first used. It seems to mean *Self-existence*, underived, independent, and immutable. (*Note*, Ex. iii. 14.)

V. 5, 6. In general, God employs the genial warmth

C

upon the earth, and *there was* not a man <sup>h</sup> to till the ground.

6 But <sup>\*</sup> there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

7 And the LORD God formed man <sup>†</sup> of the <sup>†</sup> dust of the ground, and <sup>†</sup> breathed into his <sup>†</sup> nostrils the breath of life: and man became <sup>m</sup> a living soul.

8 ¶ And the LORD God planted <sup>a</sup> a garden <sup>\*</sup> eastward in Eden: and there he put the man whom he had formed.

9 And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food: <sup>b</sup> the Tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and <sup>†</sup> the Tree of knowledge of good and evil.

10 And <sup>a</sup> a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

of the sun and the refreshing rains, and also the labour of man, in producing the fruits of the earth: but he needs them not; and therefore these first productions, (which doubtless were in full perfection,) were prepared before the sun was created, before the rain descended, or man was formed: but from the time that the vegetables were produced, a mist arose from the earth, and fell in gentle dews for their refreshment and preservation.—It is God's immediate work to communicate the first principles of things, 'but their growth is promoted by the instrumentality of man.' Fuller. Thus regeneration is immediately the work of God; but in progressive sanctification man is willing and active.

V. 7. The Creator's skill was manifested, in forming so exquisite a structure as the human body, of so mean materials. Yet the Lord not only gave man life in common with the other animals, which had bodies formed of the same dust; but immediately communicated from himself the rational soul, here denoted by "breathing into his nostrils the breath of life." Thus "the first Adam became a living soul:" but man by the fall having become dead in sin; in infinite mercy, "the second Adam, the Lord from heaven," became "a quickening spirit," and, by the communication of the Holy Spirit, he restores divine life and renews the divine image.—It is remarkable that Jesus, after his resurrection, (with apparent reference to this expression,) "breathed upon his disciples, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." (Marg. Ref.)

V. 8, 9. This garden, planned doubtless with exquisite beauty, and stored with every thing which could regale the senses, seems to have been intended as a pledge of heavenly felicity.—The word *paradise*, (which the Septuagint use in this place for garden,) in allusion to Eden, is in some instances used for heaven itself, and there are many references to it in scripture. (Luke xxiii. 43. 2 Cor. xii. 4.) "The Tree of Life" seems also to have been a sacramental pledge of immortality; and, by eating the fruit of it, life

11 The name of the first is *Pison*: that is it which compasseth the whole land of <sup>\*</sup> Havilah, where *there is* gold;

12 And the gold of that land is good: there is <sup>\*</sup> bdellium and <sup>\*</sup> the onyx-stone.

13 And the name of the second river is *Gihon*: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of <sup>\*</sup> Ethiopia.

14 And the name of the third river is <sup>\*</sup> Hiddekel: that is it which goeth <sup>†</sup> towards the east of <sup>\*</sup> Assyria. And the fourth river is <sup>\*</sup> Euphrates.

15 And the LORD God took <sup>†</sup> the man, and <sup>\*</sup> put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden <sup>\*</sup> thou mayest <sup>b</sup> freely eat:

17 But <sup>\*</sup> of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not

and felicity were sealed to Adam, as long as he continued obedient. "The Tree of knowledge" might be thus called, because that, by the prohibition of its fruit, a revelation was made to Adam of his Creator's will; of his own duty, interest, situation, and danger; of the consequences of his future conduct; and of the prescribed condition of life or death, happiness or misery; in which things his most interesting knowledge consisted. By abstaining from this fruit the knowledge of good would be enjoyed; but by eating of it the knowledge of evil would be fatally introduced. It might also intimate that man should set boundaries to his thirst for knowledge; and covet rather to know and obey the commands of God, than to pry into unrevealed secrets. To these meanings Satan artfully superadded his pernicious misinterpretation, which will shortly require our attention.—This garden was situated eastward of Canaan, or of the wilderness where Moses wrote the history.—Adam and Eve seem to have been created without the garden, and to have been afterwards brought into it.

V. 10—14. From the well-known names of the Hiddekel or Tigris, and the Euphrates, we determine that the garden of Eden was situated in or near Mesopotamia; and some learned men have supposed that almost the precise spot may be ascertained; but this is doubtful. It is supposed, that the Tigris and Euphrates met and united their streams at the garden of Eden, and that below it, the river parted again into two streams, called Pison and Gihon; and that all these are called heads. It is manifest, that Moses intended to give an intelligible description of the situation of Eden to his countrymen; who might doubtless, by attending to the several particulars here mentioned, find the precise spot, though we cannot; and notwithstanding the subsequent convulsions during the deluge, which must have greatly changed the face of the country; it is evident that the Tigris and Euphrates continued nearly the same course after that catastrophe as before.

V. 16, 17. Man, created in the image of God, doubt

\* Heb. *dying thou shalt die.*  
 † iii. 3. 4. Deut. xcvii. 26. Ez. iii. 19—20. xviii. 4. 13. 32. Rom. i. 32. v. 12—21. vi. 16. 23. vii. 10—18. viii. 2. 1 Cor. xv. 22. 56. Gal. iii. 10. Eph. ii. 1—6. v. 14. Col. ii. 13. 1 Tim. v. 6. Jam. i. 15. 1 John v. 16. Rev. ii. 11. x. 6. 14. xxi. 8. i. 31. Prov. xviii. 22. Ec. iv. 9—12. iii. 12. 1 Cor. xi. 7—12. 1 Tim. ii. 11—13.

eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, \* thou shalt <sup>d</sup> surely die.  
 18 ¶ And the LORD God said, *It is not* <sup>a</sup> good that the man should be alone: 'I will make him an help <sup>†</sup> meet for him.

19 And <sup>‡</sup> out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and <sup>b</sup> brought *them* unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever <sup>‡</sup> Adam called every living creature, that *was* the name thereof.

20 And Adam <sup>§</sup> gave names to all

less had the moral law written in his heart as the law of his holy nature; and was both bound and inclined to that *love* of God and his creatures, which constitutes its substance and fulfilment. But the prohibition, here imposed, was an *additional instituted test of obedience*; and, being accompanied with the liberal allowance which precedes it, formed a proper trial of his love, and of the submission of his inclinations to the will of his beneficent Benefactor. It likewise intimated to him, that the favour of God, and not animal gratification, was the proper felicity of his nature; and taught him not to consider himself at the summit of his happiness, in a state where self-denial was required.—The annexed denunciation, "thou shalt surely die," or, *dying thou shalt die*, evidently implied, that by transgression he would totally forfeit his Maker's favour, and incur his displeasure with all its awful effects; that immediately he would become liable to pain and disease, which, as a tedious execution, would not cease but in the dissolution of the body; that he would lose the holy image of God and the comfort of his favour; and that he would experience the torment of sinful passions and the terror of his Creator's vengeance, which, *according to this covenant*, must endure coeval with the existence of his immortal soul. The event shews that all this was implied: for the just and holy God would not subsequently inflict more than he had previously denounced to Adam and Eve. The same evidence proves, that the whole human race, then in the loins of their common father, and represented by him as their federal head, were interested in the transaction. To argue against this, is to combat stubborn facts, as well as divine revelation; unless some more satisfactory account of the present condition and character of man can be assigned, but which has never yet been done. For man is evidently a sinful creature, and shews his natural propensities by his first actions and continual conduct; he is under undeniable tokens of divine displeasure, and exposed to sufferings and death; a dark cloud, impenetrable except by the light of revelation, rests upon his state beyond the grave; the Scriptures always address him as in this miserable situation, and as bearing this sinful character; and these things have been universally verified in all ages and nations. If men find fault with that which God has evidently done, let them answer it to him. He deigns not to apologize for his own conduct; and, with our dark and imperfect views, we shall be deemed too officious, if we attempt it.—"Shall not the *"Judge of all the earth do right?"* seems the proper answer to objectors; and to wait for a world of clearer

cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; <sup>1</sup> but for <sup>18</sup> Adam there was not found an help meet for him.

21 And the LORD God caused <sup>a</sup> <sup>k</sup> a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

22 And the rib which the LORD God <sup>l</sup> had taken from man <sup>1</sup> made he a woman, and <sup>1</sup> brought her unto the man.

23 And Adam said, *This is now* <sup>m</sup> bone of my bone, <sup>n</sup> and flesh of my flesh: she <sup>n</sup>

light is our proper behaviour. To allow the wisdom, justice, and goodness of the divine conduct, only when we can perceive them, savours neither of humility nor of faith; for the same approbation is due to an equal or an enemy: but it becomes us, and is honourable to God, when we adore the depths which we cannot fathom, and believe that while "clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and judgment are the basis of his throne." Could we divest ourselves of partiality, we might discern in some degree the reasonableness of the prohibition; the peculiar meetness of Adam, as the common father of the human race, to be their representative; and the divine goodness in selecting, as the condition of this covenant, so easy a test of obedience, and in making the implied stipulation, that if he did not eat he should not die. Many things have been copiously and plausibly argued upon these topics: but it is readily granted, that great difficulties remain; and that they, who will give their Creator credit for justice and goodness, no farther than they can perceive them, must stumble at this stumbling stone, after all that can be done to remove it. Man's mortality and depravity, as well as universal history, coincide with, and confirm, the scriptural account of this transaction; and, as collateral evidences, prove that it is the "testimony of God," and that we do not mistake its meaning: on this ground faith receives it; and humbled reason submits to her Teacher, God, and allows his righteousness, though she cannot fully comprehend it.

V. 18. It was not conducive to the happiness of man, to remain without the solace of society, and the endearment of tender friendship; nor consistent with the end of his creation to be without marriage, by which the earth might be replenished, and worshippers and servants of God continually raised up to render him praise and glory.

V. 19, 20. Adam seems to have been vastly better acquainted, by intuition or immediate revelation, with the distinct properties of every creature, than the most sagacious observers, since the fall, have been by study. When, therefore, God brought the several species before him, he gave them names expressive of their distinct natures or exterior forms. This was also a token of his dominion over them.—Yet, upon this review, not one was found in outward form his counterpart, (as the animals were created male and female;) nor one suited to engage his affections, participate in his enjoyments, or associate with him in the worship of God.

V. 21—23. Adam, being supernaturally cast into a deep

\* Heb. *Jah.* 1 Cor. xi 8, 9. shall be called \* Woman, because she was taken out of † Man.

† Heb. *Jah.* 24 Therefore shall a man † leave his father and his mother, and shall † cleave

unto his wife: and † they shall be one † flesh.

25 And they were both † naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Mat. ii. 14—16. Matt. xix. 3—9. Mark x. 6—12. 1 Cor. vi. 16, 17. vii. 2—4. Eph. v. 28—31. 1 Pet. iii. 1—7. iii. 7, 10, 11.

sleep, without consciousness or pain, the Lord took from that part of his body which was near the heart, the substance of which he formed the woman; who was to be as part of himself, and the object of his most cordial affections. She was taken from *him*, and not out of the ground; that there might be a natural foundation of moderate subordination on the woman's part, and sympathizing tenderness on the man's; as a man rules over, yet carefully defends and tenderly takes care of, his own body. The Lord then conducted her as his gift to Adam, that they might be united in marriage for their mutual good; and that he might thus authorize, and give an example for the regulation of, future marriages. Doubtless he made known to Adam, perhaps during his sleep, in what manner the woman had been created from a part of himself, to be his companion.—The original word translated *woman*, is the same as is rendered *man*, excepting the feminine termination: it imports that she was exactly his counterpart, taken from him, united to him, and like him in every thing but sex; and it expressed his satisfaction in his Creator's gift, and his thankful acceptance of it.

V. 24. According to the original institution of marriage, the nearest of all relations and the proper source of all the rest, men in every subsequent age would leave the immediate society even of their parents, to lay the foundation of new families; and thenceforth all other relative affections and duties must be regulated, in subordination to the affections and duties of that new relation. Thus one man and one woman are so closely united as to become "one flesh:" so that, according to the original institution, nothing can separate them, but that which dissolves the union of soul and body, and even divides the component parts of the body from each other. This seems to be the remark of Moses rather than of Adam; but certainly it was the word of God, speaking by one of them. Neither polygamy nor divorces can accord with this original institution. "In the beginning it was not so;" nor would such things have been practised, but for the sinful lusts of men. And equally unscriptural are constrained celibacy, and needless restraints upon marriage. The records of former times, and impartial observation on the present, evince that it is not generally "good for man to be alone." The mutual inclination of the sexes for each other, (which, however debased by sin, was originally implanted by the Creator,) when regulated by the law of God, and free from other restraints, becomes the foundation of all the relations of life, the source of the most rational, of our earthly comforts, and equally beneficial to individuals, families, and nations: like a river, which, gliding within its banks, beautifies and enriches the neighbouring plains. But when unscriptural restraints are imposed, or when it bursts through the appointed bounds, it diffuses vice, discord, disease, and misery, with horrible rapidity; like the same river, obstructed in its natural channel, overflowing its banks, inundating and desolating the fields, and converting the neighbouring country into a noxious marsh or fen.—"Go among the enemies of the gospel, and you shall see the

woman either reduced to abject slavery, or basely flattered for the vilest of purposes: but in Christian families, you see her treated with honour and respect; as a friend, as naturally an equal, a soother of man's cares, a softener of his grief, and a partner of his joys.' Fuller.

V. 25. The human body, the most noble production in the material creation, would not have required concealment, had not sin disgraced the Creator's work: and probably shame would never have been excited, in the manner in which it has been ever since, had not the sinful nature been communicated with the propagation of the human species.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—15.

As God himself contemplated his whole work with cordial approbation, and rested in it with entire complacency; it must be great presumption for us to find fault with any part of it. We are indeed capable of perceiving the wisdom and goodness of God, in many of the constituent parts of the vast creation, and of rendering to him the tribute of adoring praise; but it is most daring pride, to suppose ourselves competent to understand the whole.—The only wise God instituted the Sabbath in Paradise before the entrance of sin; and thus he has shewn, not only the advantage, but the absolute necessity, of time set apart for his immediate service, as the world now is; if we would pay any suitable regard to religion, or to the salvation of our immortal souls. How diligently then should we sinners keep *holy* the Christian Sabbath; and take care that our children and domesticks have leisure and opportunity, and make use of them, for the same salutary purposes! But the *rest* to be observed is not indolent repose. The rest of heaven consists in serving God without weariness and with entire satisfaction; and our sabbaths should be earnest of that blessedness, and a preparation for it. Indeed, God gives every thing to *labour*, which was needful in innocence and in paradise; because true excellence and happiness consist in action, not in inactivity.—The reflection likewise, that our bodies were formed from the dust of the earth, may tend to repress the pride of beauty, strength, or agility; to abate our solicitude about them; and to teach us to prepare for the execution of the sentence, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

##### V. 16—25.

Additional favours lay us under additional obligations to grateful obedience: and as our liberal Benefactor indulges us in all things truly good for us; it is highly reasonable that we should give him credit for his wisdom and kindness, even in restraints and prohibitions, and cheerfully deny ourselves at his requirement.—The covenant of works was holy, and just, and good; being proposed by a God of perfect holiness, justice, and goodness; and acceded to by Adam, before sin had impaired his powers, perverted his judgment, or depraved his heart: yet it is *contrary to us*, who in Adam, and after his example, have violated the terms of it. We have, therefore, great reason to be thankful for

## CHAP. III.

The woman, tempted by the serpent, eats the forbidden fruit, and induces Adam to do the same, 1—6. They are alarmed and ashamed, in vain attempt concealment, and are convicted by God, 7—13. Sentence is denounced against them, containing the gracious promise of a Redeemer, 14—19. They are clothed, but expelled from Eden, 20—24.

\* 12—15 to xxvii.  
1. Matt. x. 16.  
2 Cor. xi. 3. 14.  
Rev. xii. 9. xx. 2.

NOW <sup>a</sup> the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the

LORD God had made: and he said unto the woman, \*Yea, <sup>b</sup>hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3 <sup>c</sup>But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye <sup>d</sup>touch it, lest ye die.

c ii. 16, 17.  
d xx. 6. Ex. xix. 12, 13. 1 Chr. xvi. 22. Job i. 11. ii. 5. xix. 21. 1 Cor. vii. 1. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Col. ii. 21.

another covenant, established upon better promises, and ratified by the engagements of a better Surety. To him let us flee for refuge, and from him alone seek deliverance from shame and pain, from sin and death. And while we receive all worldly and relative comforts from the hand of our reconciled God; and seek his blessing on them, use them according to his appointment, and attend to the duties which they require according to his command; let us not forget, that a union must be formed with the Lord Jesus, of which marriage itself is but a type and shadow. (2 Cor. xi. 2.) We must be *one spirit* with him, and cleave to him in simple dependence, cordial attachment, and devoted obedience and submission; even though it should interfere with the comfort of that most endeared relation. Then death, which dissolves all other unions, will complete this to eternal ages.

## NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. Adam and Eve, perhaps, had noticed with pleasure and partiality, that the serpent possessed an instinctive sagacity, which more resembled the effects of reason, than that of any other creature did; and this might suggest to Satan the device of using this animal as his instrument in temptation. For the serpent appeared to speak, but in reality Satan spake by the serpent; as, in the days of Christ, the unclean spirits employed the tongues of possessed persons. Common sense and the whole Scripture lead us to conclude, that the serpent was only the instrument; Satan the real agent, who is therefore called the serpent, the old dragon, a liar, and a murderer from the beginning. (Note, Rev. xii. 7—12.)—The word of God reveals to us the world of spirits, holy and unholy, of which otherwise we should have had no certain knowledge. Faith avails itself of this information; but unbelief rejects it to the infidel's irreparable detriment: as nothing better answers the purpose of the powers of darkness, than to work in the dark; and none serve their interests more effectually, than they who deny and endeavour to disprove their existence; for we never can guard against the attacks of unseen and unsuspected enemies. From the Scriptures we learn, that "angels sinned, and kept not their first estate;" and that, being created holy and happy, they by transgression forfeited the favour, and incurred the displeasure, of their Creator, and became unholy and miserable; yea, desperate in the certain expectation of increasing and everlasting misery. Being, however, still endued with vast capacities, profound sagacity, extensive knowledge, and great power; and, wholly actuated by enmity, malice, envy, pride, ambition, and subtlety; they maintain determined rebellion against their Maker: and as they are very

numerous, they have established a kingdom in opposition to his kingdom, under the dominion of the arch-apostate, the Devil or Satan; so that, as far as they are permitted, they are unwearied and insatiable in mischief; aiming at nothing less than reducing the whole creation to a state of rebellion, anarchy, and misery, and rendering all creatures as vile and wretched as themselves.—Doubtless, the beauty of the recently created world, the glory of God, and the happiness of man, excited the envy and rage of these evil spirits, and suggested to Satan the malicious design of ruining the whole. For this purpose, he, with dark craftiness, concealed himself in the subtle serpent, and thus made his unsuspected attack on the woman when alone; perhaps insinuating that by eating the fruit of the forbidden tree, the serpent had acquired the gift of reason and speech: nor can we satisfactorily account for the woman's entering into conversation with the serpent, and shewing no marks of surprise or suspicion, unless we admit a supposition of this kind. Some learned men indeed have conjectured, that this serpent appeared so beautiful and resplendent, that Eve supposed it to be an angel, and listened to it as a heavenly messenger; and they confirm this opinion by observing, that the fiery serpents are called in the original *Seraphim*; (Num. xxi. 6. 8;) as the heavenly worshippers are by Isaiah; (Is. vi. 2;) and that the apostle notes, that "Satan is transformed into an angel of light," in the same chapter in which he says, "The serpent beguiled Eve by his subtlety." (2 Cor. xi. 3. 14.) This supposition, however, makes more excuse for the conduct both of Eve and Adam, than the word of God authorizes; and certainly we cannot learn it from the narrative.—Nothing can be conceived more artful than Satan's first address; "Yea, hath God said?" "How is it that God should speak thus?" Can it be true, that he has given you appetites, and placed gratifications before you, only to mock you?—You must misunderstand his meaning; or some envious being has counterfeited his authority; or at least it must be allowed to be a very capricious restraint.' Such insinuations were artfully couched in this insidious question, and such objections are continually raised by him and his instruments, against every restriction in the word of God which calls for self-denial.—It is observable, that no notice is taken of the largeness of the grant, but merely of its limitation.

V. 2, 3. The first mistake of the woman seems to have consisted, in attempting to answer the ensnaring question proposed to her. She ought not to have listened for a moment to such suggestions; nor to have entered into a parley with one, whose words directly tended to excite hard thoughts of God and of his express command. She mentioned the grant of the bountiful Creator, but not in the

• 13. Deut. xxix.  
19. Ps. x. 11.  
2 Cor. ii. 11.  
• Ex. xx. 7. 1 Kings  
xxii. 6. Jer. xiv.  
13. 14. xxviii. 2.  
3. Ez. xiii. 2—6.  
22. 2 Cor. xi. 3.  
13—15.

4 And the serpent said unto the woman, <sup>a</sup> Ye shall not surely die;

5 For <sup>a</sup> God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then <sup>a</sup> your eyes shall

g 7. Matt. vi. 23. Acts xxvi. 18

be opened: and ye shall be <sup>a</sup> as gods, <sup>b</sup> knowing good and evil.

6 And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food; and that it *was*

h Ex. v. 2. 2 Chr.  
xxviii. 15. Ps. xii.  
4. Ez. xxviii. 2.  
9. xxix. 3. Dan.  
iv. 30. vi. 7. Acts  
xii. 23. 2 Cor.  
iv. 4. 2 Thes. ii.  
4. Rev. xiii. 4. 14  
i 22. ii. 17.

expressive language in which it had been made; "Of every tree in the garden thou mayest *freely* eat;" and she added to the restriction, "neither shall ye touch it." This is, indeed, an excellent precaution; we should not come within the attractive force of forbidden objects: yet it seems, as here used, to be an intimation of severity in the prohibition. The Lord had said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die:" but the *undoubted certainty* of the event is here omitted. Indeed it is evident, that the poison began to work; Eve made too little of the liberal grant of the Creator, stated the prohibition in strong terms of severity, and rather faulted as to the certain and immediate execution of the threatening.

V. 4, 5. Perceiving his advantage, the tempter grew bolder, and gave a direct contradiction to the divine denunciation; and, to gain the more credit to his daring assertions, he proceeded to confirm them by an oath, blasphemously calling on God to attest his horrid falsehoods: or rather, he insinuated that the Lord knew his own threatening would not be executed, at least in the sense in which Adam and Eve had understood it; but that, on the contrary, most abundant advantage would accrue to them from the violation of the Creator's law: no less than a vast advance in knowledge, and an independent felicity, without subjection to the will, or dread of the displeasure, of any superior. Thus he insinuated, that God forbade this fruit, in order to keep them in ignorance, and in a mean state of dependence and subjection. There is likewise an equivocation in the words; a latent truth, the reverse of their apparent meaning. "Your eyes," says Satan, "shall be opened;" that is, 'When you have eaten the fruit, you will too late see your own folly. "Ye shall be as gods;" revolted from God, and losing his image and favour, you will ambitiously affect independency; demand the homage of flattery and praise; aspire at the pinnacle of pre-eminence, and grasp at dominion; act as if you were your own lords and avengers; and thus attempt to usurp the throne of God. By this conduct you will be left to make trial of your ability to contrive, effect, and secure a happiness to yourselves, as if ye were gods, till you find death and misery seize upon you; "knowing good and evil," by losing the good and experiencing the evil.'—Of such a paraphrase the words will admit, and such have been the effects of eating the forbidden fruit; but nothing could be further from Eve's thoughts than this interpretation.—Thus the assertions of the tempter resembled the ancient heathen oracles, of which, in one way or other, this "father of lies" was doubtless the author: for these were generally couched in such ambiguous language, as might afterwards be accommodated to the event; though often in direct opposition to the disappointed expectations of the deluded votaries.—'Nothing is more common, than for the most false and pernicious doctrines to be advanced with a boldness, which stuns the minds of the simple, and induces a doubt; Surely I must be in the wrong, and they in the right, or they would not be so confident!' Fuller.

V. 6. "The lust of the eye" made way for the "lust of the flesh;" when the woman looked on the fruit, till she fancied there must be some very extraordinary pleasure in the taste of it. As her ear, formed to receive the truth of God, had just before been opened to admit Satan's lies; so now the eye, formed to behold his works, became an inlet to concupiscence. Now first the members became, as they have ever since continued in unconverted men, "instruments of unrighteousness unto sin." (Notes, Rom. vi. 12, 13. 16—19.) Eve had no testimony except that of Satan concealed in the serpent, that "it was a tree to be desired to make one wise;" yet she neither hesitated, nor suspected any delusion; but, at his instance, "she took of the fruit, and did eat," without consulting Adam, or allowing herself leisure for consideration! Thus she listened to the tempter, till, entangled in unbelief, she suspected the divine veracity and goodness, conceived hopes of impunity in transgression, and expected a vast gratification both of ambition and of the sensual appetite; and at length, with confident presumption, she took the forbidden fruit, and ate. In this manner was "lust at first conceived, then sin brought forth; and sin being finished, brought forth death."—But Satan's success was yet incomplete: for had Adam refused to eat, the woman's transgression would have remained with herself. It was, indeed, a great point gained to prevail with her whom Adam loved so tenderly, and one who would employ her fascinating influence, to prevail on him to follow her example. But whether Adam sinned in presumption, as not seeing death immediately inflicted on Eve; or in despair, as giving up all for lost; or as overcome by Eve's persuasions and reasonings, it does not clearly appear. Yet the apostle intimates, that he was not deceived in the same manner and degree as the woman. (1 Tim. ii. 14.)—Considering this offence in all its circumstances, and with all its aggravations, we may term it the prolific parent and grand exemplar of all the transgressions committed ever since. Whatever there hath been in any sin, of unbelief, ingratitude, apostasy, rebellion, robbery, contempt, defiance of God, hard thoughts of him, and enmity against him: whatever of idolatry, as comprehending faith in Satan, "the god" and "prince of this world," worship of him, and obedience to him; or of pride, exorbitant self-love, and self-will, in affecting that independency, exaltation, and homage which belong only to God; and of an inordinate love to the creatures, in seeking our happiness in the possession and enjoyment of them: whatever discontent, sensual lust, covetousness, murder, and mischief, were ever yet contained in any one sin, or in all which have been committed upon earth, the whole were centred in this one transaction. Nor have they been wide of the truth, who have laboured to prove, that all the ten commandments, extensively and spiritually expounded, were at once violated; while, in proportion as the prohibition was reasonable, and the inducements to rebel against it trifling, the offence was the more aggravated.—In this manner sin entered, and Satan triumphed in establishing his usurped authority; "for of

\* pleasant \* to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise; she took of the fruit thereof, and <sup>1</sup> did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, <sup>m</sup> and he did eat.

7 And \* the eyes of them both were opened, and they <sup>o</sup> knew that they *were* naked; <sup>p</sup> and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves <sup>r</sup> aprons.

8 And \* they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the <sup>s</sup> cool of the day: and Adam and his wife <sup>t</sup> hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

9 And the LORD God called unto

Adam, and said unto him, 'Where *art* thou?' iv. 9. xvi. 8. Josh. vii. 17—19. Rev. xx. 12, 13.

10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden: 'and I was afraid, <sup>u</sup> because *I was* naked; and I hid myself.

11 And he said, Who told thee that thou *wast* naked? <sup>v</sup> hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee, that thou shouldest not eat?

12 And the man said, 'The woman whom thou gavest *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

13 And the LORD God said unto the woman, 'What *is* this *that* thou hast done? and the woman said, 'The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

"whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in "bondage." Thus man apostatized, God was provoked, the Holy Spirit forsook his polluted temple, the unclean spirit took possession, the divine image was defaced, and Satan's image impressed in its stead: hence the wickedness and the misery of man. A lamentation it is, and should be: yet, "righteous art thou in all thy judgments, O "LORD." Let not the enemy further prevail against us, we beseech thee, by taking hence occasion to produce in our minds one hard thought of thee, or of thy mysterious judgments!

V. 7. Satan's promise soon began to be accomplished. The eyes of Adam and Eve were opened to see the snare, when they were already caught in it: they saw also misery before them with horror and dismay, and their new discoveries were their torment. Their bodily nakedness had not previously excited the sensation of shame; but being stripped of the robe of innocence, and despoiled of the image of God, the defence of his protection, and the honour of his presence, they perceived that they were indeed made naked to their shame; and their outward nakedness appeared an indication of the exposed and shameful condition to which they were reduced. Their vain attempt to cover themselves, by fig-leaves plaited together, represents the fruitless pains and worthless expedients, which men employ to conceal their real character, and hide their sins from each other, and even from themselves. For all men are naturally more ashamed of being detected in sin, than of committing it; and more desirous of keeping up a good opinion of themselves, than of obtaining pardon from God: though they can hide nothing from him, and can neither elude his justice, nor recover his favour, by any of their own contrivances.

V. 8. Some visible tokens of the Lord's presence, perhaps in human form, seem here intimated, of which we shall hereafter find undeniable instances; and which should be considered as anticipations of *his* incarnation, who is called "The Word of God:" though the word rendered *walking* may be referred to the *voice*, and not to the LORD.—Some learned men, indeed, explain all these appearances of the SHECHINAH, or *visible glory* indicating the divine presence, which at some times shone with mild lustre, at others in terrifick majesty. But I shall hereafter assign my

reasons for thinking, that this hypothesis has its sole foundation in the imaginations of Jewish Rabbies, and is totally destitute of scriptural proof, except where express mention is made of visible glory. (Note xxxii. 30).—"The cool of "the day" was, probably, one time of Adam and Eve's accustomed worship; when, doubtless, they had been used to welcome the tokens of the divine presence with that kind of exulting joy, with which a dutiful child meets the approbation of an indulgent parent. But now, conscious guilt inspired terror; and they desired to flee and hide themselves from God, as no longer their loving Father and bounteous Friend, but their dreaded Enemy, who was about to take vengeance on them.—Where was now the wisdom, which they were to derive from the forbidden fruit? Alas! they could only devise a foolish project of hiding themselves from the all-seeing eye of God, under the shade of a few trees! (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9. *Where art thou?* Words of more terror, perhaps, never sounded in man's ears, or will be heard till the day of judgment!—The command had been peremptory, the threatening absolute, the transgression undeniable; no escape or resistance was practicable; no mention had been made of mercy, and probably the offenders had no expectation of forgiveness.

V. 10, 11. Adam did not say, 'I saw thy glory,' but "I heard thy voice;" which implies that he saw nothing to affright him; but merely that conscious guilt appalled him, on hearing the accustomed tokens of God's special presence.—Without any humiliation before his offended Lord, or confession of sin, or supplication for mercy, he evasively attempted to account for his flight and concealment. But the true cause was at once detected. It arose from conscious guilt, for he had dared to transgress the righteous command of the Most High. Thus "every mouth "shall be stopped," and every excuse silenced, when God shall arise to judgment.—"Who told thee that thou *wast* "naked?" Whence could arise this idea? It had before no existence.

V. 12, 13. Adam could neither deny nor excuse his transgression of his Creator's most express mandate; yet, instead of frankly confessing it, he cast the blame upon the woman; as if he had been allowed to hearken to her, rather than to obey God! Nay, he covertly charged the blame

14 ¶ And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this <sup>b</sup> thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon

b 1. ix. 6. Ex. xxi. 28—32. Lev. xx. 25.

upon the Lord himself, saying, "The woman, whom THOU gavest me."—Here we discern the pride, and stoutness of heart, which characterize that evil spirit, who had just set up his kingdom in Adam's heart. The woman likewise discovered the same spirit, in her vain attempt to exculpate herself, by throwing the blame upon the Serpent.

V. 14, 15. It is probable, that the serpent was previously beautiful and innoxious; but it now assumed the reptile form, and became mischievous and hateful. From that season, serpents have been more shunned, and persecuted unto death, as enemies to the human race, than almost any other animal: by the venomous bite of many of them they have often severely avenged themselves; and, by reason of their proneness on the earth, they eat their food mingled with dust. Thus the words may imply a visible punishment to be executed on the serpent, as the instrument in this temptation: but the curse was in reality directed against the invisible tempter; whose abject degraded condition, and base endeavours to find satisfaction in rendering others wicked and miserable, might be figuratively intimated, by the serpent's moving on his belly, and feeding on the dust. Yet this curse on Satan is expressed in language, which contains the sum of all the blessings, which a merciful God bestows on sinful man! It is a *prophecy* and a *promise*, which have ever since been fulfilling, but have not yet received their entire accomplishment. It comprises the whole Gospel, and a prophetic history of the opposition with which it should meet, and the success with which it should be crowned, in all ages and countries to the end of time.—Christ himself is "the Seed of the woman," as the most illustrious of the human race. Yet all true believers, as one with him, are also included. He is called the *Seed of the woman*, and not the *Seed of Adam*, though descended from both; not only because Satan had prevailed first against the woman, but likewise with an evident prophetic intimation of his miraculous conception and birth of a pure virgin. Maimonides, an eminent Jewish writer, says, 'This is one of the passages in Scripture which is most wonderful, and not to be understood according to the letter; but contains great wisdom in it.' 'In which words he wrote more truth than he was aware, but was not able to unfold this hidden wisdom, as we Christians, blessed be God, are able to do.' *Bp. Patrick*.—The devil, his angels, and wicked men, are the Serpent and his seed: "Ye are of your father, the devil, and the works of your father ye will do." God himself hath put enmity between these two contending parties. The effect of his grace in the heart of true Christians is *enmity*, not against the persons of sinners, but against their character, the image of Satan which they bear, and the cause of Satan which they favour; for "that mind is in believers which was in Christ," "who was manifested to destroy the works of the devil." Their character and conduct also, the testimony which they bear against the wickedness of the world, and the opposition which they make to it, as well as the success which the Lord vouchsafes them, excite the rage, envy, and malice of Satan and his servants; whose pride they affront, whose

thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.

c Ps. lxxii. 9. 1a. xxiix. 4. lxxv. 25. Mic. vii. 17. d Num. xxi. 6, 7. Am. ix. 3. Mark xvi. 18. Luke x. 19. Acts xxviii. 3—6. Rom. iii. 13.

15 And I will put <sup>d</sup> enmity between thee and the woman, and between <sup>e</sup> thy

e Matt. iii. 7. xii. 34. xiii. 38. xxiii. 33. John viii. 44. Acts xiii. 10. 1 John iii. 10.

consciences they disturb, whose real characters they detect, and whose iniquity they oppose. (*Marg. Ref.*) Hence Satan and his seed, by open violence and cruel persecutions, by secret machinations and base slanders, by artful temptations and pernicious heresies, fight against the "Seed of the woman." In doing this, they "bruise his heel." They once "crucified the Lord of Glory" himself; they have massacred perhaps millions of his disciples, and by one means or other are always bringing inward or outward tribulations on them: yet this is no mortal wound, for it does not hinder the final glorification of the whole multitude, who thus in succession have "Satan bruised under their feet."—"The seed of the woman," fighting under the Redeemer's standard, by the doctrine of truth and the armour of righteousness, which are united with prayers and patience, hatred of sin, and compassion for sinners, carry on their benevolent war; and they gain most illustrious victories, when the power of Satan is broken, and his deluded servants are converted unto Christ. But their victories are the fruit of his severe conflict, and glorious triumph over the tempter, especially upon the cross; where, in human nature, giving himself a ransom for sinners, he broke the whole force of Satan's usurped empire: and now, risen from the dead, and having "all power in heaven and earth" vested in him, he is continually employed in crushing the Serpent's head; yet in measure and order, "according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." *Eph. i. 11*. Already, by his apostles and ministers, he hath shaken the very foundations of Satan's kingdom, and rescued millions of his wretched captives: but ere long he will even on earth gain a more decisive victory; and at last, setting his foot, as it were, on the Serpent's head, he will entirely crush his interests, deprive him of all power to do further mischief, and execute condign punishment on all his seed. (*Notes, Rev. xix. 17—21. xx. 1—3. 11—15.*)—From this short explication we perceive, that the person, sufferings, glory, and triumphs of the Redeemer; the character, tribulations, and felicity of the redeemed; the temporary success and final ruin of all the enemies of Christ and his people; and indeed almost the whole history of the church, and of the world, through time and to eternity, are compendiously delineated in this singular verse; which stands, and will stand to the end of time, an internal demonstration that the Scripture was given by inspiration from God.—Satan's cause would be ruined by one in a nature inferior to his own; by one emphatically called the "Seed of the woman," over whom the tempter had triumphed; and the victory over the enemy would be obtained, not only by the Messiah, but by all his servants. (*Note, Ex. viii. 16, 17.*)—It is remarkable that this gracious promise of a Saviour was given unsolicited, and previous to any humiliation on the part of man. (*Note, Rom. v. 7—10.*) Without a revelation of mercy, inspiring hope of forgiveness, the convinced sinner would be hardened in despair: this intimation therefore formed that encouragement to hope, which was followed by true repentance and true religion, (as it is generally supposed,) in fallen Adam and

seed and 'her Seed: 'it shall bruise thy head, and 'thou shalt bruise his heel.

16 Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; 'in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children; and 'thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall 'rule over thee.

17 And unto Adam he said, 'Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of

thy wife, 'and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: 'cursed is the ground for thy sake; 'in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

18 'Thorns also and thistles shall it 'bring forth to thee: and thou shalt eat 'the herb of the field;

19 In 'the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, 'till thou return unto the ground: for out of it wast thou taken: for 'dust thou art, 'and unto dust shalt thou return.

Eve: and though the revelation was at first obscure, it became brighter and brighter, like the increasing light of the morning, till "the Sun of righteousness arose with healing in his wings."

V. 16. The woman was first in the transgression, and had tempted Adam, as the serpent had tempted her; she therefore next received her sentence, respecting the sufferings to which she and her daughters would be subjected. It cannot be supposed, that pain or sorrow would have been connected with pregnancy, or child-bearing, had not sin been committed: but now, the Lord threatened to multiply the woman's sorrows, even those of her conception; so that, in a world of suffering, the pains and sufferings of the female sex are thus greatly multiplied indeed, almost beyond expression.—It might therefore have been expected, that on this account women would generally prefer the single state, and thus prevent the increase of the human species: but God (according to the probable meaning of the expression as used in this connection, Note iv. 6, 7.) hath so ordered it, that marriage is notwithstanding generally chosen even by the suffering sex.—The authority of the husband, when exercised uniformly with wisdom and tenderness, would have increased mutual felicity: but, by the entrance of sin, it is often converted into unreasonable and unfeeling despotism, and becomes an additional source of misery to vast numbers of unhappy females: and they too are equally prone to neglect the duties of their station, which occasions a still further increase of misery and distraction. To prevent or mitigate these evils, submission in things lawful is here commanded, notwithstanding this change in the conduct of the husband, which seems also to be predicted.—'It is well, 'that enmity was not put between the man and woman, in 'the manner that it is betwixt her seed and that of the serpent.' Henry.

V. 17—19. The plea, by which Adam tried to extenuate his crime, was adduced as the reason of his punishment: instead of hearkening to the voice of God, he had hearkened to the voice of Eve, whom he was appointed to counsel and command, not to obey. Yet the Lord did not denounce a curse on him and his seed, having before given intimations of rich blessings intended for them: but "he cursed the ground for his sake;" that as he had transgressed in eating the forbidden fruit, so he might be chastised in the labour and sorrow connected with his future sustenance. In consequence of this curse, useless and noxious weeds and plants spring up spontaneously, and both grow and

multiply with immense rapidity. These must be eradicated, the soil prepared, and much labour bestowed, before the precious fruits of the earth can be obtained: hence incessant fatigue, pain, and penury are the lot of the bulk of mankind; which would not have been the case, had not sin occasioned it. And at last, the herb of the field, the ordinary productions of the earth, were substituted for the delicious fruits of Eden, as a sharp rebuke for man's coveting and eating the forbidden fruit. The weight of this part of the sentence falls chiefly on the man, to whom it is addressed, as that of the former on the woman. Nor was any respite or termination of this labour and sorrow to be expected, till death should consign the body to the earth again, to mingle with its original dust.—As we feel that this sentence, in every part, is in full force against the whole human species; it is absurd to deny that we were all joined in the covenant with Adam, our common representative. (Marg. Ref. q—z.) But as the sentence upon the Serpent couched, under its outward meaning, the threatening of vengeance on the invisible tempter, so the death denounced against the body, which is but "the instrument of unrighteousness," comprehends also the awful punishment prepared for the soul, the deviser of every sin, and the real agent in committing it. This is evinced by the sinful propensities of the human race, compared with the threatenings of "the wrath of God against every soul of man, that doeth evil." Our very nature is fallen under the curse for Adam's sake, and produces only sinful desires, words, and actions, unless renewed by divine grace: for in the very day in which Adam sinned, he died, he became spiritually dead, the Holy Spirit having left his soul: and all capacity of delighting in the holy service and spiritual worship of God, is extinct in every descendant of Adam, till "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" restores divine life, by regeneration. Indeed, the apostle directly opposes the death which came by Adam, to the life which comes by Christ: and therefore, if the one is eternal, so is the other. (Rom. v. 12—19.) Thus all are concluded under sin and wrath, and none but Jesus, the Mediator of a new covenant, can deliver us. And thus He, "the second Adam, the Lord from heaven," as our Surety, was under subjection, and made a curse for us, laboured through his sorrowful life, sweat blood in the garden, endured the travail of his soul; and at length expired on the cross, and was laid in the grave, that he might bear every part of the sentence deserved by man's sin, and so finally save the whole multitude of his believing people.

<sup>a</sup> ii. 20. 23. v. 29  
xvi. 11. xxix. 32.  
—35. xxxv. 18.  
Ex. ii. 10. 1 Sam.  
i. 20. Matt. i. 21.  
23.  
<sup>b</sup> Heb. Cherub.  
<sup>c</sup> Acts xvii. 26.  
<sup>d</sup> 5. i. 26. xi. 6. 7.  
Is. xix. 12. xlvii.  
12. 13.  
20 ¶ And <sup>a</sup>Adam called his wife's  
name <sup>b</sup>Eve; because she was the mo-  
ther <sup>b</sup>of all living.

21 Unto Adam also and to his wife  
did the LORD God <sup>c</sup>make coats of skins,  
and clothed them.

22 And the LORD God said, Behold,  
the man is become <sup>d</sup>as one of us, to  
know good and evil: and now lest he  
put forth his hand and take also of the

<sup>e</sup> ii. 9. Prov. iii. 18.  
Rev. ii. 7. xxii.  
2.  
<sup>f</sup> Pa. xxii. 26. John  
vi. 48—58.  
<sup>g</sup> 5. iv. 2. 12. ix.  
20. Ec. v. 9.  
<sup>h</sup> ii. 8.  
<sup>i</sup> Ex. xxxv. 22.  
1 Sam. iv. 4.  
1 Kings vi. 25—  
26. Ps. lxxx. 1  
xcix. 1. Ez. x. 2  
&c.  
<sup>k</sup> Num. xxii. 23.  
Josh. v. 13. 1 Chr.  
xxi. 16.  
1 John xiv. 6. Heb.  
x. 18—22.

<sup>e</sup> tree of life, and <sup>f</sup>eat, and live for  
ever;  
23 Therefore the LORD God sent him  
forth from the garden of Eden, to <sup>g</sup>till  
the ground from whence he was taken.

24 So he drove out the man: and he  
placed at the <sup>h</sup>east of the garden of  
Eden <sup>i</sup>Cherubims, and <sup>k</sup>a flaming sword  
which turned every way, <sup>i</sup>to keep the  
way of the tree of life.

V. 20. Adam thankfully accepted the reprieve compre-  
hended in the sentence, and looked forward to the increase  
of the human species with submissive satisfaction, notwith-  
standing its attendant miseries; because he by faith em-  
braced the promise of that future "Seed of the woman,  
" which should bruise the Serpent's head." And he called  
his wife *Eve*, which signifies *Life*, or *Living*; not only as  
she was to be the mother of the whole human race, but also  
of him especially who is the Author and Source of life  
eternal to all believers.

V. 21. *Coats of skins.*] Some conclude from this cir-  
cumstance, that a considerable time had elapsed between  
the creation and the fall, and that the animals had already  
begun to increase, or none could have been spared to be  
slain: but this is mere conjecture; as are all other opinions  
on the subject, in which it has not pleased God to gratify  
our curiosity. It is extremely probable that some beasts,  
sacrificed by divine appointment, furnished the skins with  
which Adam and Eve were clothed: for, as they certainly  
had never slain any animals before the fall, and as we have no  
reason to suppose that any had died of themselves, it is hard  
to conceive in what other way these skins could be procured.  
—Innocent animals, slain in sacrifice, furnishing garments  
to fallen Adam and Eve, would very aptly typify the pro-  
mised Seed, who suffered for our sins, that we might stand  
accepted before God in his righteousness: and the circum-  
stance of the Lord God *making* these coats of skins, and  
*clothing* them, not only intimates the kind instruction and  
assistance which he afforded them, in accommodating them-  
selves to their present situation; but represents to us, that  
the Saviour and salvation are of his providing; and that  
faith, which receives and puts on Christ, is his gift, and  
must be sought and received from him.

V. 22—24. The expression, "become as one of us,"  
emphatically denotes the plurality of persons in the Deity.  
(Note, i. 26.)—The Lord was pleased to point out, in lan-  
guage, expressive both of pity and indignation, the sad  
change which had taken place, by thus alluding to the ambi-  
tious desire and vain expectation of being as gods, which  
had been excited in Adam and Eve, and to their woeful dis-  
appointment. As they had forfeited the blessing of *immor-  
tality*, it was very proper that they should be deprived of  
the sacramental pledge of it. But this by no means proves,  
that the fruit of the tree of life had any *inherent efficacy* of  
conferring immortality: it rather reflected upon their folly,  
who had been deluded to believe that the fruit of the tree  
of knowledge could of itself make them wise!—After this  
expulsion from Eden, some angelick guards, with a visible  
appearance, and the similitude of a flaming sword, forbid  
all entrance into it, or access to the tree of life. This indi-

cated, that, *according to the covenant sealed by the tree of  
life, the favour of God and eternal happiness were for ever  
unattainable by fallen man.* (Marg. Ref.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—6.

In deducing practical instruction from this important part  
of Scripture, the only difficulty lies in selection; for every  
part of revealed religion is virtually comprised in it.—The  
subject calls upon us to lament and mourn; not so much  
for these primitive transgressors, as for ourselves, our chil-  
dren, and the whole human race, thus involved in one com-  
mon ruin; but at the same time it reminds us to rejoice in  
God our Saviour, from whom come everlasting righteous-  
ness and felicity. It behoves us, however, "to rejoice with  
"trembling," lest we be found among those who neglect  
this great salvation, through the deceitfulness of our hearts,  
and the snares of the world; and, above all, through the  
subtlety of our watchful, unwearied, and malicious enemies,  
the powers of darkness, and the agents in whom they lie  
concealed, who are still envious of our happiness, and  
covertly plotting our destruction. For, though the several  
steps be not always so discernible, there is the same concu-  
rence and succession in all temptations, by which we are  
overcome, as there were in the case of Eve: and it contains  
a picture in miniature of all Satan's devices and victories  
in every age. Still he insinuates hard thoughts of God and  
his commandments; flatters men with hopes of impunity,  
in direct contradiction to the sacred oracles; enhances to  
the imagination the pleasure or advantage of sinful indul-  
gence; pays court to pride and the sensual appetite: he  
still entangles men in error, seduces them into unbelief,  
hurries them on with precipitation, and prevails with them  
to "trust in their own hearts," and "lean to their own  
"understandings," till he has effected his destructive pur-  
poses. Whenever therefore our pride is flattered, or dis-  
content, ambition, affectation of independence, covetousness,  
or sensual lust is excited; when we are ready to promise  
ourselves impunity in sin, or advantage from it; when hard  
thoughts of God and his commandments, doubts about his  
veracity and faithfulness, or low apprehensions of the value  
of his favour and of spiritual blessings are suggested; and  
when we are urged forward in self-confidence, not brooking  
opposition, and not taking time for prayer, and consulting  
pious and prudent friends: then we may be sure the old  
Serpent is tempting us; then especially we are called to  
"watch and pray;" and our only safety consists in speedy  
flight, or vigorous resistance, being "stedfast in the faith."  
—We have also in Satan's conduct the first example of *per-  
jury*, and a specimen of its horrible consequences: and

## CHAP. IV.

Cain and Abel are born, 1, 2. Abel's offering is accepted, and Cain's rejected, 3—7. Cain murders Abel; is convicted, condemned, and banished: his subsequent behaviour, 8—17. His descendants to Lamech, the fifth in descent from him; with some

particulars of Lamech and his children, 18—24. Serh is born, 25, 26.

AND Adam knew Eve his wife: and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, "I have gotten a man from the LORD."

a 25. v. 29. 1 John iii. 12.

perjurers would do well to contemplate, as in a glass, their own character, and learn whose children they are, and whose similitude they bear.—We should, however, not only be upon our guard against avowed enemies, or wicked people: we must also reject every temptation to unbelief or disobedience, though sent by the hands of the most lovely or beloved object on earth; recognizing the concealed tempter, and with indignation answering, "Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written," &c. (*Note, Matt. xvi. 21—23*): for he still seduces us by those who possess our warmest affections; and he has in all ages employed men and women as tempters to each other, with immense success.—Transgressors can seldom be contented to sin alone; but they endeavour to draw others to imitate their own misconduct. Indeed, should our own senses or understandings seem to testify, that forbidden objects are good and desirable, we must reject that testimony, if we would be safe and happy. Nor let it be forgotten, that the desire of knowledge is as liable to exorbitancy, as the sensual appetites; and when not restricted by the word of God, it degenerates into bold curiosity, scepticism, and infidelity.

## V. 7—13.

"The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." "The knowledge which puffeth up," induces men to "profess themselves wise, till they become fools;" and either to say, "There is no God," or to speak and act as if there were none; or as if he were "altogether such an one as themselves."—The triumphs of successful wickedness are short, and often terminate in shame and anguish; and agreement in sin commonly produces bitter recriminations, and often implacable enmities.—When God shall "judge the world in righteousness," a summons even more dreadful, than that which called forth our affrighted progenitors, will constrain every impenitent sinner's attendance at his awful tribunal. Then "every mouth shall be stopped, and all the world will become guilty before God:" and whatever excuse shall be attempted, it will not only be silenced, but turned into an argument against the criminal, and an aggravation of his guilt and condemnation.—In the meanwhile, it is very useful for us frequently to propose to ourselves this question, "Where art thou?" In a state of safety and peace? or in the broad road to destruction? In the path of duty, or in some devious course?—But alas! Adam's posterity have ever shewn a prevalent disposition to copy his example, not only in transgression, but also in making such excuses, as ultimately throw the blame upon God himself. Self-justification forms a prominent feature in the human character, discernible from tender infancy to hoary hairs; not only among the moral and virtuous, but even down to the murderer, the thief, and the prostitute! To this there is *no exception*.—It is indeed artfully concealed in some; suppressed in others by that proficiency in vice, which, glorying in what is shameful, like Satan attempts no excuse; and subdued in others by the grace of the gospel, and the humbling influences of the Holy Spirit.

## V. 14—19.

We should accustom ourselves to consider all the sorrows and troubles of life, however varied, and by whatever second causes brought upon us, as part of the sentence of a righteous Judge pronounced against our sinful race. (*Notes, Ps. xc. 3—11.*) Even death itself should not be spoken of as the *debt of nature*, but as the execution of the law of God upon a criminal. "So teach us, O LORD, to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom!"—On the other hand, all our comforts are undeserved mercies: and this should teach us, not only patience and contentment, but lively gratitude; especially as they are connected with the promise of a Saviour, and the hope of eternal life. Even the troubles, to which we are here exposed, death itself not excepted, as things are now circumstanced, are of a salutary tendency, if duly prepared for: and the wearisome labour to which man, as a criminal, is sentenced, and against which all the slothful of every rank continually rebel, prevents far greater evils than it occasions.—This transaction, at first sight, makes it manifest that we are capable of ruining, but not of saving ourselves; and that the contrivance and proposal of salvation go before, not only our deservings and endeavours, but even our desires and expectations. Had not therefore the Judge of men been previously revealed, as the Saviour of sinners, we must all have stood self-convicted and trembling before him, to hear the awful sentence of everlasting condemnation, without the possibility of escape.

## V. 20—24.

Notwithstanding the light of revelation, and the hope of eternal life, the world, ever since the fall, has been full of darkness, sin, and misery: what then would it have been, had the Lord finally withdrawn from his apostate creatures? And if temporal suffering causes such doleful lamentations, what will be "the second death," "the wrath to come?" The believer, however, is taught to consider the former as fatherly chastisements, tokens of love, "light afflictions," and but for a moment; and is enabled to submit to them, and to death itself, with cheerfulness, in the hope of everlasting glory: but the latter is reserved as the portion of the enemies of God. Hoping in the merits of Christ, and the blood of the everlasting covenant of which he is the faithful Surety, let us prostrate ourselves before God, in humiliation for sin, and gratitude for salvation; let us labour and suffer patiently, manfully resist temptation, and obey his commands with cheerfulness: not only expecting that "he will bruise Satan under our feet shortly;" but that he will in due time crush the Serpent's head completely, and fill the earth with truth and righteousness.

## NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1, 2. The word, translated *gotten*, means *acquired or possessed*, and generally implies a high valuation of the acquisition; it is thus used in two remarkable texts:

ii. 20. 23. v. 29  
xvi. 11. xxix. 33.  
—35. xxxv. 18.  
Ex. ii. 10. 1 Sam.  
i. 29. Matt. i. 21.  
23.  
• Heb. Cherub.  
• Acts xvii. 26.  
c. 7. Is. lxi. 10.  
Rom. iii. 22.  
2 Cor. v. 21. 20 ¶ And <sup>a</sup>Adam called his wife's name <sup>b</sup>Eve; because she was the mother <sup>b</sup>of all living.

21 Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God <sup>c</sup>make coats of skins, and clothed them.

• 5. i. 26. xl. 6, 7.  
Is. xix. 12. xlvii.  
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e. ii. 9. Prov. iii. 18.  
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l. John xiv. 6. Heb.  
x. 18—22. <sup>e</sup>tree of life, and <sup>f</sup>eat, and live for ever;

23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to <sup>g</sup>till the ground from whence he was taken.

24 So he drove out the man: and he placed at the <sup>h</sup>east of the garden of Eden <sup>i</sup>Cherubims, and <sup>k</sup>a flaming sword which turned every way, <sup>l</sup>to keep the way of the tree of life.

V. 20. Adam thankfully accepted the reprieve comprehended in the sentence, and looked forward to the increase of the human species with submissive satisfaction, notwithstanding its attendant miseries; because he by faith embraced the promise of that future “Seed of the woman, which should bruise the Serpent’s head.” And he called his wife *Eve*, which signifies *Life*, or *Living*; not only as she was to be the mother of the whole human race, but also of him especially who is the Author and Source of life eternal to all believers.

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In deducing practical instruction from this important part of Scripture, the only difficulty lies in selection; for every part of revealed religion is virtually comprised in it.—The subject calls upon us to lament and mourn; not so much for these primitive transgressors, as for ourselves, our children, and the whole human race, thus involved in one common ruin; but at the same time it reminds us to rejoice in God our Saviour, from whom come everlasting righteousness and felicity. It behoves us, however, “to rejoice with trembling,” lest we be found among those who neglect this great salvation, through the deceitfulness of our hearts, and the snares of the world; and, above all, through the subtlety of our watchful, unwearied, and malicious enemies, the powers of darkness, and the agents in whom they lie concealed, who are still envious of our happiness, and covertly plotting our destruction. For, though the several steps be not always so discernible, there is the same concurrence and succession in all temptations, by which we are overcome, as there were in the case of Eve: and it contains a picture in miniature of all Satan’s devices and victories in every age. Still he insinuates hard thoughts of God and his commandments; flatters men with hopes of impunity, in direct contradiction to the sacred oracles; enhances to the imagination the pleasure or advantage of sinful indulgence; pays court to pride and the sensual appetite: he still entangles men in error, seduces them into unbelief, hurries them on with precipitation, and prevails with them to “trust in their own hearts,” and “lean to their own understandings,” till he has effected his destructive purposes. Whenever therefore our pride is flattered, or discontent, ambition, affectation of independence, covetousness, or sensual lust is excited; when we are ready to promise ourselves impunity in sin, or advantage from it; when hard thoughts of God and his commandments, doubts about his veracity and faithfulness, or low apprehensions of the value of his favour and of spiritual blessings are suggested; and when we are urged forward in self-confidence, not brooking opposition, and not taking time for prayer, and consulting pious and prudent friends: then we may be sure the old Serpent is tempting us; then especially we are called to “watch and pray;” and our only safety consists in speedy flight, or vigorous resistance, being “stedfast in the faith.”—We have also in Satan’s conduct the first example of *perjury*, and a specimen of its horrible consequences: and

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## V. 14—19.

We should accustom ourselves to consider all the sorrows and troubles of life, however varied, and by whatever second causes brought upon us, as part of the sentence of a righteous Judge pronounced against our sinful race. (*Notes, Ps. xc. 3—11.*) Even death itself should not be spoken of as the *debt of nature*, but as the execution of the law of God upon a criminal. "So teach us, O LORD, to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom!"—On the other hand, all our comforts are undeserved mercies: and this should teach us, not only patience and contentment, but lively gratitude; especially as they are connected with the promise of a Saviour, and the hope of eternal life. Even the troubles, to which we are here exposed, death itself not excepted, as things are now circumstanced, are of a salutary tendency, if duly prepared for: and the wearisome labour to which man, as a criminal, is sentenced, and against which all the slothful of every rank continually rebel, prevents far greater evils than it occasions.—This transaction, at first sight, makes it manifest that we are capable of ruining, but not of saving ourselves; and that the contrivance and proposal of salvation go before, not only our deservings and endeavours, but even our desires and expectations. Had not therefore the Judge of men been previously revealed, as the Saviour of sinners, we must all have stood self-convicted and trembling before him, to hear the awful sentence of everlasting condemnation, without the possibility of escape.

## V. 20—24.

Notwithstanding the light of revelation, and the hope of eternal life, the world, ever since the fall, has been full of darkness, sin, and misery: what then would it have been, had the Lord finally withdrawn from his apostate creatures? And if temporal suffering causes such doleful lamentations, what will be "the second death," "the wrath to come?" The believer, however, is taught to consider the former as fatherly chastisements, tokens of love, "light afflictions," and but for a moment; and is enabled to submit to them, and to death itself, with cheerfulness, in the hope of everlasting glory: but the latter is reserved as the portion of the enemies of God. Hoping in the merits of Christ, and the blood of the everlasting covenant of which he is the faithful Surety, let us prostrate ourselves before God, in humiliation for sin, and gratitude for salvation; let us labour and suffer patiently, manfully resist temptation, and obey his commands with cheerfulness: not only expecting that "he will bruise Satan under our feet shortly;" but that he will in due time crush the Serpent's head completely, and fill the earth with truth and righteousness.

## NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1, 2. The word, translated *gotten*, means *acquired* or *possessed*, and generally implies a high valuation of the acquisition; it is thus used in two remarkable texts:

<sup>a</sup> Heb. *Hebel*.  
<sup>b</sup> xxix. 29—31.  
 xvi. 32—34.  
 xviii. 3. Ex. vii.  
 1. Ps. lxxviii. 70.  
 —72. Am. vii. 14.  
<sup>f</sup> Heb. *freder*.  
<sup>c</sup> in. 23. ix. 20.  
<sup>g</sup> Heb. *at the end of days*. 1 Kings xvii. 7. Neh. xiii. 6. *Marg.*  
<sup>d</sup> Lev. ii. 1—11.  
 Num. xviii. 12.  
<sup>e</sup> Ex. xiii. 12. Num. xviii. 17. Prov. iii. 9. Heb. ix. 22. 1 Pet. ii. 20. Rev. xiii. 8.  
<sup>h</sup> Heb. *sheep, or, goats*.  
<sup>i</sup> xv. 17. Lev. ix. 24. Num. xvi. 25. Judg. vi. 21. 1 Kings xviii. 24. 38. 1 Chr. xxi. 23. 2 Chr. vii. 1. Ps. xx. 5. *Marg.*  
<sup>j</sup> Num. xvi. 15.  
<sup>k</sup> Heb. xi. 4.  
<sup>h</sup> xxxi. 2. 5. Job v. 2. Luke xv. 28—30. Acts xiii. 45

2 And she again bare his brother <sup>a</sup>Abel. <sup>b</sup>And Abel was <sup>c</sup>a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a <sup>d</sup>tiller of the ground.

3 And <sup>e</sup>in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of <sup>f</sup>the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

4 And Abel, he also brought of <sup>g</sup>the firstlings of his <sup>h</sup>flock, and of the fat thereof. And the LORD <sup>i</sup>had respect unto Abel, and to his offering:

5 But <sup>j</sup>unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very <sup>k</sup>wroth, and his countenance fell.

6 And the LORD said unto Cain,

'Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

7 If <sup>l</sup>thou doest well, shalt thou not <sup>m</sup>'be accepted? and if thou doest not well, <sup>n</sup>'sin lieth at the door. And <sup>o</sup>'unto thee *shall be* his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

8 And Cain <sup>p</sup>talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass when they were in the field, that <sup>q</sup>Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

9 ¶ And the LORD said unto Cain, <sup>r</sup>'Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, <sup>s</sup>'I know not: *Am* I my brother's keeper?

1 Chr. xiii. 11—13. Is. i. 18. Jer. ii. 6. 31. Jon. iv. 1—4. 8—11. Mic. vi. 8—9. Matt. xx. 18. Luke xv. 31, 32.  
 Ec. viii. 12, 13. Is. iii. 10, 11. Acts x. 35. Rom. ii. 7—10.  
 Or, *have the excellency*.  
 18—13. Rom. vii. 8, 9. Jam. i. 15.  
 Or, *subject unto thee*. 16. *Marg.*  
 2 Sam. iii. 27. xiii. 26—28. xx. 9, 10. Neh. vi. 2. Ps. lv. 21. Prov. xxi. 24—26. Luke xxii. 48.  
 n 2 Sam. xiv. 6. Matt. xxiii. 35. Luke xi. 51.  
 1 John iii. 12—15. Jude 11.  
 o iii. 9—11.  
 p xxxvii. 32. Job xxii. 13, 14. Ps. x. 13, 14. John viii. 44. Acts v. 4—9

Deut. xxxii. 6. Prov. viii. 22. Heb. Probably therefore Eve concluded that this was the promised Seed; and indeed some think the words may be rendered, "I have acquired a MAN, even JEHOVAH." If so, the subsequent events must have been a most distressing disappointment. On the other hand the name given to Abel (which signifies *Vanity*) seems to imply, that far inferior expectations were formed respecting him. And if Cain was early taught to consider himself, as entitled by his birth-right to the special favour and blessing of God, it might greatly tend to nourish in him that proud, malignant, and envious spirit, which produced the fatal consequences recorded in this chapter.

V. 3—5. This early use of sacrifices confirms the supposition, that the appointment of them formed a part of the gracious revelation, made to Adam after his transgression. —It is indeed exceedingly difficult, in any other way, to account for the use of altars and sacrifices, in appeasing the anger of the offended Deity; which has prevailed almost in all ages and nations, and which does not appear to have its origin from any deductions of human reason. But if God commanded Adam, after the fall, to shed the blood of *innocent* animals, and to consume part or the whole of their bodies by fire; representing the punishment merited by sin, in death and after death, and prefiguring the sufferings of Christ; then the whole is natural: the original tradition was remembered, and the method of expiation practised, long after the meaning of it was obscured or forgotten.—The apostle informs us that, "by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." (*Note, Heb. xi. 4.*) Now Cain evidently had some kind of faith in God, his Creator and providential Benefactor; and he brought an offering as an outward acknowledgment of his obligations, and expression of his gratitude: but he did not believe in the promised Saviour, nor come as a sinner to supplicate mercy through him; and therefore he did not bring the sacrifices which prefigured the atonement. Thus he manifested an impenitent and unbelieving heart, and virtually cleaved to the violated covenant of works; and therefore he and his offering were rejected. But Abel came in *faith*, as a sinner, according to the appointment of God; his offering was presented in sincerity, and was expressive of humility and believing obedience: and, as he sought the mercy of the new covenant, through the promised Seed, he was graciously accepted; and his sacrifice was distinguished

by some manifest token of divine approbation. Probably, it was consumed by fire from heaven; which intimated, that deserved vengeance, consuming the sacrifice, made way for the exercise of mercy to the offender. (*Marg. Ref. f.*) —In all ages there have been two such descriptions of worshippers; namely, proud despisers of salvation by faith in the blood of Christ, who have attempted to please God by their own devices; and humble believers, who have found acceptance in his appointed way, and patiently endured the envy, hatred, and persecution to which this exposed them. Cain however, instead of humbly enquiring the cause of his rejection, indulged desponding grief, and malignant resentment against Abel, and even rebellion and enmity against God himself; which tormenting passions were (as they are wont to be,) strongly marked on his sullen, downcast countenance.

V. 6, 7. Though Cain manifested a most rebellious spirit, yet the Lord condescended to expostulate with him, and shewed that he had no cause of dissatisfaction; that the hypocrisy of his heart, and the unwarranted method of his approach, had indeed *deservedly* excluded him from his gracious approbation; but that, if he came in another temper, and in the prescribed way, he too would be accepted. He further warned him, that "sin lay at the door," ready to burst in upon him; for impenitence and the indulgence of malignant passions would open the way to the commission of greater crimes, which would expose him to still deeper condemnation: or the guilt of his unpardoned, because unexpiated crimes, lay at the door ready to seize on him, as a lion on his prey. Neither had Cain any cause for discontent or resentment; seeing Abel still loved him, and was ready to obey him, as his elder brother, even as he had before done.—It is not said in what way the Lord spake to Cain: but it is probable, that it was by some mild and familiar appearance in human form, as in many subsequent instances it was undeniably the case: for had it been with a display of terrific glory, as some suppose, it can hardly be conceived, that he would have dared to answer as he afterwards did.

V. 8. Cain concealed his murderous hatred under the mask of cordial affection, and entered into familiar converse with his brother; till he had drawn him into a place of privacy, where he took the opportunity of slaying him.

V. 9. The Lord soon called the murderer to account for

q iii. 13. Josh. vii.  
19. Ps. i. 21.  
• Heb. blood.  
r xviii. 20. Ex. iii.  
7. Job xxi. 38.  
30. Ps. ix. 12. Is.  
v. 7. Heb. xii.  
24. Jam. v. 4.  
Rev. vi. 10.  
• iia. 14. Deut.  
xxvii. 24. xxviii.  
15—20. xxix. 19  
—21. Gal. iii. 10.  
• Job xvi. 18. xxxi.  
38—40. Is. xxvi.  
21. Rev. xii. 16.  
• iii. 17. 18. Lev.  
xxvi. 20. Deut.  
xxviii. 23, 24.  
• 14. Lev. xxvi.  
36. Deut. xxviii.  
65, 66. Ps. cix.  
10. Jer. xx. 3, 4.  
Hos. ix. 17.  
+ Or, *Iniquity*  
is greater than  
that it may be  
forgiven.  
y Rev. xvi. 9. 11.  
21.  
z Prov. xiv. 32. Is.  
viii. 22. Hos. xiii.  
3.  
• 16. Job xxi. 14.  
15. Ps. li. 11—14. cxliii. 7. Matt. xxv. 41. 46. 2 Thes. i. 9.

10 And he said, 'What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's 'blood crieth unto me from the ground.

11 And now art thou 'cursed from the earth, which hath 'opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand.

12 When thou tillest the ground, 'it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength. 'A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be on the earth.

13 And Cain said unto the LORD, 'My punishment is greater than I can bear.

14 Behold, thou hast 'driven me out this day from the face of the earth: and 'from thy face shall I be hid, and I shall

be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth, and it shall come to pass, 'that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

15 And the LORD said unto him, 'Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him 'sevenfold. And the LORD set 'a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

16 ¶ And Cain 'went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

17 And Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bare 'Enoch: 'and he builded a city, and called 'the name of the city after the name of his son Enoch.

his conduct, (as he had formerly done Adam and Eve;) enquiring of him, "Where his brother Abel was?" and his answer accorded to the idea before suggested of his pride and unbelief. He denied that he knew where Abel was, as if he could conceal his crime from God himself; and he insolently demanded, whether he was his brother's keeper! —I know not whether we are to consider this as a denial of the omniscience of God, as a rejection of his authority, or as a defiance of his omnipotence; but it plainly shews that sin had hardened Cain's heart and blinded his understanding.

V. 10—12. Thus God called upon Cain to reflect on the horrid nature and aggravated circumstances of his crime, and the vengeance due to him, in order to awaken his remorse and alarm his fears.—Undeserved hatred and proud revenge producing premeditated murder, while men were comparatively few in number, and probably none had yet died; the murder of a brother, in cruel disregard to their common parents, for no other cause than the excellency of his character, and the envy excited by the favour which God had shown him; a malignant hatred of holiness, daring contempt of the Lord himself, and determined enmity to him; were united in this one crime. (Note, 1 John iii. 11, 12.)—The justice and holiness of the great Governor of the universe, render it so proper for him to punish offenders, that they who suffer flagrant wrong, are often spoken of in Scripture, as loudly calling upon him to execute vengeance on their injurers. And, as he witnesses the secret crimes which elude human justice; so those crimes themselves are represented, as demanding the punishment of the offenders from the Judge of all, "to whom vengeance belongs." Thus Abel's blood called, as with a loud voice, to the Lord to punish the murderer: and Cain's enormous crime exposed him to so awful and deserved a curse, that the very elements were ready to rise up in arms against him, as the Creator's instruments of vengeance; and the earth would withhold her wonted increase, because he had forced her to drink the blood of righteous Abel.—There is peculiar majesty and energy in thus personifying the inanimate creatures, and representing them as uniting against Cain.—In consequence of his crime, he would also be dreaded and detested, and the sight of him would become hateful even to his parents, Adam and Eve; so that he would be compelled to leave their society, and to wander as a vagabond

in distant parts, filled with anguish and made a terror to himself. (Στενω και τρεμων. Groaning and trembling. Sept.)

Cursed from the earth, &c. (11) Or, "more cursed than the ground," &c.

V. 13—15. Either Cain proudly complained of the severity, with which he was to be punished; or, as the words more naturally signify, he stated that his crime was too great to be pardoned. Thus he still manifested an unhumiliated, impenitent, unbelieving heart. He considered himself as an out-law, about to be left destitute of God's providential protection, and driven to a distance from his worshippers and ordinances, to spend his days in groans and terrors, till some person should meet with him and kill him. 'Behold here a finished picture of impenitent misery; what a contrast to the fifty-first Psalm!' Fuller.—But the Lord determined that Cain should live, a monument and evidence of his abhorrence of murder; so that he would severely punish any one who should slay him.—It is in vain to enquire about the mark set upon Cain: it was doubtless an indelible brand of infamy, which would make him known to all who saw him.—Adam and Eve had very many more children than are mentioned in this brief narrative; which was principally intended to record a few important particulars, and to trace the history, from the beginning to the time of Moses. And if, as it is generally thought, Abel was murdered but a short time before the birth of Seth: the human race might be exceedingly increased in the space of a hundred and thirty years.

V. 16, 17. Cain seems entirely to have left the ordinances of God, the society of his worshippers, and the places especially favoured with the tokens of his presence. This might be at first by compulsion, in consequence of the curse denounced on him; but, continuing impenitent, he probably soon became openly irreligious, or perhaps an idolater. Nod signifies a vagabond, or wanderer: the land of the vagabonds.—The wife of Cain is the first woman mentioned in this history, Eve only excepted. The sons and daughters of Adam and Eve must have intermarried. It is probable that Cain had been married, and had children, long before these events; and that his descendants principally helped him to build a city, and formed the majority of its inhabitants.—Thus he attempted to divert his mind from serious reflections and remorse of conscience; or to attach to himself adherents,

18 And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech.

19 And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah.

20 And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle.

21 And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.

22 And Zillah, she also bare Tubalcain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron: and the sister of Tubalcain was Naamah.

23 ¶ And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, "Hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt."

24 If Cain shall be avenged seven-fold, truly Lamech seventy and seven-fold.

25 ¶ And Adam knew his wife again, and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.

26 And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the Lord.

\* Heb. Lamech.  
† ii. 24. Matt. xii. 4-6. 8.

k 21. 1 Chr. ii. 50-52. iv. 4, 5. Rom. iv. 11, 12. 1 2. xxv. 27. Jer. xxxv. 9, 10. Heb. xi. 9.

an xxxxi. 27. Job xxxi. 12. Is. v. 12. Am. vi. 5.

† Heb. whether.  
n Ex. xxxv. 3. Num. xxxi. 22. Deut. viii. 9. xxxiii. 25. 2 Chr. ii. 7.

o Num. xxiii. 18. Judg. ix. 7.

r Or, I would slay a man in my wound, &c.  
† Or, in my hurt.

p 15. Matt. xviii. 22.

q v. 3, 4. 1 Chr. i. 1. Luke iii. 38. 1 Heb. Seth.  
r 1-3, 8, 10, 11. B. C. 3769.  
s v. 6-8.

† Heb. Enosh.  
† Or, call themselves by the name of the LORD. Deut. xxi. 17, 18. Is. xlii. 5. xlviii. 1. lxxiii. 19. Jer. xxxiii. 16. Zeph. iii. 9. Acts xi. 16. Eph. iii. 14.

and to get a name in one way, as he had forfeited his reputation in another.

V. 18-22. The sacred historian cursorily mentions a few of Cain's descendants; but not in that particular manner, in which he afterwards gives a genealogy of the line of Seth to Noah.—Lamech is the first on record, who deviated from the original institution of marriage, by taking more than one wife: and this did not occur till the earth was considerably replenished with inhabitants. Some of his sons became remarkable, as the inventors of useful and ingenious arts: but no intimation is given that any of them were pious persons. (*Marg. Ref.*)

*Brass and iron.*] This early use of metals, seems to imply, that some instructions in this respect had been given to Adam from God.

V. 23, 24. Lamech appears to have been either suspicious of his wives, or desirous of obviating their apprehensions for his safety. It seems plain that he was conscious of having many enemies, whose resentment he had provoked by injuries of one kind or other: whether therefore he spake affirmatively, and acknowledged that he had killed a man, though not his own brother; or interrogatively, "Have I killed a man to my hurt?" he evidently drew a comparison betwixt himself and his ancestor Cain, and flattered himself that he was much less criminal: while he seems to have abused the patience of God, in sparing Cain, into an encouragement to himself to expect impunity in sin, and to defy the vengeance of his adversaries.

V. 25. Perhaps Eve had some intimation, that this son was to be the progenitor of the promised Seed. The mention of Abel, in this connexion, was an indication of her piety, as valuing pious Abel above all her children.

V. 26. *To call upon, &c.*] Or, "to call themselves by the name of the Lord:" (*Marg.*) that is, some persons, by an open profession of true religion, began to protest against the prevailing impiety and wickedness of the world around them; to separate from the society of idolaters and irreligious persons; and to call on the Lord as his worshippers.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1-7.

The promises of God will surely be accomplished; but

the appointed season must be waited for, and hasty expectations often end in bitter disappointments. An instance of worship accepted by our holy God, from any of our fallen race, should be a joyful and welcome sight to sinners: but his acceptance can only be obtained, in the way of his appointment; and unbelief, pride, and hypocrisy, are as ruinous as open ungodliness.—When we fail of success in our undertakings, or comfort in religious exercises; instead of yielding to discontent and envy, we should diligently search out and remove the sinful cause; for thus we may afterwards succeed: but if we "give place to the devil," by harbouring envy and resentment, we know not whither we may be hurried.—What fatal effects do we here behold of Adam's transgression! What can we discern in Cain of the divine image? Was he "very good?" On the contrary do not pride, anger, envy, lies, malice, murder, enmity against God, and final apostasy, the very image of Satan, mark his whole character? for as divine truth, embraced in faith, is the appointed means of our recovering, "from glory to glory," the image of God; so Satan's lies, when believed, produce his diabolical nature in the soul.

##### V. 8-26.

What varied anguish must have tortured the hearts of our first parents at the events here recorded! But, "Abel being dead, yet speaketh:" not only proclaiming the heinousness of murder, and warning us resolutely to suppress the first emotions of wrath; but also teaching us, that the believer's happiness is not in this world; that persecution must be expected by the righteous, and that there is a future state and an eternal recompence to be enjoyed by them, through faith in Christ and his atoning sacrifice.—When "Cain, who was of that wicked one, slew his brother, because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous;" then, in consequence of the enmity put betwixt the Seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, the war broke out, which, in one way or another, hath been waged ever since: and Cain may be considered as the father, the patron, and the archetype of proud infidels, Pharisees, formal worshippers, and bloody persecutors, of every age and nation, from the beginning to the end of the world. In this war we are all concerned: for our Captain hath de-

## CHAP. V.

A repeated account of Adam's creation, 1, 2. The birth of Seth, 3. The age and death of Adam, 4, 5; Seth, 6—8; Enos, 9—11; Cainan, 12—14; Mahalaleel, 15—17; and Jared, 18—20. Enoch walks with God, and is translated, 21—24. The age and death of Methuselah, 25—27; and of Lamech, 28—31. An account of Noah, and his sons, 32.

**THIS** is the "book of the generations of Adam: in the day that God created man, <sup>b</sup> in the likeness of God made he him :

2 Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called "their name Adam, in the day when they were created.

3 And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat *a son* "in his own likeness, after his image; and "called his name Seth.

4 And "the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years: and "he begat sons and daughters :

5 And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: <sup>b</sup> and he died.

6 And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos :

7 And Seth lived after he begat Enos eight hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters :

8 And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years: and he died.

9 And Enos lived ninety years, and begat "Cainan :

10 And Enos lived after he begat Cainan eight hundred and fifteen years, and begat sons and daughters :

11 And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years: and he died.

12 And Cainan lived seventy years, and begat Mahalaleel.

13 And Cainan lived after he begat Mahalaleel eight hundred and forty years, and begat sons and daughters :

14 And all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years: and he died.

h iii. 19. Heb. ix. 27.  
B. C. 3074.

\* Heb. Kenan.  
B. C. 3079.

B. C. 2864.

B. C. 3000

B. C. 2769.

a ii. 4. Matt. i. 1.  
Luke iii. 36—38.

b i. 26, 27. Eph.  
iv. 24. Col. iii.  
10.

c ii. 15. Marg. Acts  
xvii. 26.

d Job xiv. 4. xv.  
14—16. xxv. 4.  
Ps. li. 5. Luke i.  
75. John iii. 6.  
Rom. v. 12. Eph.  
ii. 8.

e iv. 25.  
f i. Chr. i. 1—9.  
Luke iii. 37, 38.

g 7. 10. 13. 19. 22.  
26. 30. i. 28. ix.  
7.

clared, "He that is not with me, is against me." Under his banners therefore let us enlist, and not be fearful and unbelieving, but take up our cross and follow him; and let us earnestly and decidedly, yet meekly, support the cause of truth and righteousness against Satan and his servants: and should we meet with persecution even unto death, he will certainly give us the crown of everlasting life. (Rev. iii. 21.) These are "the better things," which the blood of Jesus speaketh, than did that of Abel, who was a type of him, both in the righteousness of his life and in the manner of his death: but Abel's blood called for vengeance on him who shed it; while the blood of Christ pleads, before the throne, for pardon and peace, grace and glory, to those whose sins procured his death.—But what will it avail the sinner, to deny or excuse his crimes? to impeach or blaspheme the justice of his Maker? or impiously to spend the space of his long-suffering in worldly projects, or in making himself eminent among his fellow-creatures, or terrible to them? For "the wrath of God abideth on him:" this will poison all his enjoyments; and heaven, earth, and hell, will speedily combine, as it were, in effecting his everlasting destruction. Indeed, worldly employments often help men to forget their danger and misery: and, as the first city, that is mentioned in history, was built by Cain, and his posterity were the inventors of many useful arts; so ungodly men still frequently excel, in natural ingenuity and skill, those who attend to "the one thing needful;" who, however, "choose the good part, which shall never be taken "from them."

## NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. This chapter is a brief history of the posterity of Adam, in that line from which all the human race since the flood is descended: and of them alone; for

the immense numbers, which sprang from the other branches of the families, in each generation, are barely mentioned. The former chapters also referred to, as the authentick records of the original of the world, and of the human race.—ADAM was the name not only of the first man, but also of the species: it is supposed to have been derived from the red colour of the earth, out of which his body was formed.

V. 3. The distinction between Adam "created in the "likeness of God," and Seth begotten in the likeness of Adam after the fall, is very remarkable.—It is generally allowed that Adam and Eve were *personally* pardoned, and recovered to holiness: but Adam was no longer the representative of his posterity, as he was when he transgressed the covenant; thus he communicated to them that nature which he had as a sinner, not the new nature which he had as a believer.—Seth also seems to have been a godly person; not as begotten by Adam, but as "born of the Spirit;" and this seems to have been noted in respect of him, lest Cain's wickedness should be ascribed to other causes, and Abel's righteousness to the goodness of his natural disposition, and not to the grace of God. But indeed the character and conduct of all Seth's posterity, (Christ alone excepted,) plainly testify what that image was in which he was begotten.

V. 4—20. The Greek translation of the Bible, called the Septuagint, varies from our version, (which was made from the Hebrew,) both in this genealogy, and in that which follows. (xi. 10—26.) In particular, by the addition of a hundred years to the age of Adam, and of six of these Patriarchs, before their sons here mentioned were born, and deducting them from the subsequent part of their lives, making the sum total the same. Thus the space between the creation and the deluge is made seven hundred years more than in our account: and by a similar addition, with

C. 3544 15 And Mahalaleel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared:

Heb Jered 16 And Mahalaleel lived after he begat <sup>\*</sup>Jared eight hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters:

17 And all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred ninety and five years: and he died.

B. C. 2714 18 And Jared lived an hundred sixty and two years, and he begat <sup>1</sup>Enoch.

iv. 17. 1 Chr. i. 3. Enoch. Luke iii. 37. 19 And Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

B. C. 2582  
B. C. 3317.  
k vi. 9. xvii. 1. xxiv. 40. xlviii. 15. Lev. xxvii. 12. Deut. xlii. 4. Ps. cxvi. 9. Cant. i. 4. Am. iii. 3. Mic. iv. 5. vi. 8. Mal. ii. 6. Luke i. 6. Acts ix. 31. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Col. i. 10. Thes. ii. 12. 1 John i. 7. 20 And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years: and he died.

21 And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah.

22 And Enoch <sup>k</sup>walked with God

after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

23 And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years.

24 And Enoch walked with God, and he *was* not: <sup>1</sup>for God took him.

25 And Methuselah lived an hundred eighty and seven years, and begat <sup>†</sup>Lamech.

1 2 Kings ii. 11. Heb. xi. 5, 6 Jude 14, 16.

† Heb. Lamech. iv. 18. marg.

26 And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters.

27 And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died.

B. C. 2348.

28 And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son.

other variations, the space between the deluge and the birth of Abraham, is made almost nine hundred years more. But the original Hebrew is best entitled to our confidence: and the difference may be ascribed to some mistakes in the numeral letters; or rather, perhaps, to a vanity in the translators, which has been common in many nations, of ascribing a very remote antiquity to the commencement of their history.—The individuals here mentioned might not be the first-born, as Seth was not the eldest son of Adam; but the genealogy was continued through them, not only from Adam to Noah, but afterwards even to Christ, “the second Adam, the Lord from heaven.”

V. 21—24. “Walking with God,” is a figurative description of the intimate communion, which subsists between a merciful God and true believers. “Can two walk together except they be agreed?” *Amos* iii. 3. Without coincidence in sentiment, judgment, and disposition, there can be no cordial union nor harmony. But man is naturally prone to those things which God abhors and forbids, and averse from those which he loves and commands. Man’s understanding is darkened, his judgment perverted, his affections depraved, and his taste vitiated by sin; so that, in almost every thing, his views, his choice, his desires, and pursuits, are the reverse of those which the Scripture requires. Thus he is induced to walk contrary to God, to contract guilt, and merit condemnation. A sinner’s walk with God, therefore, commences with the change of his judgment and disposition by divine grace. Then he begins to repent of his sins, to despise the world in comparison of the favour of God, to “hunger and thirst after righteousness,” to seek forgiveness and acceptance in the way of God’s appointment, and to devote himself to his love and service, and the pursuit of holiness. Having been thus reconciled to God, he *walks with him* by habitual repentance, and “faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;” in a realizing regard to the presence of God in his whole conduct; a daily dependence on the promise, providence, and grace of God, for all things needful for soul and body; and a continual attention to his word, that from thence he may learn his truth and will, and derive the peace and comfort of his salvation;

by pouring out his heart before the Lord in fervent prayer and grateful praise; by a believing, reverential, and delightful attendance on all the ordinances of his worship, and an open profession of his faith and love; by a conscientious obedience to all his commandments, without regarding the praise or censure of men; by submission to his providential appointments; and finally, by attention to every relative obligation, a careful improvement of every talent, a circumspect conversation, and endeavouring to “adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things,” and to recommend religion to all around him.—The Lord, on his part, answers the expectations of those who walk with him. He supplies their wants, interposes in their emergencies, and evidences his care of them: he meets them in his ordinances, teaches them from his word, answers their prayers, accepts their services: he communicates by his Spirit, wisdom, strength, and consolation to their souls, and is indeed their Guide, Companion, and Counsellor through life: and at length he meets them at death, and takes them into “his presence, where is fulness of joy.” Thus ends the walk of faith; for thenceforth they walk by sight, and see him as he is; being for ever with him, and like him in holiness and felicity.—But “Enoch was translated, that he should not see death.” *Heb.* xi. 5, 6. In the prime of life, according to those times, he was taken from earth to heaven, in the body, without feeling the pangs of death, “having received ‘this testimony, that he pleased God.’” Therefore “he was not” on earth: neither his friends nor his persecutors could find him. He was a preacher of righteousness; and, if we may judge by the specimen left on record, (*Jude* 14, 15,) his plain and alarming address could not fail greatly to enrage the daring sinners, among whom he lived. But God effectually rescued him from their malice, testified his approbation of his conduct, and gave a convincing proof of the existence of the invisible world, and of the future state of recompence. ‘It is possible also that the translation of ‘this holy man might be conferred, in order to shew what ‘should have been common to all, had man persisted in his ‘obedience: a translation from the earthly to the heavenly ‘paradise.’ *Fuller.*

m vi. 8. 9. vii. 23.  
ix. 24. Ia. iiv. 9.  
Ez. xiv. 14. 20.  
—Matt. xxiv. 37.  
Luke iii. 36. xvi.  
26. 27. Yoc. Heb.  
xi. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 5.  
20. 2 Pet. ii. 5.  
n iii. 17. 19. iv. 12.

29 And <sup>m</sup>he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us, concerning our work and toil of our hands, <sup>n</sup>because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed.

30 And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and daughters.

31 And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years : and he died.

32 And Noah was five hundred years old : and Noah begat <sup>o</sup>Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

B. C. 2353.

B. C. 2448.  
o vi. 10. vii. 13. ix.  
18. 19. 22—27. x.  
1. 32. 1 Chr. i. 4  
—25. 2 Chr. iii.  
36

V. 29. *Noah signifies rest, or, refreshing.*—Perhaps Lamech had respect to the promise, (iii. 15,) and might hope he had obtained the promised Seed : but it is more likely that he spake by the Spirit of prophecy, which revealed to him that Noah would be an extraordinary person ; and not only a great comfort to his parents and relatives amidst their toils and sorrows, but likewise a great blessing to mankind ; with special reference to the preservation of the human species with him in the ark, which typified the salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ. He was also thus marked out as the progenitor of the promised Seed.—It is generally thought that Noah greatly improved the art of husbandry, and so lessened the labour before required in cultivating the earth. (ix. 20.)

V. 32. *Note, x. 1.*

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—20.

This chapter contains nearly all the history, that God hath pleased to transmit to us, of the antediluvian world which subsisted for the space of 1656 years. Considering how long men lived and had children before the flood, we may well suppose that the earth was filled with inhabitants ; and conjecture, with apparent probability, that there were many flourishing kingdoms, many revolutions in states, many mighty achievements and renowned characters, which are all now buried in oblivion : while nothing is recorded but what relates to the holy seed, among whom true religion was maintained, and who doubtless were despised and hated in their generation. In the judgment of God, the saints are the only excellent and eminent persons, and true religion the grand concern, on earth ; compared with which, all things else are scarcely worth mentioning.—The power of God alone, “ in whom we live, and move, and have our “ being,” could preserve the curious fabrick of the human body for the few years, now allotted to us ; and the same power would suffice to preserve it to the age of Methuselah, or for ever. Man lives as long as his Creator pleases, and no longer : which should warn us not to provoke him, but to be prepared for and expecting our summons. Nor have we any cause to regret the shortness of our present lives : Abel and Enoch, the two most favoured characters before the flood, were removed at an earlier period than any others whose history is recorded. Were the world less miserable, it could be no loss to die and go to heaven : nor can it ever

#### CHAP. VI.

The worshippers of God intermarry with the ungodly ; wickedness rapidly increases ; and the Lord in anger determines to destroy the earth, 1—7. Noah is accepted by God ; warned of an approaching deluge ; and instructed to prepare an ark, 8—21. He implicitly obeys, 22.

AND it came to pass, when men began <sup>a</sup>to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

2 That <sup>b</sup>the sons of God saw the daughters of men, <sup>c</sup>that they were fair ; <sup>d</sup>and they took them wives of all which they chose.

a i. 28.  
b iv. 26. Ex. iv. 22.  
23. Deut. xiv. 1.  
Ps. lxxxii. 6. 7.  
Is. lxiii. 16. Mal.  
ii. 11. John viii.  
41. 42. Rom. ix.  
7. 8. 2 Cor. vi.  
18.  
c iii. 6. xxxix. 6.  
7. 2 Sam. xii. 2.  
Job xxxi. 1.  
1 John ii. 16.  
d xxiv. 8. xxvii.  
46. Ex. xxxiv.  
16. Deut. vii. 3.  
4. Josh. xxiii.  
12. 13. Ezra ix.  
1. 2. 12. Neh.  
xiii. 24—27.  
Mal. ii. 15. 1 Cor.  
vii. 39. 2 Cor. vi.  
14—16.

be gain to live and treasure up wrath by sin : and as the long lives of the antediluvians might encourage procrastination and increase presumption ; so the shortness of our days may warn us without delay, to hearken to the voice of God in the gospel.

##### V. 21—32.

Man, in his best estate, is altogether vanity.—He is born, raises up a family, and dies ! These are his memoirs : all else is a cypher, or a blot, except he WALKS WITH GOD.—The page of history records the splendid actions of the great and illustrious : the report of the day proclaims the wealth which some have accumulated and left behind, and of which they are gone to render an account : the monuments of the dead are often inscribed with pompous titles and flattering commendations :—but may it, *with truth*, be engraven on my tomb-stone, or whispered in the obscurest corner, “ He walked with God, and was not, for God took “ him ! ” and so far from envying their distinctions, not even Enoch’s privilege shall be anxiously desired ; but, as one expresses it,

‘ I’ll hail the sharpest pangs of death,  
‘ Which break my way to God.’ *Doddridge.*

We may also observe that they, who begin young to walk with God, may expect to walk with him long, comfortably, and usefully : and the true Christian’s *perseverance* in holiness, through many a year, till God takes him, will best evince and illustrate that doctrine, which many oppose, and others pervert.—But walking with God requires no monkish celibacy and solitude : it well consists *with* the cares and comforts, and much consists *in* the conscientious performance of the duties, of social and relative life.—As, however, we need better comforters under our toil and sorrow, than the dearest relations and most promising offspring, may we seek and find the comforts of faith in Christ, and of joy in the Holy Ghost !

#### NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1, 2. The spiritual worshippers of God are *his children* ; and this honourable title is sometimes conferred on all who profess the true religion. These seem to have kept themselves for a long time distinct from such as were openly irreligious, or idolatrous ; the former uniting with Seth’s descendants, the latter with Cain’s. But at length, when the human race had greatly increased, and numbers of very beautiful women were observed among the

<sup>•</sup> Num. xi. 17. <sup>•</sup> Neh. ix. 30. <sup>•</sup> Isai. 10. Acts vii. 51. 1 Thes. v. 19. 20. 1 Pet. iii. 18. —29. Jude 14, 15. <sup>•</sup> Jer. iii. 6. Rom. viii. 1—13. Gal. v. 16—24. <sup>•</sup> Num. xiii. 33. Deut. ii. 20, 21. iii. 11. 1 Sam. xvii. 4. 2 Sam. xxi. 15—22. <sup>•</sup> xxi. 4. Num. xvi. 2. <sup>•</sup> xiii. 13. xviii. 20. 21. Ps. xiv. 1—4. Rom. i. 28—31. iii. 10—19. <sup>•</sup> Heb. the whole imagination, with the purposes and desires of the heart. <sup>•</sup> viii. 21. Job xv. 16. Ec. vii. 29. ix. 3. Jer. xvii. 9. Mark vii. 21—23. Eph. ii. 1—3. Tit. iii. 3. 1 Jer. iv. 14. † Heb. every day.

3 And the LORD said, "My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is <sup>•</sup> flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

4 There were <sup>•</sup> giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare *children* to them; the same *became* mighty men, which *were* of old, <sup>•</sup> men of renown.

5 And <sup>•</sup> God saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* <sup>•</sup> every <sup>•</sup> imagination of the <sup>•</sup> thoughts of his heart *was* only evil <sup>•</sup> continually.

6 And it <sup>•</sup> repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and <sup>•</sup> it grieved him at his heart.

7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created, from the face of the earth, <sup>•</sup> both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air: for it repenteth me that I have made them.

8 But Noah <sup>•</sup> found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

9 These *are* <sup>•</sup> the generations of Noah: Noah was a <sup>•</sup> just man and <sup>•</sup> perfect.

<sup>•</sup> Job xii. 4. Prov. iv. 18. Ec. vii. 20. Hab. ii. 4. Luke ii. 25. xxiii. 50. Acts x. 22. Gal. iii. 11. Heb. xi. 7. † Or, upright. 2 Chr. xv. 17. xxv. 2. Job i. 1. 8. Pa. xxxvii. 37. Luke i. 6. Phil. iii. 9—15.

irreligious or idolatrous party; the worshippers of God were induced by unworthy motives, unreservedly to contract marriages with them, which made way for a rapid increase of wickedness, and an almost universal apostasy. (*Marg. Ref.*) These women are called "the daughters of men," or rather of *Adam*; as inheriting his fallen nature, and imitating his sin, but not his repentance.

V. 3. The Spirit of God *strove* with men, by inspiring Enoch, Noah, and perhaps others, to preach to them; as bearing with them, and waiting to be gracious, notwithstanding their rebellions; and as exciting convictions in their consciences. But the Lord on this occasion declared, probably by Noah, that his Spirit should not thus strive with them perpetually; but that, provoked by their obstinate resistance, not only to the warning of his prophets, but even to that of their own consciences, he would finally leave them to be hardened in sin, and ripened for destruction. This he determined on, because, "man was flesh:" not only frail and feeble, but carnal and depraved; having prostituted the noble powers of his rational soul, and every higher consideration, to make provision for the gratification of his corrupt inclinations. And now, by the defection of those who had been distinguished as "the sons of God," this was become almost the universal character of the human race; so that man was become altogether incapable of answering the great end of his creation. Yet the Lord was pleased to declare, that he would wait a hundred and twenty years, before he executed his purposed vengeance; that men might have space to repent, and to use proper methods of averting his terrible indignation.

V. 4. *Giants.*] These giants perhaps were men of great stature and strength, but more certainly men of enormous wickedness. And the children, which sprang from the intermarriages abovementioned, were of the same character. Thus they became, in those ancient times, "mighty men, . . . men of renown," as heroes, conquerors, and chieftains: but they were apostates from God, and cruel destroyers and oppressors of mankind.

The Hebrew word (גִּימְרִים), rendered *giants*, appears to be derived from a root which signifies *to fall* (פָּלָה): either, Men who had fallen from God; or Men, who by force and power caused others to fall, that is, cast them down.

V. 5. The words of this verse are peculiarly expressive:—"God saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth." He, who could not mistake, or form a false esti-

mate, saw that man's wickedness was great; open, daring, and atrocious; and *that* among all men, throughout the earth. Yet he saw the heart still worse: "Every imagination of the thoughts of the heart were only evil continually:" that is, the workings of the fancy, the contrivances of the understanding, the purposes, desires, and affections of the whole soul, were every one of them evil, only evil, without any intermixture of good; only evil, every day, *continually*, without interruption or cessation!

V. 6, 7. *It repented . . . it grieved.*] Such expressions as these are made use of by the Holy Spirit, in a gracious condescension to our apprehensions; and to accommodate heavenly things, as far as their nature will admit of it, to the similitude of earthly things: just as we speak to children in their language, and in accommodation to their capacities, that we may the better convey our meaning to their minds.—Metaphysical truth is too refined and subtle for mankind in general, and only fitted for the amusement of speculative men: but the Scriptures were written to make even the poor and illiterate wise unto salvation. To speak to them of the *cause*, from its *sensible* and visible effects, more readily informs and more deeply interests them: while other passages sufficiently guard the sober enquirer from misapprehension.—Should an artist, after bestowing much pains, and manifesting great skill, about some curious piece of mechanism, dash it to pieces; we should conclude *from this effect*, that he repented having made it. Or should a parent, after conferring great favours on his child, be provoked by his misconduct finally to disinherit him; we should thence infer, that he was "grieved at his heart" that he had bestowed so much upon him. Thus the Creator, having formed the earth, and men upon it; having displayed his wisdom, power, and goodness in his works, and in the riches which he had conferred on man, in whom especially his glory had shone; after the earth was filled with inhabitants, was provoked by their wickedness to destroy them all with a flood. This was an effect which seemed to flow from his *repenting* that he had made man, and to indicate that he was "grieved at his heart."—It is indeed impossible that God should *really* be sorry, or repent of any thing that he has said or done; or *really wish* he had never said or done it: but his change of conduct was such as in men springs from these causes; and the expression most emphatically denotes extreme abhorrence of the crimes of men, and of their desperate depravity.

V. 8, 9. Noah is the first person, who is called *righteous*,

a See on v 22

fect in his generations, and <sup>a</sup>Noah walked with God.

a v 32.

10 And Noah begat three sons, <sup>a</sup>Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

t f s ix. 18. Ez. viii. 17. xxviii. 16. Hos. iv. 1, 2. Hab. ii. 8. 17.

11 The earth also was corrupt before God; and the earth was <sup>a</sup>filled with violence.

u 8. Job xxxiii. 27. Ps. xxxiii. 13, 14. lili 2. Prov. xv. 3.

12 And God <sup>a</sup>looked upon the earth, and behold, it was corrupt: for <sup>a</sup>all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.

x 5. vii. 1. 21. ix. 12, 16, 17. Luke iii. 6. y Jer. li. 13. Ez. vii. 2-6. Amos viii 2. 1 Pet. iv. 7

13 ¶ And God said unto Noah, <sup>a</sup>The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them: and behold, I will destroy them <sup>a</sup>with <sup>a</sup>the earth.

• Or, from the earth vii. 23.

z Jer. iv. 23-28. 2 Pet. iii. 6, 7. 10-12.

14 <sup>a</sup>Make thee an ark of gopher-wood: <sup>a</sup>rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt <sup>a</sup>pitch it within and without with pitch.

a Matt. xxiv. 38. Luke xvii. 27. 1 Pet. iii. 20. † Heb. nests. b Ex. ii. 3.

15 And this *is the fashion* which thou shalt make it of: the length of the ark *shall be* three hundred <sup>a</sup>cubits, the

c vii. 20. Deut. xiii. 11

or just; that is, he was so by the "righteousness of faith." (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, Heb. xi. 7.) He was a true believer, "he found grace," and was the object of the Lord's special favour: being sincerely and unreservedly religious; and one who dared to be singular in that corrupt generation.

V. 11, 12. The earth was not only full of daring impiety, and probably idolatry, *before God*, and, as it were, in defiance of him; but also of oppression, cruelty, and murder: so that men in general had corrupted their way all over the world.

V. 13. The Lord revealed to Noah, that he would destroy guilty man *from the earth*, with all the animal tribes and all the vegetable riches, with which it was replenished; and also all the works of men; and so change the state of it, as to render the whole one universal desolation. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 14—16. The word here rendered *an ark*, is only used for Noah's ark, and that ark of bulrushes in which the child Moses was preserved. It seems to have been built, in some respects, like the hulk of a ship; except that it was flat-bottomed, square at each end, and roofed as a house; so that it terminated at the top in the breadth of a cubit. It is not agreed what kind of timber is meant by Gopher-wood; perhaps that of the Cypress-tree. The ark was made with three decks, and divided into many little cabins; it was pitched within and without to keep it tight and sweet; and lighted from the upper part, probably by one window reaching from end to end. A cubit was something more than half a yard; so that this enormous vessel was about a hundred and sixty yards in length, twenty-seven in breadth, and sixteen in height; and thus vastly larger than our greatest ships. Learned men have shewn, that these dimensions were far more than were necessary to contain all the animals to be preserved, and sufficient provision for them. But it must at first sight be evident that so great a vessel, thus constructed, and with so few persons on board, was utterly

breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.

16 A <sup>d</sup>window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above: and <sup>e</sup>the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof: <sup>f</sup>with lower, second, and third *stories* shalt thou make it.

d vii. 6. 2 Sam. vi. 16. 2 Kings ix. 30.

e vii. 16. Luke xiii. 25. f Ez. xli. 16. xlii. 3.

17 And <sup>g</sup>behold, I, even I, do <sup>h</sup>bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh, wherein *is* <sup>i</sup>the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that *is* in the earth <sup>k</sup>shall die.

g ix. 9. Ex. xiv. 17. Lev. xxvi. 17. Deut. xxxiii. 29. 1a. ii. 12. Ez. vi. 8. vi. 3. xxxiv. 11. 20. Hos. v. 14.

h vii. 4. 17. 23. Ps. xcix. 10. xciii. 3. 4. Amos ix. 6

18 But with thee will I <sup>i</sup>establish my covenant: and thou shalt <sup>m</sup>come into the ark; thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

i ii. 7. vii. 15. k Rom. v. 12-14

l vi. 21. vi. 23. viii. 20-22.

m vii. 1. 11. xvii. 4. 7. 21.

19 And of every living thing of all flesh, <sup>n</sup>two of every *sort* shalt thou bring into the ark to keep *them* alive with thee: they shall be male and female.

n vii. 1. 7. 13. Is xxvii. 20. 1 Pet. iii. 20. 2 Pet. ii. 6.

20 Of fowls <sup>o</sup>after their kind, and of <sup>o</sup>i. 20-22.

unsuitable to weather out the deluge; except as it was under the immediate guidance and protection of the Almighty.

V. 17. These were "things not seen as yet," concerning which Noah was warned; and many have since ventured to deny, and it is not improbable that some would then argue against, the possibility of such a deluge: but the almighty God, with a most emphatical repetition, declared that he would effect it; and Noah simply credited this word. He neither hesitated to expect the unprecedented catastrophe; nor argued against the justice or goodness of God in the awful sentence; nor declined the immense labour and expence imposed on him, or the reproach and ridicule to which it might expose him; nor made any objection to this mode of preservation. But, being "moved with fear," and reverencing the divine revelation, he prepared the ark; became a preacher of righteousness; and, taking the warning given him for his subject, and shewing his faith by his works, he called on mankind to repent of their sins. Had they duly regarded the warning, all the inhabitants of the earth might have heard it, before the expiration of the hundred and twenty years of God's long-suffering: and if a general repentance had taken place, perhaps a respite would have been granted; as there was afterwards, in like circumstances, to Nineveh. (*Notes*, Jon. iii.) If individuals had repented, and by faith sought admission into the ark, doubtless it would have been opened to as many as it could contain: and, for any thing that appears to the contrary, if others had in humble, penitent faith prepared arks, they also might have been preserved.

V. 18. This is the first place in which the word *covenant* occurs; and it seems to relate to the gracious assurance, which God gave Noah, that the earth should not be destroyed by a second deluge. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*Sons.* None of Noah's sons were born a hundred years before the flood; but the command might be given *prophetically* in this respect as well as in others. It is however probable, that the first

cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind: <sup>a</sup>two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep *them* alive.

21 And take thou unto thee of <sup>a</sup>all food that is eaten, and thou shalt gather *it* to thee, and it shall be for food for thee, and for them.

22 Thus did Noah; <sup>a</sup>according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

vii. 8—16  
 1. 29, 30. Job xxxviii. 41. xl. 20. Ps. xxxvi. 6. civ. 27, 28. cxxxvi. 25. cxlv. 16. cxlviii. 9. Matt vi. 26. vii. 5. xviii. 23. Ex. xl. 16. 21. 23. 27. 32. Matt. vii. 24—27. John ii. 3. xv. 14. Heb. xi. 7. 8. John v. 3.

intimations of the approaching deluge were given some years, before the command for building the ark: yet this was a work of so great labour, that much time must have been employed about it.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

##### V. 1—7.

There is scarcely a more lamentable proof of a decay in vital godliness, or a more effectual means of hastening it, than intermarriages betwixt professors of true religion and its avowed enemies. In all ages there seems to have been a peculiar curse of God on them; the evil example of the ungodly party generally corrupts the other; family-religion is put an end to; and the children, almost universally, are trained up according to the maxims of the ungodly parent. If we profess ourselves to be “the sons and daughters of the Lord almighty,” we must not marry in opposition to his will: and he will not allow us to prefer beauty, wit, wealth, or honourable alliances, to piety.—Though “the Lord is slow to anger and of great kindness,” yet his “Spirit will not always strive with men;” and when they persist in sin, in defiance of his word, and the convictions of their own consciences, he will at length totally withdraw from them, and permit them to be hardened to their ruin.—If he is so grieved by our sin, as to destroy the work of his own hands, how reasonable is it that we should mourn for it, and that we should show our repentance by seeking its destruction!—They whom the world admires as “men of renown,” are often, in the judgment of God, and even of common sense, no better than cruel tyrants and oppressors: let us then desire that “honour which cometh from God” on those who do good; not that which comes from man upon those who do mischief.—But, what is now become of “the image and likeness of God?” Doth man now merit to be pronounced **VERY GOOD** by the **LORD** himself? Alas! the old serpent, that proud ambitious apostate, rebel, liar, and murderer, hath filled the earth with his detestable progeny! Yet, how few are aware that the description here given of human depravity suits them, while unregenerate! Inattention, ignorance of the divine law, and self-flattery, hide this humiliating truth from men’s minds; yea, strongly prejudice them against it: but a deep conviction of it, with application to our own state and character, is essential to a due valuation of the salvation proposed in the gospel.

##### V. 8—22.

In the worst of times, God hath “a remnant according to the election of grace:” and they who would please him must dare to be singular. These believe his truth, and obey his commandments; they hear his warnings, and fear, but do not despair; they embrace his promises, and hope,

#### CHAP. VII.

At God’s command Noah enters the ark, with his family, and the living creatures; and the flood begins, 1—16. Its increase for forty days, 17—20. All flesh is destroyed by it, 21—23. Its duration, 24.

**AND** the **LORD** said unto Noah, <sup>a</sup>“Come thou, and all thy house, into the ark: for <sup>b</sup>thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.

2 Of every <sup>a</sup>clean beast thou shalt

but do not presume; they stand in awe, and do not find fault; they expect safety upon the warrant of his word; and they refuse no obedience, however burdensome, expensive, or self-denying.—But in the warning to Noah, there is one more solemn given to us, “to flee from the wrath to come,” which, with tremendous efficacy, will sweep all unbelievers into the pit of destruction. Christ (the true “Noah, which same shall comfort us,”) hath, at infinite expense, already prepared the ark, and kindly invites us to enter in. Whilst the day of his patience continues, let us obediently hear his voice, and thankfully sue for admission, which will then be readily vouchsafed us.—But let it be observed, that they who “go about to establish their own “righteousness,” act as Noah would have done, had he substituted a high tower on a mountain, according to his own wisdom, for his place of security, instead of the ark which God had appointed.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1. At the appointed time, when all needful preparations had been made, Noah was directed to enter with his family into the ark; because the Lord had “seen him righteous before him in that generation.” The apostle says, that he “became heir of the righteousness which is “by faith.” (Notes, vi. 8, 9. Heb. xi. 7.) The same principle which induced him to believe, on the testimony of God, and contrary to all human probability, that the deluge would come at the appointed season, would move him “to flee “from the wrath to come:” and as he believed, that in the ark *alone* he could be safe from the approaching deluge; so he doubtless believed the revelation of a Saviour, and sought and expected salvation through him alone. Thus he was “justified by faith:” and being likewise a partaker of that Spirit, whose “fruit is in all goodness, and righteousness, “and truth;” he was *righteous* in his character and conduct; that is, devoted to God, and “walking before him in “all his ordinances and commandments, blameless.”

V. 2, 3. It is probable, that the *clean beasts* signify such as were not rapacious, and which were exclusively offered in sacrifice by the express appointment of God. They were also such as were most serviceable to man. The grant of animal food seems not to have been explicitly made before the flood; the distinction of *meats* could not therefore have been appointed. Seven couple of the clean beasts seem to have been preserved. Some indeed suppose that only three couple, and the seventh animal for sacrifice, were meant. (viii. 20.)—There must have been a very extraordinary miracle wrought, perhaps by the ministration of angels, in bringing two of every species to Noah, and rendering them submissive to him, and peaceable with each other: yet it

a Job vi. 19—24. Ps. xci. 1—10. Prov. xiv. 26. xviii. 10. Is. xxxvi. 20, 21. Ez. ix. 4—6. Zeph. ii. 3. Matt. xxiv. 37—39. b See on vi. 9.—Ps. xxxiii. 18, 19. Prov. xi. 4—8. Is. iii. 10, 11. 2 Pet. ii. 5—9. c viii. 20. Lev. xi. Deut. xiv. 1—21. Acts x. 11—16.

• Heb. seven, take to thee by \*sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that *are* <sup>d</sup>not clean by two, the male and his female.

3 Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.

4 For \*yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth <sup>f</sup>forty days and forty nights: "and every living substance that I have made, will I <sup>†</sup>destroy from off the face of the earth.

5 And Noah did according unto <sup>h</sup>all that the LORD commanded him.

6 And Noah *was* <sup>i</sup>six hundred years old, when the flood of waters was upon the earth.

7 And <sup>k</sup>Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood.

8 Of clean beasts, and of beasts that *are* not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth,

9 There <sup>l</sup>went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah.

10 ¶ And it came to pass <sup>m</sup>after seven

days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth.

11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were <sup>n</sup>all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the <sup>o</sup>'windows of heaven were opened.

12 And the rain was upon the earth <sup>p</sup>forty days and forty nights.

13 In the self-same day entered Noah, <sup>q</sup>and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark:

14 They, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every <sup>r</sup>sort.

15 And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein *is* the breath of life.

16 And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and <sup>s</sup>the LORD shut him in.

e 10. vi. 3. viii. 10.  
12 xxix. 27, 28.  
f 12. 17.

g 21—23 vi. 17.

† Heb. Not out.  
Ex. xxxii. 32,  
33. Ps. lxxix. 28.  
Rev. iii. 5.

h vi. 22. Ex. xxxix.  
42, 43. Ps. cxix.  
6 Matt. iii. 16.  
Luke viii. 21.  
John ii. 5. xiii  
17.

i v. 32. viii. 13.

k i. vi. 18. Prov.  
xxii. 3. Heb. vi.  
18

l ii 19. Is. xi. 6—  
9. lxxv. 25. Gal  
iii. 28. Col. iii.  
11.

m Or, on the se-  
venth day, 4.

m i. 7. vi. 17. viii.  
2. Job xxxviii.  
8—11. Ps. xxxiii.  
7. Prov. viii. 28,  
29. Jer. v. 22. li  
16. Ez. xxvi. 19.  
Am. ix. 5, 6.  
n Or, flood-gates.  
2 Kings vii. 2.  
19. Ps. lxxviii.  
23, 24. Mal. iii.  
10.  
o Ex. xxiv. 18.  
Deut. ix. 9, 18  
x. 10. 1 Kings  
xix. 8. Matt. iv.  
2.  
p v. 32. vi. 10. ix.  
18, 19. x. 1, 2  
6. 21. 1 Chr. i. 4  
—28.

† Heb. wing

p Ps. xci. 1—10.  
Matt. xxv. 10.  
Luke xiii. 25.  
John x. 27—30.  
1 Pet. i. 5.

seems not to have made any impression on the hardened spectators!—The suspension of the ferocity of the savage beasts, during their continuance in the ark, is generally considered as an apt figure of the change, which takes place in the disposition of sinners, when they enter the true church of Christ; (Note, Is. xi. 6—9:) but it may also remind us of the hypocrite's external good behaviour, though his nature is not changed.

V. 7. *Sons' wives.*] Though each of Noah's three sons was at this time nearly a hundred years old, and none of them had any children living; and the whole earth was about to be desolated: yet no exception, even on this extraordinary occasion, was made to the original constitution of marriage, "they *twain* shall be one flesh:" a decisive proof that polygamy is contrary to the original institution of marriage, and not at all needful for the increase of the human species, or even conducive to it.

V. 10—12. "The long-suffering of God had waited" a hundred and twenty years; and, as many think, seven days more; but at length the days of vengeance arrived.—"Behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters on the earth," saith the LORD. Thus speaks the Almighty, and it is absurd to question whether Omnipotence could effect the deluge. Every attempt to explain the manner, in which the earth was overflowed, too much resembles the presumption of those who enquired, "How are the dead raised up?" and "with what body do they come?" It is no more incredible that God should drown the world, than that he should raise the dead: and, by his almighty power, he caused "the

"waters from above the firmament, and the waters under "the firmament," which he had before separated, to meet together for that purpose. (Note, i. 9.) "The fountains "of the great deep were broken up;" and, by some vast convulsions, the waters from the bowels of the earth and from the depths of the ocean, were forced upwards; while the windows or flood-gates of heaven "were opened," and rain poured out impetuously in *cataracts*, or water-spouts, without intermission, for forty days and nights, in every part of the globe, till a universal deluge was effected.—Probably this commenced about the beginning of November; for the patriarchal year began in September.

V. 16. *Shut him in.*] No doubt this was done by the ministration of angels, and as an evident miracle in the view of all the spectators, of whom numbers, from different motives, might be collected.—Probably, the door of this vast structure was too massy, to be securely closed by the few persons within the ark. Thus the Lord gave Noah a pledge of his acceptance and his care of him; and by the same token he shut out all the rest of mankind, and sealed their condemnation.—But had Noah's preaching no effect? Were there no other believers upon the whole earth? We may probably suppose, that many had been previously taken away from the evil to come; for Methuselah is computed to have died the year before the flood, or in that very year. But it seems evident, that there were no godly persons among the survivors, however some might have been alarmed, affected, or convinced: for there was room enough in the ark; and it does not appear that any were refused admit-

17 ¶ And the flood was forty days upon the earth: and the waters increased, and bare up the ark; and it was lifted up above the earth.

18 And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth: and the ark went upon the face of the waters.

19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and <sup>q</sup> all the high hills, that *were* under the whole heaven, were covered.

<sup>q</sup> Job xii. 15. Ps. xxi. 2, 8. civ. 6.—9.

20 Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered.

<sup>r</sup> 4. vi. 6, 7. 2 Pet. iii. 6.

21 And <sup>r</sup> all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of

cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man.

22 All in whose nostrils *was* <sup>Heb the breath of the spirit of life. ii. 7. vi. 17.</sup> the breath of life, of all that *was* in the dry land, died.

23 And <sup>Job xxii. 15—17. Is. xxiv. 1—8. Matt. xxiv. 37—39. Luke xvi. 26, 27. 1 Pet. iii. 20. 2 Pet. ii. 5.</sup> every living substance *was* destroyed which *was* upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth; <sup>Ex. xiv. 28—30. Ez. xiv. 14. 20. Mal. iii. 18. Matt. xxv. 46.</sup> and Noah only remained *alive*, and they that *were* with him in the ark.

24 And the waters prevailed upon the earth <sup>u</sup> an hundred and fifty days. <sup>u</sup> viii. 3, 4.

tance.—Indeed, our Lord has informed us of the real state of the case: “They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them *all*.” *Luke xvii. 27.* Thus they encouraged one another in contemptuous disobedience; and if any were at all disposed to pay regard to the divine warning, they either procrastinated, or were afraid of being singular. But what must have been their feelings, when, at the appointed time, it began to rain in so extraordinary a manner, and continued to do so from week to week incessantly; the waters still rising, and following them to the eminences on which they ascended! How much soever they had before despised Noah’s madness, or pitied his weakness; they would now remember his warnings, admire his wisdom, and envy his happiness; while they cursed their own folly and impenitence.

V. 17—19. At the end of forty days the waters were so raised, that the ark was afloat: but they increased exceedingly afterwards, by the continuance of the same causes, though perhaps with some intermission. Thus the deluge prevailed till “all the high hills under the whole heaven *were covered*.” This decidedly proves the deluge to have been strictly *universal*; though some learned men have argued against this: but indeed traces of the deluge are found in all parts of the earth, and some confused tradition of it every where prevails.

V. 20—23. The waters at length arose to be above eight yards deep on the top of the highest mountains: so that every project for security was frustrated; every advantage of situation was unavailing. Some might escape longer than others; but, first or last, all men, except those in the ark, perished. And with the human species most of the animals perished also. (*Is. xxxiv. 1—6.*) Indeed, the faithful and powerful protection of God was Noah’s only security, in this wild tumult of the elements: and the presence of God was his only comfort in this dreary confinement, and in witnessing the dire devastation of the earth and its inhabitants, and especially of the human species; of his companions, his neighbours, his relatives; of those, to whom he had preached, for whom he had prayed, and over whom he had wept, many of whom had even helped to build the ark. (*2 Pet. ii. 5.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—16.

Numbers in every age “despise the riches of the goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering of God, not knowing that his goodness *leads* to repentance: but after their hardness and impenitent heart they treasure up wrath against the day of wrath;” till judgment come upon them to the uttermost. But in all this the Lord’s purposes are effected, his predictions accomplished, and his justice displayed.—Our short span of life will speedily come to a close, even though we should linger out our threescore years and ten. Yes, the last week, the last day, the last hour, will soon *surprise* us, if we be not always watching and ready; and with no less tremendous consternation and terrible destruction, than the deluge did those in the days of Noah. If when “the Master of the house has risen up, and “shut to the door,” we be found without, it will then be too late to knock for admittance. For the threatenings of the Lord, however now neglected or despised, will as certainly be fulfilled as his promises: and there is a time coming, when they, who have most affected to pity or deride the godly, will admire or envy them.

##### V. 17—24.

What a triumph was here of death, even “over those who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression!” and how did the whole creation groan under man’s sin! But, though we may indulge the hope that the multitude of infants, who died without their own actual sin, through the first Adam’s transgression, obtained life without their own actual faith, through the second Adam’s obedience; yet we are constrained to admit, that the same deluge, which swept the rest of that generation from the earth, swept their souls into the prison of hell. How tremendous then will be “the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men!” and what will be the feelings of those, who, in contempt of the divine testimony, treat the “things not seen as yet” as unreal, though revealed by the infallible testimony of God; when they shall at length be seen, but seen too late! Happy they, who are part of Christ’s family, and safe with him in the ark! they may look forward without dismay, and rejoice in the assurance, that they shall triumph, when a deluge of fire shall encircle the visible





MOUNT ARARAT.

GENESIS VIII. 4.

## CHAP. VIII.

God remembers Noah, and assuages the waters, 1—3. The ark rests on the mountains of Ararat, 4, 5. Noah sends forth a raven, and then a dove, to gain intelligence, 6—12. He leaves the ark, offers sacrifices, and is accepted and encouraged, 13—22.

**AND** <sup>a</sup> God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all <sup>b</sup> the cattle that *was* with him in the ark: and God made <sup>c</sup> a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged.

2 The <sup>d</sup> fountains also of the deep, and the windows of heaven were stopped, and <sup>e</sup> the rain from heaven was restrained.

3 And the waters returned from off the earth <sup>f</sup> continually: and after the end of the <sup>g</sup> hundred and fifty days the waters were abated.

4 And <sup>h</sup> the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of <sup>i</sup> Ararat.

5 And the waters <sup>j</sup> decreased continually until <sup>k</sup> the tenth month: in the tenth *month*, on the first *day* of the month were the tops of the mountains seen.

6 ¶ And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened <sup>l</sup> the window of the ark which he had made.

<sup>a</sup> xix. 29. xxi. 22. Ex. ii. 24. 1 Sam. i. 19. Neh. xiii. 14. 22. 29. 31. Job xiv. 13. Ps. cvi. 4. cxxxii. j. cxxxvi. 23. cxxxvii. 7. Am. viii. 7. Rev. xvi. 19. xviii. 5. <sup>b</sup> Num. xxii. 32. Ps. cxxxvi. 6. Jon. iv. 11. <sup>c</sup> Ex. xiv. 21. <sup>d</sup> vil. 11. Prov. viii. 28. Jon. ii. 3. <sup>e</sup> Job xxxvii. 11—13. xxxviii. 37. Matt. viii. 26, 27. <sup>f</sup> Heb. *in going and returning* <sup>g</sup> vil. 24.

<sup>g</sup> vil. 17—19.

<sup>h</sup> Jer. li. 27.

<sup>j</sup> Heb. *were in going and decreasing* <sup>i</sup> vil. 21.

<sup>k</sup> vi. 16.

7 And he sent forth <sup>1</sup> a raven, which went forth <sup>2</sup> to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.

8 Also he sent forth <sup>m</sup> a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground.

9 But the dove <sup>n</sup> found no rest for the sole of her foot, <sup>o</sup> and she returned unto him into the ark: for the waters *were* on the face of the whole earth. Then he put forth his hand, and took her, and <sup>p</sup> pulled her in unto him into the ark.

10 And he <sup>q</sup> stayed yet other <sup>r</sup> seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark.

11 And the dove came in to him in the evening, and lo, in her mouth *was* <sup>s</sup> an olive-leaf plucked off. So Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

12 And <sup>t</sup> he stayed yet other <sup>u</sup> seven days, and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more.

13 And it came to pass in the <sup>v</sup> six hundredth and first year, in the first *month*, the first *day* of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark; and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry.

14 And in the second month, on the

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xi. 15 <sup>2</sup> Kings xvii. 6. Job xxxviii. 41 <sup>3</sup> Heb. *in going forth and returning* <sup>m</sup> Cant. i. 16. ii. 11, 12. 14. Matt. x. 16.

<sup>n</sup> Deut. xxviii. 65. <sup>o</sup> Ezek. vii. 16. <sup>p</sup> Matt. xi. 28. <sup>q</sup> John xvi. 33. <sup>r</sup> Ps. cxvi. 7. Is. lx. 8.

<sup>s</sup> Heb. *caused her to come* <sup>t</sup> Ps. xl. i. Is. viii. 17. <sup>u</sup> Rom. viii. 26. <sup>v</sup> 12 vii. 4. 10.

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xxvii. 14. <sup>2</sup> Cxxx. 5, 6. Is. xxi. 9. xxvi. 8. <sup>3</sup> Hab. ii. 3. Jam. v. 7, 8. <sup>4</sup> 10. ii. 2, 8. <sup>5</sup> vii. 11.

creation. But, unless we dare to be singular, and renounce the favour, and venture the scorn and hatred of the world; unless we are willing to exercise self-denial and diligence; we can find no admission into this ark. And, even in the ark, while in this world, we shall need faith and patience, and have much to try them.—Though we should lament, we need not wonder at, the prevalence of impiety; nor should faithful ministers despond, if their success be not so large as their expectations; for the most eminent and favoured servants of God have experienced the same disappointments.—Ungodly children often receive temporal mercies for their parents' sake; but unless they themselves are made partakers of faith and holiness, they will not escape eternal destruction.—Finally, though there is great difference of character among men, and we are apt to imagine some favourable distinctions in our own case: yet, if we neglect, refuse, or abuse the salvation of Christ, we shall, notwithstanding such imaginary advantages, be overwhelmed in the common destruction of an unbelieving world.

## NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1—3. The flood continued a considerable time after the inhabitants of the earth were destroyed; and Noah might be tempted to be weary of his confinement, and almost to question whether “the Lord had not forgotten to be gracious:” but at length “God remem-

bered” him, by hearing his prayers, and preparing for the release of him and his family; and also of the animals which were with him in the ark, which is specially noted.—By a strong, dry wind the clouds were dispersed, and so the rain ceased; and the miraculous interposition being withdrawn, things reverted to their former course. Thus the waters, *in going and returning*, were in part evaporated, and in part ran off into the lower countries and the bed of the ocean, or sunk into caverns in the bowels of the earth.

V. 4, 5. On the seventeenth day of the seventh month of the year, (as it is most probable,) just five months, or a hundred and fifty days from the beginning of the flood, the waters were so far abated, that the ark rested on one of the summits of mount Ararat. This is supposed to mean a ridge of mountains, extending from Armenia eastward to a great distance. The word *Ararat* is elsewhere translated *Armenia*, but it is not agreed whether the ark rested in Armenia, or more towards the east. It was, however, no doubt on some lofty summit; as it was almost three months longer before the tops of the mountains were seen. (*Marg. Ref.*) “If we had been a long and dangerous voyage at sea, we should be better able to conceive of the joy which this sight must have occasioned.” *Fuller*.

V. 6—14. Forty days after the tops of the mountains became visible, Noah sent out a raven, in order that he might learn the state of the earth: but, as this bird was used to



## CHAP. IX.

The Lord blesses Noah and his family; grants them additionally flesh for food; prohibits them from eating blood; and requires that murderers should be punished with death, 1—7. His covenant with Noah and his posterity, of which the rainbow was constituted a pledge, 8—17. Noah's family and employment, 18—20. His drunkenness, and the different behaviour of his sons; with his prophecy, age, and death, 21—29.

a 1. 28. xiv. 60.  
1a. li. 2.  
b 7. 19. viii. 17. x.  
32.

**AND** God <sup>a</sup> blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, <sup>b</sup> Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth.

c 1. 28. Lev. xxv.  
6. 22. Job v. 22.  
23 Ps. viii. 4—  
8. civ. 20—23.  
Hos. ii. 18. Jam.  
iii. 7.

**2** And <sup>c</sup> the fear of you, and the dread of you, shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth,

and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

**3** <sup>d</sup> Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even <sup>e</sup> as the green herb have I given you all things.

**4** But flesh with <sup>f</sup> the life thereof, <sup>g</sup> which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

**5** And surely your blood of your lives will I require: at the hand of <sup>h</sup> every beast will I require it, and <sup>i</sup> at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's <sup>j</sup> brother will I require the life of man.

**6** Whoso sheddeth man's blood, <sup>k</sup> by man shall his blood be shed: for <sup>l</sup> in the image of God made he man.

d Lev. xi. xxi. 9.  
Deut. xii. 16.  
xiv. 3—21. Acts  
x. 12—15. 1 Tim.  
iv. 3—5.  
e 1. 29. 30. Rom  
xiv. 3. 14. 17  
1 Cor. x. 25. 31.  
Col. ii. 16. 2.  
22.  
f Lev. iii. 17. xvii.  
10—14. xix. 26.  
Deut. xii. 16. 23.  
xiv. 21. xv. 23.  
Acts xv. 20. 29.  
1 Tim. iv. 4.  
g Ex. xxi. 25. 29.  
h ix. 9. 10. Num.  
xxxv. 31—33.  
Deut. xxi. 1—9.  
Ps. ix. 12.  
i Acts xvii. 28.  
Ex. xxi. 12—14.  
Lev. xxiv. 17.  
1 Kings ii. 5. 6.  
28—34. Matt.  
xxvi. 52. Rom.  
xiii. 4. Rev. xiii.  
10.  
k i. 26. 27 v. 1.  
Ps. ii. 4. Jam.  
iii. 9.

Spirit of Christ, may indeed, through temptation, for a season quit the ark and go to the world; but, like the dove, he can find no rest till he returns to the Lord.—They who are saved from destruction, must on earth witness the desolations which sin makes, with aching hearts and weeping eyes; and in many things share in them. But the consolations of God will counterbalance these sorrows: and in heaven all tears shall be wiped away; so that even the destruction of the wicked will in no wise abate the perfect felicity of the righteous.—The mercy of God, the sacrifice of Christ, and the grace of the Holy Spirit, cause the difference between those who are saved, and those who perish: and the first use which we should make of deliverances from trouble, is to return thanks to God for his mercy, solemnly to devote ourselves to him and his service, and to seek anew his providential protection and gracious blessing. Nor can that be *wasted*, whether of our valued property or more valuable time, which is expended in the service of God, according to his appointment. Finally, the divine authority of the Scripture, as well as the faithfulness of God, is demonstrated in the regular course of the seasons of the year. May we therefore admire the goodness of the Lord, trust his providence, receive all from his love, and use all to his glory.

## NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. It is not said, in what manner the Lord revealed himself to Noah and his sons: but he renewed to them the blessing pronounced originally on our first parents, because they were the appointed progenitors of a new race of men (Note i. 28); and he added several things, both for warning and encouragement, adapted to their situation. The dominion over the animal creation, which had been forfeited by sin, was again conceded; yet with some variation from the original grant. It is probable, that the subjection of the animals before the fall, was voluntary, and that by instinct they regarded man as a friend: but since that event, it hath been more the result of fear; most of them dreading him as a powerful enemy, whom they must either submit to or flee from. We continually witness the fulfilment of this promise, among creatures of all sorts. The ease with which horses are managed, notwithstanding their strength and spirit, and the severity with

which they are treated; and the safety with which large droves of oxen are goaded forward, frequently by a single youth, who, conscious of his superiority, fears not them whilst they stand in awe of him; are circumstances which would be deemed very wonderful, were they not so common: but they are seldom considered as effected by the power, and as proving the faithfulness and goodness, of God. Even the most savage of the wild beasts have been, and are, tamed or subdued by man, and have an instinctive dread of him; shunning populous places, and retreating into forests and deserts; lying still all the day while man is abroad, roaming forth when he retires to rest; and seldom injuring him unless pinched by hunger, or provoked by opposition. (Note, Ps. civ. 20—23.) Were this instinctive fear removed, and should the animals, conscious of their force, rise in general rebellion, what confusion and devastation must ensue!

V. 3, 4. Perhaps, before the flood men had *taken the liberty* of eating flesh; but it seems not to have been explicitly allowed: the grant however, here given, fully warrants our use of the animals for food, but not the abuse of them by intemperance or cruelty. This is not here limited to any kind of animals; so that the distinction of clean and unclean must relate to the use of them in sacrifice: and the eating of blood seems principally to have been prohibited, because blood typified the great atonement. (Notes, Acts xv. 19—29. Marg. Ref. f.) Yet this restriction might be intended as a check to cruelty; lest men, inured to shed and feed upon the blood of animals, should grow unfeeling, and be the less shocked at the idea of shedding human blood.

V. 5, 6. From this energetick declaration it certainly follows, that wilful murder ought invariably in all communities to be punished with death; whatever form it assumes, or however it may, by specious pretences, be extenuated: and that God will himself require it of those, who suffer the murderer to escape; so that the punishment due to murder will, in some way, be inflicted on them, as accessaries to the crime. This implies, that magistrates should be appointed, who might punish murderers with death; though in the case of Cain the Lord had been pleased to prohibit all men from slaying him. (Notes, iv. 13—15. 2 Sam. xii. 13.) Perhaps the impious inhabitants of the old world had been emboldened by the example of Cain: and no intima-

7 And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply, bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

8 ¶ And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,

11. 17. vi. 18. xvii. 7, 8. 1s. liv. 9, 10. 9 And I, behold I, <sup>1</sup>establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;

m viii. 1. Ps. cxlv. 9. Jon. iv. 11. 10 And <sup>m</sup>with every living creature that *is* with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you, from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.

a vii. 21—23. viii. 21, 22. 2 Pet. iii. 11. 11 And I will establish my covenant with you; <sup>a</sup>neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood: neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

o xvii. 11. Ex. xii. 13. xiii. 16. Josh. ii. 12. Matt. xxvi. 26—28. 1 Cor. xi. 23—25. 12 And God said, This *is* <sup>o</sup>the token of the covenant which I make between me and you, and every living creature that *is* with you, for perpetual generations:

p Ex. i. 28. Rev. iv. 3. x. 1. 13 I do set <sup>p</sup>my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:

q Ex. xxviii. 12. Lev. xxvi. 42—45. Ps. cvi. 45. Jer. xiv. 21. Ez. xvi. 60. Luke i. 72. 15 And I will <sup>q</sup>remember my covenant which *is* between me and you, and every living creature of all flesh; and

'the waters shall no more become a <sup>r</sup>flood to destroy all flesh.

16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the <sup>s</sup>everlasting covenant, between God and every living creature of all flesh, that *is* upon the earth.

17 And God said unto Noah, This *is* the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that *is* upon the earth.

18 ¶ And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, <sup>t</sup>were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and <sup>u</sup>Ham *is* the father of <sup>v</sup>Canaan.

19 These *are* the three sons of Noah: and <sup>x</sup>of them was the whole earth overspread.

20 ¶ And Noah began *to be* <sup>y</sup>'an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard.

21 And he drank of the wine, and <sup>z</sup>was drunken, <sup>a</sup>and he was uncovered within his tent.

22 And <sup>b</sup>Ham the father of Canaan saw the nakedness of his father, and <sup>c</sup>told his two brethren without.

23 And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid *it* upon both their shoulders, <sup>d</sup>and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces *were* backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness.

tion is given, that any murderer was punished with death during all that period of violence. To impress the greater horror of destroying man's life, it was enjoined that even the beast which killed a man should be put to death. (*Note, Ex. xxi. 28—32.*)—It is a subject for serious enquiry, to all who are cordially affected to the welfare of these nations, how far national guilt is contracted, when so many are suffered to elude justice, who commit *wilful, deliberate murder in duels*; whilst many thieves are put to death, a punishment which God never commanded to be inflicted on them, and perhaps does not approve. The *connivance* also of British rulers in India at the murders committed by the inhabitants, in their idolatry and idolatrous customs, should not be forgotten. (*Num. xxxv. 33. 2 Kings xxi. 16. xxiv. 4.*) Though the moral image of God, in which man was at first created, is defaced, yet the natural image remains: and it is the most daring act of rebellion against God to assault his visible image on earth, and destroy the life which he communicated.—It is observable that the reason, given for the punishment of the murderer with death, is taken from the affront which he offers to God, not from the injury which he does to man.

V. 9—17. The word, rendered *covenant*, sometimes means a reciprocal agreement between two or more parties; and at other times a positive engagement made by one party, with-

out any stipulation being required of the other: that established with Noah was of the latter sort. To obviate the fears of him and his posterity, the Lord engaged, that he would drown the earth no more, notwithstanding man's wickedness.—Probably, the rainbow had appeared before the flood, being the effect of natural causes: but it was now appointed to a new use, and made a seal and pledge of a particular engagement. This was confirmed by an *everlasting covenant*, or one which shall never be abolished. (*Note, xvii. 7, 8.*) Without *revelation* this gracious assurance could not be known; and without *faith* it can be of no use to us: and thus it is in respect of a still greater and more imminent danger, to which all are exposed; and to the new covenant, with its blessings and securities, which in these events was refigured. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 19. *Of them, &c.*] This precludes the conjecture, that Noah himself had other children, though he lived above three hundred years after the flood.

V. 20—23. When Noah, after the deluge, began again to cultivate the earth, he planted a vineyard, made wine, and was betrayed into excess. Some have thought that wine was now first made of grapes, and that Noah, not aware of its effects, was surprised into drunkenness.—But this is highly improbable; for even in the most savage tribes, the

22. iii. 14. iv. 11. 24 And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him.  
 xix. 7. Deut. xxvii. 16. xxviii. 18. Matt. xxv. 41.  
 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.  
 25 And he said, <sup>o</sup> Cursed be Canaan; <sup>f</sup> a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.  
 26 And he said, <sup>s</sup> Blessed be <sup>h</sup> the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be <sup>s</sup> his servant.

27 God shall <sup>†</sup> enlarge Japheth, <sup>†</sup> Or, *persuade*. and he shall <sup>†</sup> dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. <sup>†</sup> Mal. i. 11. Eph. ii. 14. 19. iii. 6.

28 ¶ And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years.

29 And all the days of Noah were <sup>k</sup> nine hundred and fifty years: and he <sup>k</sup> died. <sup>k</sup> v. 5. 20. 27. 32. xi. 11—25.

art of making intoxicating liquors is known: and though a man might plant two or three vines, for the sake of the grapes; who ever “planted a vineyard,” except for the sake of wine? Indeed, the fact seems recorded by the inspired historian, with that perfect impartiality, which is peculiar to the Scripture, as an instance and evidence of human frailty and imperfection. Ham appears to have been a man of bad character: and probably he rejoiced to find his father in so unbecoming a situation; that, by exposing him, he might retaliate for the reproofs, which he had received from his parental authority: and perhaps Canaan first discovered Noah’s situation, and told it to Ham. In that case, the event must have occurred several years after the flood; for there were but eight persons in the ark, and consequently Ham had no children at that time.—The conduct of Ham in exposing his father to his brethren, and their behaviour in turning away from the sight of his disgrace, form a striking contrast. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 24, 25. This portion of Scripture, though attended with some difficulties, evidently contains a remarkable prophecy, which was recorded for the encouragement of the Israelites, in warring against the devoted Canaanites.—There is no authority for altering the text, and reading as some do, “Cursed be Ham the father of Canaan:” yet the frequent mention of Ham, as the father of Canaan, suggests the thought, that the latter was also criminal. Ham is thought to have been the *second*, and not the *youngest*, son of Noah: (*Note*, x. 1:) and if so, the words, “knew what his younger son had done,” refer to Canaan his grandson.—Ham must have felt it a very mortifying rebuke, when his own father was inspired on this occasion, to predict the durable oppression and slavery of his posterity: Canaan also was rebuked, by learning that the curse would especially rest on that branch of the family, which should descend from him: for his posterity were no doubt *principally*, though not *exclusively* intended. The devoted nations, which God destroyed before Israel, were descended from Canaan: and so were the Phenicians and the Carthaginians, who were at length subjugated with dreadful destruction by the Greeks and Romans. “The whole continent of Africa was peopled principally by the descendants of Ham: and for how many ages have the better parts of that country lain under the dominion of the Romans, and then of the Saracens, and now of the Turks. In what wickedness, ignorance, barbarity, slavery, misery live most of the inhabitants! and of the poor negroes, how many hundreds every year are sold and bought, like beasts in the market; and conveyed from one quarter of the world, to do the work of beasts in another!” *Bp. Newton*. This, however, in no measure vindicates the covetous and barbarous oppression of those, who thus enrich themselves with the products

of their sweat and blood. God has not commanded us to enslave negroes, as he did Israel to extirpate the Canaanites; and therefore, without doubt, he will severely punish this cruel injustice.—True religion has hitherto flourished very little among Ham’s descendants; they remain to this day almost entire strangers to Christianity; and their condition in every age has remarkably coincided with this prediction. (*Notes*, Ez. xxvi.—xxxii.) “There never has been a son of Ham, who has shaken a sceptre over the head of Japheth. Shem hath subdued Japheth, and Japheth subdued Shem: but Ham never subdued either.” *Mede*. This must be understood, with some exceptions in the first ages of the world: for the Egyptians enslaved Israel, and it is recorded that they made extensive conquests in Asia. (2 Chr. xii. 2—4.) Nimrod, it also seems probable, subjugated and tyrannized over the descendants of Shem, when he “went to Ashur and built Nineveh.” (*Note*, x. 8—12.)

V. 26. The descendants of Shem, in the line of Arphaxad, Eber, and Peleg, included all the posterity of Abraham; and the Lord Jesus, “in whom all the nations of the earth are blessed,” sprang from him.—Thus JEHOVAH was especially “the God of Shem.” His descendants comprised a vast majority of the worshippers of the true God, till the coming of Christ; and afterwards they were the first and principal instruments, of bringing other nations to share the blessings of his salvation; so that the descendants of the other sons of Noah, when converted to Christianity, are taught to worship and “bless JEHOVAH the God of Shem.” (*Note*, Zech. viii. 20—23.)—The posterity of Abraham also subjugated or destroyed the posterity of Canaan; and the nations, which sprang from Shem by his other sons, have prospered greatly, enjoyed fruitful countries, and been far more civilized than the race of Ham.

V. 27. Japheth seems to have been the progenitor of above half the human race: and the principal success of the gospel, in the calling of the Gentiles, has hitherto been among his descendants. (*Notes*, x. 1—5.) Thus God has enlarged Japheth, and persuaded him, (as some render the word, *marg.*) “to dwell in the tents of Shem,” by receiving the Gospel from preachers of Abraham’s race, who descended from Shem; and so obtaining admission into the church.—The descendants of Japheth have also obtained that dominion, under the Grecian and Roman Empires, and in subsequent ages, which was for a long time chiefly possessed by the posterity of Shem. Indeed, even a general knowledge of the outlines of history will suffice to satisfy the serious enquirer, that the descendants of Canaan have been subjected to those of Shem and Japheth, through many generations: and the extraordinary accomplishment of this prediction, which contains almost a prophetick history of the world, vindicates Noah from the suspicion of

## CHAP. X.

The posterity of Noah, by Japheth, 1—5; by Ham, with some particulars concerning Nimrod, and the descendants of Canaan, 6—20; by Shem, 21—32.

a in. 4. v. 1. vi. 9.

b 21 1 Chr. i. 5—  
7. Is. lxvi. 19  
Ez xxvii. 7 12  
—14. 19. xxxviii.  
2. 6 xxxix. 1.  
Rev. xx. 8.

NOW these <sup>a</sup>are the generations of the sons of Noah; Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood.

2 ¶ The <sup>b</sup>sons of Japheth; Gomer,

and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras.

3 And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.

4 And the sons of Javan; Elishah, and Tarshish, <sup>c</sup>Kittim, and <sup>d</sup>Dodanim.

5 By these were the <sup>e</sup>isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one <sup>f</sup>after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.

c Num. xxiv. 24  
Is. xlii. 1. 12.  
Dan. xi. 30.  
Oritim.  
d Or. *Isodanm.*  
d 26. Is. lxxvii. 10  
Is. xxiv. 15. xl  
15. xli. 5. xlii. 4.  
10. xlix. 1. li. 5.  
Jer. ii. 10. xxv.  
22. Zeph. ii. 11.  
e 20. xi. 1—9

having uttered it from personal resentment; and fully proves that the Spirit of God took occasion, from Ham's misconduct, to reveal his secret purposes, for a very important benefit to posterity even to this day. (*Notes*, xlviii. xlix.)

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

## V. 1—23.

The blessing of God is the real cause of prosperity, personal, relative, and national.—With what thankfulness should we receive that immense advantage, ease, and pleasure, which result from the labour of the domestick animals, and which the flesh of so many creatures affords us; and the security that we enjoy from the assaults of the noxious and ferocious, through the fear and dread of man which God hath impressed upon them!—But, though God has constituted us masters, he will call us to an awful account if we act as tyrants; and avenge the cause of his oppressed creatures upon their oppressors.—How greatly then should we dread murder, and all those passions which produce that enormous crime! Though the murderer may escape, or bribe, or outbrave, human justice; yet, except he repent, he shall never escape the vengeance of God.—The Lord takes care to obviate the fears and anxieties of his people; and we should copy the example of his kindness in this and in every other instance.—But what is man in his best estate! “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall:” and let not him, who has triumphed over great temptations, be secure even in respect of such as are less; for they who have behaved well in the worst of company, and amidst the worst examples, are not safe even in solitude. Let us then watch and pray, and not be high-minded; but fear; and remember that drunkenness is a sin especially to be shunned, as it both exposes men to shame, and is an occasion of further wickedness, of various kinds, in themselves and others.—But, though the righteous fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; nor is a single act of sin, inadvertently committed, to be looked upon in the same light, as allowed and habitual transgression: the former may be the blemish of the saint, the latter is the brand of the hypocrite.—In honouring parents, magistrates, seniors, and other honourable characters, we ought to imitate the example of Shem and Japheth; not only respecting their wisdom and goodness, but covering their incidental blemishes and failures: for a peculiar blessing belongs to those who act in this manner; but an awful curse awaits such as copy the pattern of Canaan or Ham, in their conduct towards those whom God has commanded them to honour.

## V. 24—29.

We should carefully observe, and continually keep in

mind, how fully these prophecies, so evidently fulfilling in all nations and ages, demonstrate the divine original of the Bible; that we may receive the instructions and commands of God, with more implicit faith and obedience. Thus we shall learn our guilt and danger; and, fleeing from the wrath and curse which is coming on the impenitent and unbelieving, we shall embrace the invitations of the gospel, accept of its precious salvation, rely on the security of the new Covenant, and patiently wait for the blessings, which will assuredly be conferred on all believers. Then we shall be safe in those wasting calamities, which sweep others into destruction: and, though what we witness or experience may give us great pain, and may even afford lamentable proof of our weakness and depravity; yet we shall be carried through all trials and temptations, and overcome all our enemies; we shall be made instruments of good to others; and at length find, that all the promises of the Scripture have been fulfilled to us, and all our prayers that were grounded on them have been completely answered. “O LORD God of hosts, blessed is the man that putteth “his trust in thee!”

## NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1. Shem, the progenitor of Abraham, and of the Messiah, is constantly placed first, when the sons of Noah are enumerated; and Japheth last: yet it is generally supposed that Japheth was the eldest son of Noah, and Shem the youngest. (21.) Accordingly, in this chapter, the posterity of Japheth are first mentioned.—*After the flood.*] This confirms the supposition, that Noah's sons had no children till after the flood.

V. 2—5. The sacred writer was about to enter upon the history of Abraham and his family, to which his narrative would afterwards be principally confined: but before he did this, he was led to give a general account of the several branches of Noah's family, from which the original of many nations may be distinctly traced. And, in like manner, before he enters on the history of Isaac, he gives a brief account of the descendants of Ishmael, and of Abraham's sons by Keturah; and before he confines his narrative to Jacob's family, he states some particulars concerning Esau's posterity. (xxv. 1—18. xxxvi.)—This chapter, as a kind of introduction to universal history, implies many things afterwards related. It is supposed by many learned men, and shewn at least by probable arguments, that the descendants of Gomer, Japheth's eldest son, settled in the northern parts of Asia Minor, and then spread into the Cimmerian Bosphorus, and the adjacent regions: and that from them the numerous tribes of the Gauls, Germans, Celts, and Cimbrians descended. The Scythians, Tartars, and other

6 ¶ And 'the sons of Ham; \*Cush, and Mizraim, and <sup>b</sup>Phut, and Canaan.

7 And the sons of Cush; Seba, and <sup>1</sup>Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtechah: and the sons of Raamah; <sup>a</sup>Sheba, and <sup>1</sup>Dedan.

8 And Cush begat <sup>m</sup>Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth.

9 He was a <sup>o</sup>mighty hunter <sup>o</sup>before the LORD: wherefore it is said, <sup>p</sup>Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD.

10 And the beginning of his kingdom was \*Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and <sup>q</sup>Calneh, in the land of <sup>r</sup>Shinar.

11 Out of that land <sup>t</sup>went forth <sup>a</sup>Asshur, and builded <sup>1</sup>Nineveh, and <sup>2</sup>the city Rehoboth, and Calah,

12 And Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same *is* a great city.

13 And Mizraim begat <sup>u</sup>Ludim, and Ananim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim.

14 And <sup>x</sup>Pathrusim, and Casluhim, (out of whom came <sup>y</sup>Philistim,) and <sup>z</sup>Caphtorim.

15 And Canaan begat <sup>1</sup>Sidon his first-born, and <sup>2</sup>Heth,

16 And the <sup>b</sup>Jebusite, and the Emorite, and the Girgasite,

17 And the <sup>c</sup>Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite,

18 And the <sup>d</sup>Arvadite, and the <sup>e</sup>Zemarite, and the <sup>f</sup>Hamathite: and afterward were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad.

19 And <sup>g</sup>the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, <sup>h</sup>as thou comest to <sup>i</sup>Gerar, unto <sup>j</sup>Gaza: as thou goest unto <sup>k</sup>Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha.

20 These *are* the sons of <sup>l</sup>Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, *and* in their nations.

21 ¶ Unto Shem also, <sup>m</sup>the father of all the children of Eber, <sup>n</sup>the brother of Japheth the elder, even to him were *children* born.

22 The <sup>o</sup>children of Shem; <sup>p</sup>Elam, and Asshur, and <sup>q</sup>Arphaxad, and <sup>r</sup>Lud, and <sup>s</sup>Aram.

northern nations, are supposed to be descendants of Magog, Meshech, and Tubal; the Medes, of Madai; the Ionians, and indeed all the Greeks, of Javan; and the Thracians of Tiras. Nearly all the inhabitants of Europe, and probably of America, descended from Japheth, besides those of the northern regions of Asia.—“The isles of the *Gentiles*” generally mean the parts of Europe, most known to the ancient inhabitants of Asia. The inhabitants of Britain are in general descended from Japheth, and especially concerned in “the isles of the *Gentiles*.”—The reader, by examining carefully the marginal references, may perceive, in several particulars, some of the grounds on which these conclusions rest: but it would be improper, in this place, to enter on so complicated a subject.

V. 6, 7. From Cush, the son of Ham, the Ethiopians in Africa, and many tribes in Asia, (inhabiting part of Arabia, and often improperly called Ethiopians,) were evidently descended. Mizraim was the ancestor of the Egyptians, Cyrenians, and Lybians; or (the word being plural) it may be the general name of the family or tribe, whence they sprang; and Phut of the Mauritians.—In short, all Africa is supposed to have been peopled by Ham's posterity: besides the Philistines, Canaanites, and Phenicians.

V. 8—12. Nimrod seems at first to have exceedingly distinguished himself by hunting, which was *then* not so much a diversion, as a useful method of preventing the hurtful increase of wild beasts. This employment required great courage and address, and exposed a man to much danger and hardship; and thus afforded a field for ambition to aspire after pre-eminence, and gradually attached a number of valiant men to one leader. From such a beginning, it is likely, that Nimrod began to claim authority, and enforce subjection. In fact, he is the first king, of whom we

read in authentick history; and afterward he took occasion to wage war to extend his conquests, and to enlarge his acquisitions by violence and blood. Thus, in a daring manner casting off the fear of God, and acting in defiance of his late prohibition of shedding human blood, Nimrod rendered himself notorious, and his name became a proverb. When he had erected a kingdom at Babel, “he went forth out of that land to Asshur, and builded Nineveh.” Thus the words may be rendered, (*marg.*) and this appears to be the true meaning of them; for the descendants of Ham are spoken of; not those of Shem, who had a son called Asshur. (22.) Nimrod seems to have been the principal person concerned, in building both Babylon and Nineveh.—The words translated, the *city Rehoboth*, are more properly rendered in the margin *the streets of the city*. Little interesting to us is known concerning the other cities here mentioned.

The Septuagint render the words translated “a mighty hunter,” *γίγας κυνηγός*, a *hunting giant*.

V. 13, 14. The names, being plural, seem to be those of families, not individuals.

V. 15—19. Several of these tribes are not mentioned among the people, whom the Lord destroyed before Israel. Some of them inhabited a country further northward than the promised land; and various changes would take place, during a course of ages, in respect of names, especially by uniting two or more families into one. The boundaries of the Canaanites are nearly the same, as those assigned to the Israelites west of Jordan, including also the country of Sodom and Gomorrah. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 21. *Of Eber.*] Of all the Hebrews, and of many other nations, who were descended from Shem by this branch.

V. 22—30. Besides the descendants of Shem by Ar-

\* Job 1. 1. Jer  
xxv. 30. 23 And the children of Aram; \* Uz,  
and Hul, and Gether, and Mash.

\* Heb. Shelah. 24 And Arphaxad begat \* Salah; and  
\* vi. 13—15. 'Salah begat Eber.

u xi. 16—19. Luke  
iii. 35, 36. 25 And unto Eber were born two  
x 32. Deut. xxxiii.  
8. Acts xvii. 26. sons; "the name of one *was* Peleg, for  
"in his days was the earth divided; and  
his brother's name was Joktan.

y 1 Chr. i. 20—23. 26 And 'Joktan begat Almodad, and  
Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah,  
27 And Hadoram, and Uzal, and  
Diklah,

28 And Obal, and Abimael, and  
z xxv. 3. 1 Kings  
x. 1. Sheba,

a 1 Kings ix. 28.  
xxix. 4b. 2 Chr.  
xiii. 18. ix. 10.  
Job xxii. 24.  
xxviii. 16. Ps.  
xlv. 9. Is. xiii.  
12. 29 And \*Ophir, and <sup>b</sup>Havilah, and  
Jobab: all these *were* the sons of Joktan.

b ii 11. xxv. 18.  
1 Sam. xv. 7. 30 And their dwelling was from Me-  
sha, as thou goest unto Sephar, a mount  
of the east.

c 5. 20. 31 These *are* the sons of Shem,  
"after their families, after their tongues,  
in their lands, after their nations.

d v. 29—31. 32 These *are* the families of the sons  
of Noah, after their generations, in their  
nations: and by these were the "nations  
divided in the earth after the flood.

phaxad, the Persians are supposed to be the posterity of Elam; the Assyrians and Chaldeans, of Asshur: and the Syrians, Armenians, and many tribes inhabiting Mesopotamia, of Aram: and the immensely numerous inhabitants of the East Indies, China, and Japan, may perhaps be considered as the descendants of Joktan, the son of Eber. Indeed, many learned men suppose that they find all Joktan's descendants in the large peninsula between the Red-Sea and the Persian Gulph; and appear to derive the Arabians in general from him. But the mention of a mountain in the East, warrants us to look for his posterity more to the East: at least if they settled in Arabia at first, some of them seem afterwards to have migrated to a greater distance. Indeed, this appears to be the most accurate account of the peopling of the regions in the eastern parts of Asia, south of Tartary. It is likewise certain, that many of the Arabians trace back their original to Ishmael and Keturah.—Peleg signifies *division*: and had not the division spoken of been appointed about the time of his birth, it does not appear why that name might not as properly have been given to any of his contemporaries, as to him.

V. 31. *Tongues.*] (Note, xi. 1, 2.) The division, mentioned before (25), seems to have been made by divine appointment (*Marg. Ref.*): but it was not complied with, till after the confusion of tongues; and the historian here refers to the consequences in later ages.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As all mankind are of one family, and nearly related in Adam and Noah, how reasonable is it that we should love, and do good to, each other! Whenever we behold a human being, whatever be his language and garb, or wherever he

#### CHAP. XI.

Only one language in the world, ∴ The building of Babel interrupted by the confusion of tongues, and the builders dispersed, 2—9. A genealogy from Shem to Abram, 10—27. Some account of Abram and his family, and of his removal from his native country, 28—32.

AND the whole earth "was of one  
"language, and of one "speech.

2 And it came to pass, as they jour-  
neyed "from the east, that they found a  
plain in the land of <sup>b</sup>Shinar; and they  
dwelt there.

3 And "they said one to another,  
"Go to, let us make brick, and "burn  
them thoroughly. And they had <sup>d</sup>brick  
for stone, and "slime had they for mortar.

4 And they said, Go to, let us build  
us a city and a tower, "whose top *may*  
*reach* unto heaven, "and let us make us  
a name, <sup>a</sup>lest we be scattered abroad  
upon the face of the whole earth.

5 And the LORD "came down to see  
the city and the tower, which the chil-  
dren of men builded.

a Is. xix. 18. Zeph.  
iii. 9. Acts ii. 6.  
\* Heb. lip.  
† Heb. words.

z Or, eastward. xiii.  
11. Heb.  
b See on x. 10.

† Heb. a man said  
to his neighbour.

c 4. 7. Eccl. ii. 1.  
Is. v. 5. Jam. iv.  
13. v. 1.

† Heb. burn them  
to a burning.

d Eccl. i. 14. v. 7—  
18. 2 Sam. xii.  
31. Is. lx. 10.  
lxv. 3. Nah. iii.  
14.

e Job. 10. Eccl. ii. 2.  
Deut. i. 28. Is. i.  
Dan. iv. 11. 22.

g 2 Sam. viii. 13.  
Prov. x. 7. Dan.  
iv. 30. John v.  
44.

h 8. Ps. xcii. 9.  
Luke i. 51.

i xviii. 21. Ex.  
xix. 11. John iii.  
13.

was born, we should recognize a relation, and behave to him accordingly. In this view, how unnatural and absurd is that prejudice against foreigners, and that contempt of them, which generally prevail!—And how can it consist with love to our neighbours, our brethren, "bone of our bone, and "flesh of our flesh," to treat them with rigour, or hold them in slavery?—But "whence then come wars and "fightings amongst us?" From that first murderer, who so early stirred up in fallen man the vile lusts of ambition, covetousness, revenge, and cruelty, and armed brethren against each other in horrid war; and who hath in all ages filled the earth with slaughter and devastation, which, it might previously have been supposed, could gratify none but himself. But the very existence of war, and the necessity of always being ready for it, and of sometimes waging it, too plainly prove *man's depravity*, as well as *Satan's influence*. Blessed be God, the days are coming, when all the "nations shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and "their spears into pruning-hooks, and they shall learn war "no more:" and then ambitious or rapacious conquerors will no longer be adjudged illustrious characters, as in man's partial histories; but they will be branded with infamy, as in the impartial records of the Bible.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1, 2. Many learned men are of opinion, that the events here recorded occurred about the time of Peleg's birth, or a hundred and one years after the deluge: but their arguments are by no means conclusive: and the idea impressed on the mind in reading the chapter, of the numbers, to which the family of Noah was already increased, favours the opinion that a longer term of years had elapsed.



London: Published for the Proprietors of Smith's Bible and World Maps, by Wm. Wood & Sons, 25, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C. 4.

For a complete list of the various authorities consulted, see the Preface.



6 And the LORD said, <sup>k</sup>Behold, <sup>l</sup>the people <sup>i</sup>is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them which they have <sup>m</sup>imagined to do.

7 Go to, <sup>n</sup>let us go down, and there <sup>o</sup>confound their language, that they <sup>p</sup>may not understand one another's speech.

8 So the <sup>q</sup>LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.

9 Therefore is the name of it called <sup>r</sup>Babel, because the LORD did there <sup>s</sup>confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon <sup>t</sup>the face of all the earth.

Probably the *division* of the earth before mentioned, was a distinct transaction from the *dispersion*, which took place on this occasion. It was the purpose of God, declared in the blessing pronounced on the sons of Noah, that they should "replenish the earth." (ix. 1.) This implied that they should be *divided* into distinct nations, under separate governments, inhabiting different countries, till the whole earth was repopled. But, as they all spake one language, and, with but few exceptions, had cast off the fear of God; they formed a project which tended to counteract his purpose.—Some regular *division* of the earth seems to have taken place at the time that Peleg was born, probably by divine appointment, under the direction of Noah and his sons. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, x. 22—30.)—But the several families, to which the different regions were assigned, had not yet separated, and were unwilling to separate.—The expression, "as they journeyed *from the East*," may refer to some of the expeditions headed by Nimrod, who, having united the whole company under his government, perhaps led them to combine in this undertaking: (*Note*, x. 8—12:) though some think that Noah had settled to the East of Shinar, when he left the ark, and that his descendants were now removing towards the West.

V. 3, 4. The company, or their leaders, consulted together, and excited and animated each other in encountering difficulties. The plain which they had chosen, contained no quarries of stone; but it yielded quantities of bitumen, which formed a natural cement: and, having thus obtained mortar, their ingenuity and resolution suggested a method of surmounting the other impediment to their design, (which was, to erect both a *city*, and an exceedingly high *tower*;) by burning clay into bricks. If they had planned this enormous building to secure themselves against a future deluge, as forgetting or distrusting the promise of God, or defying his vengeance; they would probably have chosen for the purpose some high mountain, and not a plain: but they proposed to themselves the acquisition of renown; they wanted to do something in order to be admired and celebrated; and they sought their own glory among posterity. Yet it is remarkable that no history records so much as the name of one of these Babel-builders, except that obscure intimation respecting Nimrod before referred to.—It appears likewise, that they meant this tower to be a centre of union, that they might not be divided, and "scattered abroad upon *the face of the whole earth*." And probably their chieftains, Nimrod especially, intended it to be the metropolis of that universal dominion of which they seem to have been ambitious.—It does not appear that they built the tower for an idolatrous temple expressly; but idolatry was early introduced, and this became one of its chief residences.

V. 5. The Lord took particular notice of this daring enterprise; and men, who take such notice, *come to the spot*

to examine for themselves. (*Note*, vi. 6, 7.)—The distinction between "the children of men," or the openly profane, and "the children of God," or professors of true religion, still subsisted. We may be sure, that Noah, Shem, Eber, and other pious persons, had no concern in this ambitious rebellious project.

V. 6—9. Ever since Adam broke through the fence of the divine prohibition, by eating the forbidden fruit, men have not been restrained from any thing on which they set their hearts, unless by a strong hand. The remarkable language here used, not only implies *counsel* and *determination*, and an indignant contempt of the presumptuous project formed by the builders; but is likewise a clear intimation of the plurality of persons in the Deity, and can admit of no other consistent interpretation. (*Note*, i. 26, 27.)—The power of that God, who first gave man the gift of speech, was exerted in *confounding* the language of this rebellious company; and nothing could be more suited to break their wicked combination. Some indeed have thought, that no more is meant, than *dividing their counsels*, by leaving them to their violent passions, till they quarrelled and separated; and several other interpretations have been given: but the variety of languages, which has ever since prevailed on earth, proves that their language was confounded, and that they could not understand each other. By an extraordinary miracle, their minds were strangely *confused*, as to the meaning of the terms in which they had before conversed; and led to form other words and expressions. Thus new languages were produced; and, probably, these were as numerous as the principal families in the company, who could understand one another but could not converse with their former associates. Thus the very plan which they had formed to prevent their dispersion made way for it; and in consequence the several tribes removed to the regions allotted to them. In some respects this was a severe rebuke, and led to the more entire separation of most of them from the worshippers of God: but it tended to accomplish his purpose in replenishing the earth with the human species.—

'There is scarcely a great nation in the world, but what has *its own language*. The dividing of languages was therefore the dividing of nations; and so a bar to the whole *world being under one government*.' *Fuller*.—Noah, and other pious persons, chiefly the descendants of Shem in the line of Eber, not being concerned in this project, retained the *original language*. Now, if this was, as it is highly probable, the *Hebrew*, we may conclude it was thus called from *Eber*, to whose descendants it was peculiar: and perhaps this is the most satisfactory reason that can be assigned, why Abraham is called the *Hebrew*, and his posterity the *Hebrews*. This name, however, seems to have been at first general to all the race of Eber.—*Babel* signifies *confusion*; (*Bp. Patrick: Leigh*;) and the city was afterwards called

27. x. 21, 22. 10 ¶ These *are* 'the generations of Shem: Shem *was* an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood.

t v. 4, &c. 11 And 'Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

B. C. 1846. 12 And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and begat Salah.

B. C. 2311. 13 And Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

B. C. 1908. 14 And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber.

B. C. 2281. 15 And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

B. C. 1878. 16 And 'Eber lived four and thirty years, and begat 'Peleg.

u x. 21, 25. 1 Chr. i. 19. B. C. 2247. 17 And Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters.

\* Luke iii. 35. Phalec. 18 And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat 'Reu.

† Luke iii. 35. Regau. B. C. 2217. 19 And Peleg lived after he begat Reu two hundred and nine years, and begat sons and daughters.

B. C. 2008. 20 And Reu lived two and thirty years, and begat 'Serug.

‡ Luke iii. 35. Saruch. B. C. 2165. 21 And Reu lived after he begat Serug two hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters.

B. C. 1976. 22 And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor.

B. C. 2155.

23 And Serug lived after he begat Nahor two hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. B. C. 1955.

24 And Nahor lived nine and twenty years, and begat 'Terah.

25 And Nahor lived after he begat Terah an hundred and nineteen years, and begat sons and daughters. † Luke iii. 34. Thara. B. C. 2126. B. C. 2007.

26 ¶ And Terah lived seventy years, and begat 'Abram, Nahor, and Haran. x xii. 4, 5. xxii. 20. —24. Josh. xxiv. 2. 1 Chr. i. 26, 27.

27 Now these *are* the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat 'Lot. y 31. xii. 4. xiii. 1. —11. xiv. 12. xix. 1.—29. 2 Pet. ii. 7.

28 And Haran died before his father Terah, in the land of his nativity, in 'Ur of the Chaldees. z xv. 7. Neh. ix. 7. Acts vii. 4.

29 And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abram's wife *was* 'Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife, a xvii. 15. xx. 12.

b Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah. b xxii. 20. xxiv. 15.

30 But Sarai was 'barren; she had no child. c xv. 2, 3. xvi. 1, 2. xviii. 11, 12. xxv. 21. xxix. 31. xxx. 1, 2. Judg. xiii. 2. 1 Sam. i. 2. Luke i. 7, 36. d 26, 27. xii. 1.

31 And Terah 'took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and 'they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto 'Haran, and dwelt there. e 28. Heb. xi. 8.

32 And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran. f 32. xii. 4. xxvii. 43. xxxix. 4, 5.—Acts vii. 4. Chardan.

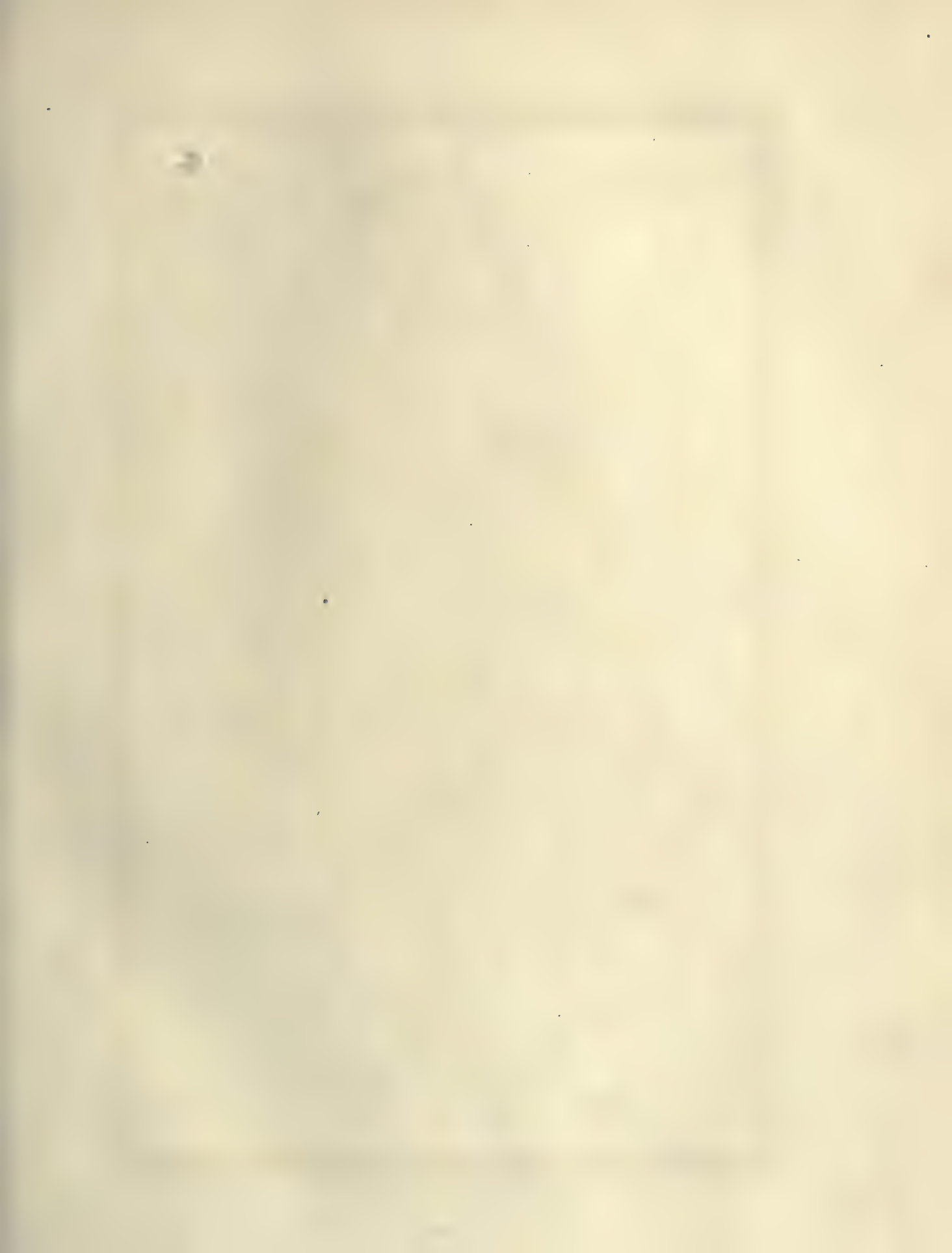
Babylon, and continued, for many ages, the head-quarters of idolatry, and the type of the mystical Babylon, "the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth;" which likewise is, and will be, *confusion*.

V. 10—25. The sacred writer, having given a general account of the tribes and nations descended from the three sons of Noah; before he proceeded to trace the line of Shem to Abram, introduced the building of Babel and the confusion of tongues, as in a parenthesis. The Septuagint read, "Arphaxad lived one hundred and thirty-five years, and begat Cainan. . . . And Cainan lived one hundred and thirty years, and begat Sala." And St. Luke refers to the genealogy, with this additional link in it. (*Luke* iii. 36.)—According to the Hebrew text, followed by our version, we may by computation find, that the original revelation made to Adam, might be transmitted to Abram, at above two thousand years' distance, through only two intermediate persons. Adam lived till Methusaleh was two hundred and forty-three years old; and Methusaleh died when Shem was about one hundred, who lived almost as long as Abraham.—The Septuagint, indeed, add one hundred years to all, beginning at Ar-

phaxad; and take them away from the subsequent life of some of them. (*Note*, v. 4—20.)—It is remarkable in how gradual a manner the life of man was shortened after the deluge, till it was confined within its present limits.

V. 26, 27. Terah seems to have lived seventy years before he had any children, and in process of time to have had Abram, Nahor, and Haran, and perhaps others. But, though Abram was mentioned first, as the most honourable character; it is probable that he was Terah's youngest son, and not born till his father was a hundred and thirty years of age. For Terah lived two hundred and five years: and Abram, who did not leave Haran till after his death, was only seventy-five when he departed thence. (xii. 5.)

V. 28—32. *Sarai* is supposed by some to have been the daughter of Haran, and the same as *Iscah*.—She is called the *daughter-in-law* of Terah (31), as being Abram's wife; yet Abram afterwards said, "she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother." (xx. 12.) Probably Haran was the eldest son of Terah, and Abram his youngest by another wife: and thus, Sarai was the daughter, or *grand-daughter*, of Terah, Abram's father, but not of his mother.—It seems that Terah left his country



**LAND OF CANAAN**  
 AS ILLUSTRATING THE HISTORIES OF  
 ABRAHAM, ISAAC & JACOB.

GENESIS CHAP. XII & XIII



## CHAP. XII.

God calls Abram and blesses him, 1—3. He, with Lot, leaves Haran and comes to Canaan, 4, 5. The Lord appears to him, and Abram worships, 6—9. Abram in a famine goes down to Egypt, and feigns his wife to be his sister, 10—13. She is taken into Pharaoh's house, who by plagues is compelled to restore her, 14—17. He reproves Abram, and sends him away, 18—20.

a xi. 31, 32. Is. xli.  
9. 1. 2. Ez. xxxviii.  
24  
b Josh. xxiv. 2, 3.  
Ps. xiv. 10, 11.  
Luke xiv. 26—  
33. Acts vii. 2—  
6. Heb. xi. 8.

NOW the LORD <sup>a</sup>had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from

thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee.

2 And <sup>a</sup>I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and <sup>d</sup>thou shalt be a blessing.

3 And <sup>a</sup>I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and <sup>i</sup>in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

c xiii. 16. xvii. 6.  
xviii. 18. xli. 3.  
Ex. xxxii. 10.  
Num. xiv. 12.  
Deut. xxxvi. 5.  
2 Sam. vii. 9.  
1 Kings iii. 8, 9  
d xiv. 1—16. xviii.  
18. xix. 29.  
xxviii. 4. 1 Kings  
i. 47. Gal. iii. 14.  
e xxvii. 29. Ex.  
xxiii. 22. Num.  
xxiv. 9. Matt.  
xxv. 40. 45.  
cviii. 18. xcii. 18.  
xxvi. 4. xxviii.  
14. xxx. 27. 30.  
xxxix. 5. Ps.  
lxxii. 17. Acts  
iii. 25, 26. Gal  
iii. 8.

on a divine monition made to Abram. (xii. 1. *Acts* vii. 2, 3.)—Idolatry must have become very general at this early period; for both Terah and his family had served other gods before this call; which was doubtless one reason of the command to Abram finally to leave his native country. Terah appears to have been very ready to obey the call, and even active in removing from Ur: and he reached a place called *Haran* or *Charran*, (well known in history, and perhaps thus named from Terah's deceased son;) but here he stopped, probably through sickness and infirmity; and Abram, having attended him till he died, afterwards proceeded on his journey towards Canaan. The other branches of the family seem afterwards to have left Ur, and to have settled at Haran.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

How soon do men forget the most tremendous judgments, and return to their former crimes! The increase of wickedness kept pace with that of the human species; though the desolations of the deluge were before their eyes, though they sprang from the stock of righteous Noah, and though that patriarch was still living! So ineffectual is every thing, except the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit, to rectify the obliquity of the human will, and subdue the depravity of the human heart!—Arduous undertakings can be accomplished only by counsel, harmony, and mutual encouragement; which we often find in the enterprizes of daring sinners against the cause of God, and which are too often wanting in the endeavours of his servants to promote his glory. There is, however, no counsel or wisdom against the Lord. While men on earth are plotting to defeat his purposes, “he sitteth in heaven, and laugheth them to scorn;” and all the efforts of sinners to honour themselves will at last terminate in shame and confusion.—In the difficulty with which our intercourse with foreign nations is carried on, and the labour with which learning is acquired, we experience the effects of the transaction at Babel. Indeed, one great hindrance to the promulgation of true religion, both in former and latter ages, has arisen from this source. Yet, “righteous art thou in all thy judgments, O LORD!” Then it was thy sovereign purpose to spread the Gospel among the nations which thou hadst dispersed, how easily didst thou by the gift of tongues remove this impediment!—Oh! remove all other impediments, and fill the earth with truth and righteousness.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1—3. To prevent the universal prevalence of idolatry, and to reserve a remnant, to whom his

oracles might be delivered, and among whom his ordinances might be established, till the coming of Christ; the Lord, as a Sovereign, chose Abram, from among his associates in idolatry. “Thus the God of glory appeared to him,” probably by a visible manifestation; and, having made himself known unto him, and satisfied him that this was a divine revelation, he commanded him to leave his native country.—It is not certain that idolatry was more prevalent there than in Canaan; but Abram might more easily avoid it among strangers, than among his former associates: he was therefore likewise required to leave all his kindred, that is, all who would not accompany him.—“The LORD had said,” &c. That is, when he was in Ur of the Chaldees: and perhaps he repeated the call after Terah's death. To engage Abram's prompt obedience, God promised to bless him *personally*, in things temporal, spiritual, and eternal; and *relatively* in his posterity, by “making of him a great nation.”—God would also “make his name great.”—Abram was not renowned, either as a conqueror, a law-giver, or an inventor of useful and ingenious arts: he was not a monarch, a genius, a philosopher, or so much as an author; but a plain man, dwelling in tents, and feeding cattle all his days: yet perhaps no mere man has been so widely and permanently honoured. The Jews, and many tribes of the Saracens and Arabians, justly own and revere him as their progenitor: many nations in the East exceedingly honour his memory at this day, and glory in their real or pretended relation to him. Throughout the visible church he has always been highly venerated; and at this day, Jews, Mohammedans, and many Gentiles, vie with each other and with Christians, who should most honour this ancient patriarch! Nothing could be more improbable at the time, than this event; yet the prediction has been fulfilling, most exactly and minutely, during the course of almost four thousand years! Need we any other proof, that the historian wrote as “he was moved by the Holy Ghost?”—The Lord also promised Abram that “he should be a blessing.” To the latest ages important blessings would for his sake be vouchsafed to his posterity; he should be an instrument of great good, while he lived, to his relations, domesticks, and neighbours; and his example would be eminently useful till the end of time. “All the true blessedness the world is now, or ever shall be, possessed of, is owing to Abram and his posterity. Through them we have a Bible, a Saviour, and a gospel. They are the stock on which the Christian church is grafted. Their very dispersions have proved the riches of the world.” *Fuller*.—The Lord would also have the same friends and enemies with his chosen servant, rewarding the kindness, and punishing the injuries,

4 So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.

5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan they came.

6 And Abram passed through the land into the place of <sup>1</sup>Sichem, unto the plain of <sup>m</sup>Moreh. And the <sup>n</sup>Canaanite was then in the land.

7 And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, <sup>p</sup>Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there <sup>q</sup>build he

an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

8 And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of <sup>r</sup>Beth-el, and pitched his tent, <sup>s</sup>having Beth-el on the west, and <sup>t</sup>Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and <sup>u</sup>called upon the name of the LORD.

9 And Abram journeyed, <sup>v</sup>going on still toward the south.

10 ¶ And there was <sup>w</sup>a famine in the land: and Abram <sup>x</sup>went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.

11 And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now I know that thou <sup>y</sup>art <sup>z</sup>a fair woman to look upon.

done to him, as if done to himself. In him, and in One descended from him, all blessings centre; and through and from him they have been communicated to unnumbered millions, and shall continue to be so, till all nations shall be made happy in him, and by faith in Jesus become "Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Notes, Acts iii. 24—26. Rom. iv. Gal. iii.)

V. 4, 5. "By faith Abram obeyed, and he went out "not knowing whither he went." He was fully satisfied that the call, promise, and command, were from the living God. He believed that his testimony was true, and his promise faithful, and that he was able to fulfil it. He was assured, that the blessing of the Almighty was sufficient to compensate for all that he could lose or leave behind, to countervail all trials, to supply all wants, and to answer and exceed all his desires and expectations. His natural reluctance might be strong; and many would deride him as a visionary, for leaving all, without so much as being able to inform his enquiring neighbours, or expostulating relatives, whither he was going. For it seems that Canaan was almost entirely unknown to him; being at least three hundred miles distant from Haran, and separated by great rivers, and an extensive and perilous desert.—Lot also, with his family, went with him, having become, probably by his means, a believer: and they took such of their possessions as could be removed, with the servants who were their property, and perhaps many of them proselytes to their religion. Thus with steady perseverance they went forward, and by the Lord's guidance and protection safely arrived in Canaan.

V. 6, 7. The Lord appeared to Abram on his arrival in Canaan, to testify his acceptance of his faith and obedience, and to encourage him; at the same time that he welcomed him to the promised land, which he assured him should be the possession of his posterity: yet he then had no child, the Canaanites dwelt in it, and he could only sojourn there as a stranger upon sufferance. Accordingly Abram "builded an altar, unto JEHOVAH, who "appeared to him." He made an open profession of his religion; maintained the publick worship of JEHOVAH; avowed his faith in the promised Seed, in prefiguration of

whose atonement sacrifices were instituted; and probably, both with his family and such of his neighbours as were induced to join him, he observed the sabbaths with sacred solemnity. Thus, in faith, he seemed to take possession of the promised land, in the name of JEHOVAH, as the land which in future ages would be the principal seat of true religion.—Sichem is afterwards spelt Shechem, which best accords with the original.—The word rendered plain, is generally supposed to mean an oak, or grove of oaks.—The clause, "The Canaanite was then in the land," might be added afterwards as an explanatory note, perhaps by Ezra: yet some think, that the branch of the devoted nations, which were called Canaanites, then inhabited this district; but, before the times when Moses wrote, had been dispossessed by some other tribe.

V. 8. Beth-el.] Many of these names were given afterwards; but Moses spake of the several places as they were known in his time.—"Calling on the name of the LORD," seems to signify the publick worship which accompanied Abram's sacrifices. Some render it, 'he preached concerning the name of the LORD;' as intimating that he joined instructions to his devotions. (xviii. 19.)

V. 10. Abram, when pressed by famine, did not return to Mesopotamia, as weary of his pilgrimage, or as despising the promised land; but he retired for a season into Egypt.

V. 11—16. It is supposed that Sarai's complexion, being fair, (as the Egyptians were sallow,) might render her more beautiful in the eyes of Pharaoh; though she was at this time sixty-five years of age.—The impartiality of the historian is here worthy of admiration: but the conduct of Abram was exceedingly culpable, and inconsistent with the character of 'the father of the faithful,' and "the friend "of God." His counsel to Sarai could arise from nothing but distrust and unbelief; for a numerous posterity had been just before promised him; and would the Lord suffer him to be slain when childless? The words which he suggested to Sarai were at best an equivocation, intended for the purpose of deceiving. He tempted her to join in his sin, and thus to expose her own chastity to imminent danger! And his language implied a strong dependence on the

12 Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This *is* his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive.

a xx. 11. xxvii. 7.  
1 Sam. xxvii. 1.  
Prov. xxix. 25.  
1 John 1. 8-10

13 Say, I pray thee, <sup>a</sup>thou *art* my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; <sup>b</sup>and my soul shall live because of thee.

a xi. 29. xx. 2. 12.  
xxvi. 7. 1b lvii.  
11. Matt. xxvi  
69-75 Gal. ii.  
12, 13.  
b Pa. cclvi. 3-5.  
Jer xvii. 5-8.

14 And it came to pass that when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians <sup>c</sup>beheld the woman, that she *was* very fair.

c iii. 6. vi. 2. xxxix.  
7. Matt. v. 28.

15 The <sup>d</sup>princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before <sup>e</sup>Pharaoh: and the woman was <sup>f</sup>taken into Pharaoh's house.

d Est. ii. 2-16.  
Prov. xxix. 12.  
e xi. 2. xli. 1. Ex.  
ii. 5. 1 Kings iii.  
1. Jer. xxv. 19.  
Ez. xxxii. 2.  
f xx. 2.

16 And he <sup>g</sup>entreated Abram well for

g xiii. 2. xx. 14

success of his carnal policy; and a disposition, if it succeeded, to give Sarai the credit of preserving his life, instead of ascribing his safety to the Lord. The temptation also, thrown in the way of Pharaoh and his princes, was suited to ensnare them in guilt, and even to prejudice them against Abram's religion.—Pharaoh, (whose name was for many ages common to the kings of Egypt,) was disposed to add to the number of his wives, (for probably he had some before;) and his courtiers were willing to assist him: but they did not shew any tokens of so atrocious wickedness, as to take Abram's wife from him, or to murder him on her account.

V. 17. God inflicted on Pharaoh and his family some grievous disorders, which made them sensible for what cause they were plagued: and thus he preserved Sarai. And probably she, being further questioned, declared the real state of the case.

V. 18—20. Pharaoh's conduct on this occasion was equitable and honourable; and his rebuke and expostulation could admit of no answer.—To tempt others to sin is the greatest of injuries.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—9.

In the call of Abram, the chosen repository of the promises, and the exemplar of believers through all future ages, we have a representation of the life of faith, and the walk with God. This commences when the Lord graciously makes himself known to a sinner, by his word and Spirit; thus calling him to forsake his sinful and worldly pursuits and connexions, to deny himself, and to become his spiritual worshipper and devoted servant: while allured by “*exceedingly great and precious promises*,” drawn by strong desires and expectations, and convinced of the ruin which attends disobedience, the sinner “*through grace obeys the calling*.”—He who indeed believes the word of God, and values duly the promised blessings, will yield a prompt and unreserved obedience to the command, however nature may revolt at it, or shrink from it: and nothing but true faith will produce this self-denying obedience. Believers, “*being justified by faith, have peace with God*,” they are blessed

her sake: and <sup>h</sup>he had sheep, and oxen, and he-asses, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and she-asses, and camels.

h xxiv. 35. xxvii.  
14. xxxii. 5. 13-  
16. Job i. 3. xiii.  
12.

17 And the LORD <sup>i</sup>plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues, because of Sarai, Abram's wife.

i xx. 18. Job xxxvii.  
19. Ps. cv. 14, 16.  
Heb. xiii. 4.

18 And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, <sup>k</sup>What *is* this *that* thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she *was* thy wife?

k xx. 9, 10. xxvii.  
9-11. Ex. xxxiii.  
21. Prov. xxi. 1.

19. Why saidst thou she *is* my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore, behold thy wife, take *her* and go thy way.

20 And Pharaoh commanded *his* men concerning him; <sup>l</sup>and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

l 1 Sam. xxix. 6-11.

themselves, and blessings to others, to relatives, to friends, to neighbours, to their country, to the church of God, and to posterity; by their example, influence, and prayers, living and dying: and their words and actions are often long after remembered with great profit, by many. As their friends will be rewarded, so their enemies will be punished; though their name may not be *great* on earth, it shall be great in heaven; and some, who have lived long in sin, have become afterwards very eminent in faith and holiness.—We must not neglect the call of God, to oblige our nearest relations; but we should endeavour to prevail on them to associate with us in his service; and we shall not in general be altogether unsuccessful. Wherever we go, “*the LORD is there*,” and, professing his truth, attending on his worship, and enjoying communion with him, we cannot but be safe, respectable, and happy. Whatever difficulties and dangers we meet with, we must never think of turning back; but must press forward, aiming at still more intimate communion with God, and more entire conformity to him.

##### V. 10—20.

No state on earth is free from trials; no character from blemishes: famine was known in Canaan, the glory of all lands; and unbelief, with its consequent evils, was clearly discernible in Abram “*the father of the faithful*!” In heaven alone can perfect felicity and purity be found.—Those external accomplishments which are most coveted and admired, frequently prove sources of danger and temptation to the possessor, and to others.—“*The fear of man bringeth a snare*,” and nothing but lively and vigorous faith can keep us steadfast in obedience, amidst perils and temptations.—Our attachments to endeared relatives, and our expectations from them, are frequently idolatrous, and inconsistent with simplicity of dependence on the Lord.—Strict sincerity, remote from the least appearance of evasion or duplicity, is not only most honourable, but in the event safest and most advantageous: for “*a lying lip is but for a moment*,” and disgrace is sure to follow.—Magistrates are exalted in Providence to be “*a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well*,” but too often they are slaves to their own lusts, and sacrifice every nobler con-

## CHAP. XIII.

Abram and Lot return with great riches from Egypt, 1—5. Strife arises between Abram's herdsmen and those of Lot, 6, 7. Abram meekly refers it to Lot, to choose his part in the country, 8, 9; and he goes to Sodom, 10—13. God renews his promises to Abram, 14—17; who goes to Hebron and builds an altar, 18.

**AND** Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into <sup>a</sup>the south.

2 And Abram *was* very <sup>b</sup>rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold.

3 And he went on his journeys from the south, even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and Hai;

4 Unto <sup>c</sup>the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram <sup>d</sup>called on the name of the LORD.

5 And Lot also, which went with Abram; had flocks, and herds, and <sup>e</sup>tents.

6 And the land was not able to <sup>f</sup>bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.

7 And there was <sup>g</sup>a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the

herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the <sup>h</sup>Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled there in the land.

8 And Abram said unto Lot, <sup>i</sup>Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen: for we *be* <sup>j</sup>brethren.

9 *Is* <sup>k</sup>not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: <sup>l</sup>if *thou wilt take* the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if *thou depart* to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

10 And Lot lifted up his eyes, <sup>m</sup>and beheld all <sup>n</sup>the plain of Jordan, that it *was* well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, *even as* <sup>o</sup>the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto <sup>p</sup>Zoar.

11 Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and <sup>q</sup>they separated themselves the one from the other.

12 Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot <sup>r</sup>dwelled in the cities of the plain, and <sup>s</sup>pitched *his* tent toward Sodom.

<sup>a</sup> xlii. 9 Josh. x. 40. xviii. 5. 1 Sam. xlviii. 10. 2 Sam. xlviii. 7.

<sup>b</sup> xxiv. 26. xxvi. 12. 13. Deut. viii. 18. 1 Sam. ii. 7. Job i. 10. Ps. cxli. 1—3. Prov. iii. 9, 10. x. 22. Matt. vi. 33.

<sup>c</sup> xlii. xli. 7, 8. xxv. 1—3. Ps. xxvi. 8. xlii. 2. lxxxiv. 1, 2, 10. d Ps. cxvi. 2, 17. Jer. xxix. 12. Zeph. iii. 9. 1 Cor. i. 2.

<sup>e</sup> iv. 20. xxv. 27. Jer. xlix. 29. f xxxvi. 6, 7. Ec. v. 10, 11. Luke xii. 17, 18.

<sup>g</sup> xxv. 20. Ex. ii. 17. 1 Cor. iii. 3. Gal. v. 20.

h xlii. 6. xxiv. 30. Neh. v. 9. Phil. ii. 14, 15. Co. iv. 5. 1 Thes. iv. 12. 1 Pet. ii. 12.

i Prov. xv. 1. Matt. v. 9. 1 Cor. vi. 6, 7. Heb. xii. 14.

j Heb. mem. brethren. xi. 27—31. xiv. 24. Ps. cxxxiii. Acts vii. 26. Rom. xii. 10. Eph. iv. 2, 3. 1 Thes. iv. 9. Heb. xlii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 17. iii. 8. iv. 8, 2 Pet. i. 7. 1 John ii. 9. —11. iii. 14—19. iv. 7, 20, 21. k xx. 15. xxxiv. 10.

l Rom. xii. 18. Jam. iii. 13—18. 1 Pet. iii. 10, 11. m iii. 6. vi. 2. Num. xxxii. 1, &c. 1 John ii. 15, 16. n xix. 17. 25. 1 Kings vii. 46. o ii. 9. 1s. ii. 3. Ez. xxxii. 13. xxxi. 8. Joel ii. 3. p xiv. 2, 8. xix. 20. —22. 30. Deut. xxxiv. 3. 1s. xv. 5. Jer. xlviii. 34.

q 9. 14. Ps. xvi. 3. cxix. 63. Prov. xvii. 10. Heb. x. 25.

r xix. 29. s xiv. 12. xix. 1. Ps. xxvi. 5. 1 Cor. xv. 33. 2 Pet. ii. 7, 8.

deration to "make provision for the flesh:" but they must give an account of their conduct to God. And when courtiers degrade themselves, by becoming caterers to the lusts of their superiors, they forfeit the honourable appellation of princes, and merit the most opprobrious epithets. Yet, even in the worst of times and places, we meet with more honour and conscience, than we perhaps expected, and find our unbelieving fears were groundless.—God protects his people notwithstanding their infirmities; takes better care of them than they do of themselves; and over-rules all things for their good: yet they shall not escape rebuke, even from those who are in other respects their inferiors, when they act inconsistently with their character and profession.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1. *South.*] The southern part of Canaan, lay north-east of Egypt.

V. 2. Abram's riches had been increased by his journey to Egypt, nay, by means of his misconduct! God so overruling it, entirely beside Abram's intention.

V. 4. *Place of the altar.*] In preference to any other place, as remembering with pleasure, the worship which he had there performed.

V. 6. The former inhabitants doubtless occupied much of the best land; and the unoccupied part could not, in one district, support so large flocks and herds.

V. 7. The Canaanite and Perizzite, being estranged from true religion, would strictly scrutinize, and severely animadvert upon, the conduct of those, who openly professed themselves the servants and worshippers of JEHOVAH.—*The Canaanite, &c.*] Note, xii. 6, 7.

V. 8, 9. Abram was the elder man, the superior relation, and the more eminent servant of God: yet, for the sake of peace, and for the credit of religion, he gave up every personal consideration, and with great temper and prudence supplicated his nephew, and allowed him his choice.—'The best, the wisest, and men of the greatest experience in the world, are most inclined to peace, and most yielding in order to it.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 10—12. Lot seems to have expressed no great reluctance at leaving Abram's family, and losing the benefit of his conversation, counsel, example, worship, and instructions; nor so much as to have remitted to him the privilege of the first choice! But if this was faulty, it was still worse to choose, merely from "the lust of the eye," a well-watered, fruitful land, without any higher motive, than the hope that his substance, already too large, would there become much greater.—Before the destruction of Sodom, this region appeared to those who approached it by the way of Zoar, which lay on its borders, like a most beautiful garden. The garden of Eden seems referred to. (*Marg. Ref. o.*) The flat country, watered abundantly by the streams of Jordan, resembled Egypt in appearance and fertility. Thither Lot resorted: and Abram continued to dwell in a part of that

xv. 16. xviii. 20.  
xix. 4. &c. Is. i.  
9. iii. 9. Ezek.  
xvi. 46—50.  
Matt. xi. 23, 24.  
vi. 11. x. 9.  
xxxviii. 7. 2 Kings  
xxi. 6. Is. iii. 8.

x. 10. Is. xlix. 18.  
lx. 4.  
y xxxviii. 14. Deut.  
iii. 27.  
z xii. 7. xv. 18.  
xvii. 8. xviii. 18.  
xxiv. 7. xxvi. 3.  
xxxviii. 13. Num.  
xxxiv. 2. &c.  
Deut. xxvi. 2—  
4. 2 Chr. xx. 7.  
Neh. ix. 7, 8.  
Ps. cv. 9—12.  
cxii. 1, 2. Acts  
vii. 5.

13 But 'the men of Sodom were wicked, and sinners 'before the LORD exceedingly.

14 ¶ And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, \*Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, 'north-ward, and south-ward, and east-ward, and west-ward.

15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

16 And \*I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

17 Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it: for I will give it unto thee.

18 Then Abram removed *his* tent, and came and dwelt in the \*plain of <sup>b</sup>Mamre which is in <sup>c</sup>Hebron, and built there <sup>d</sup>an altar unto the LORD.

xv. 5. xxi. 17.  
xxvi. 4. xxviii. 3.  
14. xxxii. 12. Ex.  
xxxiii. 13. Num.  
xxxiii. 10. Deut. i.  
19. 1 Kings iii. 8.  
iv. 20. 1 Chr.  
xxxvii. 23. Is.  
xlviii. 18, 19. Jer.  
xxxiii. 22. Rom.  
iv. 16—18. Heb.  
xi. 12.

\* Heb. *plains*.  
b xiv. 13. xviii. 1.  
c xxxiii. 2. Num.  
xiii. 22. Josh. xiv.  
13.  
d viii. 20. xii. 7, 8

country, which was afterwards inherited by his posterity.—It is not said that Lot built an altar to the LORD.

V. 13. *Sinners, &c.*] The men of Sodom were notorious and daring transgressors; despising God, and openly defying him; and they were especially marked by him for vengeance.

V. 14. "Lot lifted up his eyes, &c." (10);—and God saith to Abram, "Lift up thine eyes, &c."—"Thus he who 'sought this world lost it; and he who was willing to give 'up any thing for the honour of God and religion, found 'it.' Fuller.

V. 15. *For ever.*] This expression, in some instances, means, *for ages to come*. (Note, xvii. 7, 8.)

V. 16. *As the dust.*] This promise must have put Abram's faith to a sharp trial: for as yet he had no child; though he was far advanced in life, and had been long married.—Had an innumerable posterity been promised to one of Noah's sons, or grandsons, it would not have been extraordinary; but about four hundred and thirty years had now elapsed since the deluge; the earth was greatly replenished, and considerable nations were already founded: yet Abram's descendants have been so numerous, as almost to rank with those of some of Noah's grandsons; and none of his contemporaries can, in this respect, be at all put in competition with him. When Moses wrote the history, these predictions had, in some measure, been fulfilled: but what proportion did the increase of Abram's seed at that time bear, to the incalculable multitudes which have since sprung from him? Besides the nations of Judah and Israel, his descendants by Esau, and Ishmael, and the sons of Keturah have been astonishingly numerous. What human foresight could have perceived, that the nations descended from Abram would be preserved so distinct, during such a lapse of ages, as to afford mankind any satisfaction in enquiring into the number of his descendants? What other nations have been kept separate from the people, in the midst of whom they lived, as the Israelites, Ishmaelites, and Arabians have been? What other people can trace back their origin to one illustrious progenitor, without involving the whole in fable and uncertainty?—Even should any one doubt, against the express testimony of Christ and his apostles, whether Moses wrote these books; it is unquestionable that they are very ancient; and that these prophecies have received their most illustrious accomplishment, since the time when we may *certainly know* that they were extant.

V. 17. *Arise, &c.*] 'Go and survey the inheritance allotted to thy posterity.'

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We may sometimes be driven into places of temptation, but we must not continue in them when the necessity ceases.—The possession of riches, though dangerous, is not absolutely incompatible with the life of faith and walk with God. When they are neither anxiously coveted, nor eagerly pursued, nor improperly confided in, nor inordinately loved;—when they come by the blessing of God, are thankfully received, moderately enjoyed, and carefully improved;—they may then be ornaments of godliness, and means of usefulness. Yet they are generally encumbrances to the possessor, and sources of contention or separation between brethren; and frequently they exclude men from comfortable society, and many spiritual advantages. When they "are increased, "those are increased that eat them;" which commonly creates uneasiness, and renders the possession of the blessing of peace more precarious. Let the poor then learn contentment, and the wealthy caution and moderation, from the example of Abram and Lot.—As we, who profess to be brethren in Christ, are surrounded with enemies and spies, we should be careful to preserve union, and to "avoid all "appearance of evil," lest we should prejudice their minds, or open their mouths against us: and we ought to renounce every personal interest, and to make every concession, for the sake of peace.—If the real servants of God so lose themselves, as to leave, for temporal advantages, the society of the faithful, and to estrange themselves from sacred ordinances, by removing to dark and wicked places, they will be severely corrected: while the Lord will compensate, *perhaps* in outward blessings, *certainly* in spiritual consolations, pledges of his love, and earnest of glory, those who give up secular advantages for his sake, and for the cause and honour of the Gospel.—In outward difficulties it is very profitable for the believer to meditate, frequently and intensely, on the glorious inheritance which the Lord hath in reserve for him at the last. And as it is impossible to conceive, that the promises and predictions of this ancient book could have been so minutely and circumstantially fulfilled, during a course of so many centuries, unless they had been written "by inspiration of God;" let every reader remember our Lord's words: "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, "neither would they be persuaded though one rose from "the dead."

## CHAP. XIV.

War is waged by four kings against the king of Sodom and his allies, who are conquered and plundered, 1—11. Lot is taken prisoner, but is rescued by Abram, 12—16. Abram returns, and is met by Melchizedek king of Salem; and by the king of Sodom, to whom he restores the spoil, except the portion of his own confederates, 17—24.

AND it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of <sup>a</sup>Shinar, Arioch king of <sup>b</sup>Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of <sup>c</sup>Elam, and Tidal king of nations;

2 That these made war with Bera king of <sup>d</sup>Sodom, and with Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of <sup>e</sup>Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which is <sup>f</sup>Zoar.

3 All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the <sup>g</sup>salt-sea.

4 Twelve years <sup>h</sup>they served Chedorlaomer; and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

5 And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the <sup>i</sup>Rephaims in <sup>k</sup>Ashteroth-Karnaim, and the <sup>l</sup>Zuzims in Ham, and the <sup>m</sup>Emims in <sup>n</sup>Shaveh Kiriathaim,

6 And the <sup>o</sup>Horites in their mount Seir, unto <sup>p</sup>El-paran, which is by the wilderness.

7 And they returned and came to

Enmishpat, which is <sup>o</sup>Kadesh, and smote all the country of the <sup>p</sup>Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in <sup>q</sup>Ha-zazon-tamar.

8 And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, (the same is Zoar;) and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim;

9 With Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar: four kings with five.

10 And the vale of Siddim was full of <sup>r</sup>slime-pits: and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there: and they that remained fled to <sup>s</sup>the mountain.

11 And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way.

12 And they took <sup>t</sup>Lot, Abram's brother's son, ("who dwelt in Sodom,) and his goods, and departed.

13 And there came <sup>u</sup>one that had escaped, and told Abram <sup>v</sup>the Hebrew; for he <sup>w</sup>dwelt in the plain of <sup>x</sup>Mamre the <sup>y</sup>Amorite, brother of Eschol, and brother of Aner: and these were confederate with Abram.

14 And when Abram heard that <sup>z</sup>his brother was taken captive, he <sup>aa</sup>armed

a x. 10. xl. 2. 1s. xi. 11. Dan. i. 2. Zech. v. 11. b 1s. xxxvii. 12. c x. 22. 1s. xxi. 2. Jer. xxxv. 25. xlix. 34—39.

d x. 19. xlii. 10. 1s. i. 9. 10. e Deut. xxix. 23. Hos. xi. 8.

f xix. 20—30

g Num. xxxiv. 12. Deut. iii. 17. Josh. iii. 16. Ps. cvii. 34. marg. h ix. 25, 26.

i xv. 20. 2 Sam. v. 18. xxiii. 13. 1 Chr. xi. 15. xiv. 9. 1s. xvii. 5. k Josh. xii. 4. xlii. 12. l Deut. ii. 20—23. m Deut. ii. 10, 11. n Or, the plain of Kiriathaim. Jer. xlviii. 1. 28. o xxxvi. 8. 20—30. Deut. ii. 12. 22. 1 Chr. i. 38—42. p Or, the plain of Paran. xxi. 21. Num. xii. 16. xlii. 3.

o Num. xx. 1. Deut. i. 19. 46. xxxvi. 16. Ex. xvi. 8—16. Num. xiv. 43. 45. xxiv. 20. 1 Sam. xv. xxx. q 2 Chr. xx. 2.

r xi. 8.

s xix. 17. 30

t xi. 27. xii. 5.

u xlii. 12, 13. Num. xvi. 26. Job ix. 23. Jer. ii. 17—19. 1 Tim. vi. 9. —11. Rev. iii. 19. x 1 Sam. iv. 12. y xxxix. 14. xl. 15. xli. 12. xliii. 32. Ex. ii. 6. 11. 2 Cor. xi. 22. Phil. iii. 5. z xlii. 18. aa b x. 16. Num. xxi. 21. c xlii. 8. Prov. xvii. 17. xxiv. 11, 12. Gal. vi. 1. 2. 1 John iii. 18. Or, led forth.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1—3. This is the most ancient war recorded in authentick history; and doubtless it would have been passed over in silence and buried in oblivion, had not Abram and Lot been concerned in it: edification, not the gratifying of curiosity, being the object of the inspired historians.—The fruitful valley of Siddim, by the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, became a large lake, called the Salt Sea, or the Dead Sea.—Some of these assailants came from Mesopotamia, and others from beyond the Tigris. Amraphel was king of the country in which Babel stood. (Marg. Ref. a.)

V. 4. After having submitted for twelve years, these kings formed an alliance to shake off the yoke of this foreign prince.

V. 5—7. This ancient conqueror, having subdued all the neighbouring petty princes, and ravaged their territories, came with his victorious army to subjugate the king of Sodom and his allies.—The word *Rephaim* is often translated giants. (Marg. Ref. i.) For, "all the country of the Amalekites," the Septuagint read, "All the rulers of Amalek." (Note, xxxvi. 12.)

V. 12. From avaricious motives, Lot had chosen the

fruitful plain of Sodom, and at length had gone to dwell in that wicked city, the inhabitants of which were ripe for vengeance; but their wealth soon tempted plunderers, and he was stript of all his property and carried captive. Had not Lot been taken, the conquerors might have gone off with their booty; but he was the servant of God, though he had offended: he needed a rebuke, but he must not be reduced to slavery; especially as he was brother's son to Abram the blessed, who was "a blessing" to all related to him.

V. 13. Abram is called the Hebrew, probably from the name of Eber his ancestor, and not, as some think, from his having passed the Euphrates, the word signifying a passage. (Note, xi. 6—9.)—He had prudently formed an alliance with these chiefs for mutual defence, amidst all this violence and depredation. Perhaps they were proselyted to his religion.—Mamre is the name of a man, from whom the plain was called.

V. 14—16. Abram might have found many plausible reasons, to excuse himself from this dangerous enterprize; and especially he might have pleaded the inpropriety of Lot's conduct. But he forgot all; he disregarded difficulty and danger; he feared not the numerous and victorious forces of the combined kings: and having so good a cause



THE SALT OR DEAD SEA.

GEN. xiv. 3; xix. 28. DEUT. iii. 17.



\* Or, instructed. his \*trained servants, \*born in his own  
d xii. 5. 16. xv. 3.  
xvii. 12. 27. xviii.  
19.  
e Deut. xxxiv. 1. pursued them unto \*Dan.  
Judg. xviii. 29  
xx. 4.

f Is xli. 2, 3. 15 And he divided himself against  
them, he and his servants by night, \*and  
smote them, and pursued them unto  
Hobah, which is on the left hand of  
g xv. 2. 1 Kings xv  
18. Acts ix. 2.  
h 11, 12. xii. 2.  
1 Sam. xxxc  
18, 19. \*Damascus.

i 2 Sam. xviii. 18.  
m Ps. lxxvi. 2.  
n Heb. vii. 1, 2.  
o Matt. xxvi. 25—  
29.  
p Ps. cx. 4. Heb.  
v. 6. 10. vi. 20.  
vii. 10—22.  
q xxvi. 4. 25—29.  
xlvii. 7. 10. xlviii.  
9—16. xlix. 28.  
Num. vi. 23—27.  
Mark x. 16. Heb.  
vii. 6, 7. 16 And \*he brought back all the  
goods, and also brought again his brother  
Lot, and his goods, and the women  
also, and the people.

r 1 Sam. xviii. 6.  
Prov. xiv. 29  
xix. 4.  
k Heb. vii. 1.  
l 2 Sam. xviii. 18.  
m Ps. lxxvi. 2.  
n Heb. vii. 1, 2.  
o Matt. xxvi. 25—  
29.  
p Ps. cx. 4. Heb.  
v. 6. 10. vi. 20.  
vii. 10—22.  
q xxvi. 4. 25—29.  
xlvii. 7. 10. xlviii.  
9—16. xlix. 28.  
Num. vi. 23—27.  
Mark x. 16. Heb.  
vii. 6, 7. 17 ¶ And the king of Sodom went  
out \*to meet him (\*after his return from  
the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of  
the kings that were with him,) at the  
valley of Shaveh, which is the \*king's dale.

r 1 Sam. xviii. 6.  
Prov. xiv. 29  
xix. 4.  
k Heb. vii. 1.  
l 2 Sam. xviii. 18.  
m Ps. lxxvi. 2.  
n Heb. vii. 1, 2.  
o Matt. xxvi. 25—  
29.  
p Ps. cx. 4. Heb.  
v. 6. 10. vi. 20.  
vii. 10—22.  
q xxvi. 4. 25—29.  
xlvii. 7. 10. xlviii.  
9—16. xlix. 28.  
Num. vi. 23—27.  
Mark x. 16. Heb.  
vii. 6, 7. 18 And Melchizedek, \*king of Salem,  
brought forth \*bread and wine: and he  
was \*the priest of the most high God.

19 And he \*blessed him, and said,

\*Blessed be Abram of the \*most high  
God, \*possessor of heaven and earth:

20 And \*blessed be the most high  
God, \*which hath delivered thine ene-  
mies into thy hand. And he gave him  
\*tithes of all.

21 And the king of Sodom said unto  
Abram, Give me the \*persons, and take  
the goods to thyself.

22 And Abram said to the king of  
Sodom, I have \*lifted up mine hand  
\*unto the LORD, \*the most high God,  
the possessor of heaven and earth:

23 That \*I will not take from a thread  
even to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not  
take any thing that is thine, \*lest thou  
shouldest say, I have made Abram rich:

24 Save only that which the young  
men have eaten, and the portion of the  
men which went with me, \*Aner, Eshcol,  
and Mamre; \*let them take their portion.

as the relief of a brother in distress, depending on God, he  
boldly pursued them with his small company.—Though  
averse from war, in which we do not find he ever engaged  
before or after; he had yet trained his domesticks for it, and  
put himself in a posture of defence. Some indeed under-  
stand it, that he trained up his servants in the faith and fear  
of God, which would render them the best soldiers for such  
an expedition. In company, however, with his confederates,  
Abram followed the victors to the northern borders of Can-  
aan. He, employing both courage and policy, attacked the  
enemy in the night by surprise; and, God so ordering it, he  
totally intimidated and subdued them, slaying some, and  
dispersing the rest. Thus he recovered all, and took a great  
booty.—Some think that the place called *Dan*, was so named  
from its situation near the springs of the river *Jordan*:  
others that this name, being given to a city built long after  
by the Danites, was inserted by Ezra, instead of *Laish*, the  
ancient name, to render the passage more intelligible.  
(*Marg. Ref. e.*)

V. 18—20. Various have been the opinions of exposi-  
tors respecting Melchizedek. Some have conjectured that  
it was Shem, who, as Abram's venerable progenitor, was  
entitled to peculiar respect. But Shem's genealogy was  
well known; and Levi was descended from him as well as  
from Abram, which is irreconcilable with the apostle's rea-  
soning on the subject. (*Notes, Heb. vii. 1—10.*)—Others  
therefore have thought that it was the Son of God himself;  
being unwilling to allow that any mere man was superior to  
Abram. But surely the apostle in this case would never  
have said, that Melchizedek was "made like to the Son of  
God:" or that Christ was constituted "a Priest after  
the order of Melchizedek;" or that he was a type of  
himself! Melchizedek is stated to have been the king of  
Salem; (probably the city afterwards called Jerusalem, and  
distinguished in Pagan writers by the name *Solyia*;) but  
we may be sure that Christ did not then reign over any par-  
ticular city as a temporal prince. It is indeed very evident

that Melchizedek was a mere man: but the Lord has not  
seen good to inform us from which of Noah's sons he sprang;  
or who were his immediate parents, predecessors, or succes-  
sors: indeed, he seems intentionally to have concealed them.  
We may, however, reasonably determine, that he was an  
aged person, venerable for sanctity, who ruled over his sub-  
jects in righteousness, while they lived under him in peace;  
which, when oppression and violence prevailed among their  
neighbours, perhaps gave the name both to him and to his  
city.—He also kept up the worship of the true God; and,  
though a king, he officiated as his priest.—In these things,  
and many others, he was a remarkable type of Christ;  
(*Notes, Ps. cx. 4. Heb. vii.:*) and, in reverence to his age,  
rank, piety, and priestly character, Abram shewed him great  
honour, received his benediction, and gave him tithes of all  
his spoils: being influenced to this by some secret divine  
monition; perhaps being led to see in this typical character  
his future Lord and Saviour. At least the Spirit of God  
intended to instruct Abram's descendants by this action,  
"that a better priest should arise," than those of the family  
of Aaron.—We cannot determine from the silence of the  
sacred historian, that this was the only interview between  
Melchizedek and Abram: for, as Shem lived almost as long  
as Abram, it is probable they met together, though we are  
not informed that they did.—Bread and wine constituted a  
suitable refreshment of Abram's weary followers: and it is  
remarkable that Christ hath appointed the same, as the me-  
morials of his body and blood, which are "meat indeed  
and drink indeed." Melchizedek is the only person ex-  
pressly spoken of, as the priest of the true God, before the  
institution of the Aaronick priesthood. In this he had no  
predecessor, or successor, but was appointed for special  
purposes by God himself. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 21. Give me, &c.] 'Release the prisoners and take  
the spoil, not only of the kings, but of Sodom too, as the  
reward of thy victory.'

V. 22—24. Probably Abram solemnly vowed, before he

## CHAP. XV.

The Lord encourages Abram; who complains that he continues childless, but is assured of a numerous posterity, 1—5. He is justified by faith, 6. He requests a pledge to confirm his faith; and being directed to prepare a sacrifice, obeys, 7—11. He is favoured with a vision, prophetick of the condition of his posterity till brought out of Egypt: and Canaan is ensured by covenant to them, 12—21.

a xlv. 2. Num.  
xii. 6. Ex. i. 1.  
viii. 4. xi. 24.  
Dan. x. 1—16.  
Acts x. 10—17.

**AFTER** these things the word of the **LORD** came unto Abram <sup>a</sup>in a vision,

set out on this expedition, that he would not take any thing which had belonged to the vanquished kings. The credit of his religious profession required, that if he engaged in war, it should evidently be on the most liberal and disinterested principles. This would best answer the question "What do ye more than others?"—*Lifting up the hand to the Lord*, was a customary token of taking an oath, or making a vow to the Lord.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

## V. 1—16.

Sinners may for a season prosper, though "the wrath of God abides upon them:" but respites are not pardons, and prosperity often hardens and ripens men for destruction. After four hundred years the curse denounced on Canaan began to take effect: let us hear and fear, and flee from the wrath to come.—Avarice, ambition, and the thirst of dominion are insatiable, render men savage and brutal, and in all ages have filled the earth with misery and destruction: yet God executes his righteous purposes even by means of the unrighteousness of men.—Some calamity might have been expected to befall Lot for his misconduct; and we may expect similar consequences if we imitate his example, and prefer the prospect of gain, to 'the means of grace,' and 'the communion of the saints.' But the Lord, though he rebuke and chasten, will not forsake his offending children; and we also must be ready to forgive our offending brethren, and hasten to their relief.—War can never be desirable: but in the present state of things it may be lawful, and even adviseable; and never more so, than in order to relieve the oppressed.—They who serve God, whatever means they employ, will not depend on an "arm of flesh:" and when they trust in him, and have a righteous cause and a good conscience, it becomes them to be "bold as a lion," and not to shrink from difficulties in the path of duty. Nor is any courage worthy of admiration or imitation, or in the least degree rational, but that which springs from a believing dependence upon God, and a firm persuasion that we are prepared for life and death, and are in the place, and doing the work, which he hath assigned us.—It is a great advantage to stand related to those who are the friends and followers of God: for by their means, and in answer to their prayers, such persons will often be preserved.

## V. 17—24.

The Lord is "the most high God, the Possessor of heaven and earth;" and all our possessions belong to him: we ought then to acknowledge his right, and seek his bless-

saying, <sup>b</sup>Fear not, Abram; I am <sup>c</sup>thy Shield, and thy <sup>d</sup>exceeding great Reward.

2 And Abram said, Lord God, <sup>e</sup>what wilt thou give me, seeing I go <sup>f</sup>childless, and <sup>g</sup>the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?

3 And Abram said, <sup>h</sup>Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and lo, one <sup>i</sup>born in my house is mine heir.

3, 4. e xli. 1—3. f xlv. 21. xxx. 1, 2. Ps cxviii. 3. Prov. xii. 12. Acts vii. 5. g xli. 2. 10. xxxix. 4—6. 9. xliii. 19. xli. 1. Prov. xvii. 2. h xli. 2. xlii. 16. Jer. xli. 1. i xiv. 14. Ec. ii. 7.

ing, by consecrating a portion to his immediate service: and the tenth was early deemed, and long continued to be considered, a very moderate proportion.—Oaths on important occasions are lawful: but they should be taken with great solemnity, as an act of sacred worship, and observed with great punctuality.—Nothing better becomes a profession of godliness, than a noble spirit of disinterestedness: and in our whole conduct we should study to avoid, not only evil, but the very appearance of it; especially in those things which at first glance seem unsuitable to our profession. As "the earth is the LORD's and the fulness thereof," they who belong to him have no occasion to grasp at temporal advantages; for if riches are good for them, he will surely confer them. We should however, without censure, allow many things to others, which our profession and character may render it expedient for us to deny ourselves.—But what is become of Lot? Alas! he is gone back to Sodom; for indulged corruptions are not mortified except through severe discipline.—Finally, let us remember "our King of righteousness and King of peace," our "Priest upon his throne:" let us rejoice in his equitable and peaceful administration; and declare war against his and our enemies, sin, the world, and Satan. Invisibly he will assist us in every conflict, and manifest himself to us after every victory, refresh us with his gracious provisions, and bless us with the earnest of his love. And shortly, when the final victory is won, and he hath made us more than conquerors, he will applaud our achievements, accept and reward our poor services, and place us with himself upon his throne; while we rejoice in his love, and give him all the glory.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1. This is the first time the expression, "The word of the LORD," is used in Scripture; and some persons suppose, that Christ, "The Word of God," is meant.—The prophets, when they received revelations of the divine will in a vision, seem generally to have had the exercise of their senses on outward objects suspended, though they were not asleep. Yet the circumstances of the vision here recorded, do not indicate that this was the case with Abram; for the whole is related as a real transaction. It is however probable, that this was in some way distinguished from other appearances of the Lord, and more resembled the prophetick visions, than the condescending intercourse to which Abram was on other occasions admitted.—He might be tempted to fear, lest the potent enemies whom he had exasperated, should return with larger forces

4 And behold the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir, but he that <sup>k</sup>shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.

5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and <sup>l</sup>tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, <sup>m</sup>So shall thy seed be.

6 And <sup>n</sup>he believed in the LORD; and he <sup>o</sup>counted it to him for righteousness.

7 And he said unto him, I *am* the LORD that <sup>p</sup>brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.

k xvii. 16. 2 Sam. vii. 12. xvi. 11. 2 Chr. xxxii. 21. Philom. 12

l Ps. cxlvii. 4. Jer. xxxiii. 22.

m xxii. 17. Ex. xxxii. 13. Deut. i. 10. x. 22. 1 Chr. xxvii. 23. Rom. iv. 18. Heb. xi. 12.

n Rom. iv. 3-6. 20-25. Gal. iii. 6-14. Jam. ii. 23.

o Ps. cvi. 31. Rom. iv. 11. 22. Gal. iii. 6.

p xi. 23-31. xii. 1. Neh. ix. 7. Acts vii. 2-4.

8 And he said, Lord God, <sup>q</sup>whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

9 And he said unto him, Take me <sup>r</sup>'an heifer of <sup>s</sup>'three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon.

10 And he took unto him all these, and <sup>t</sup>divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but <sup>u</sup>the birds divided he not.

11 And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, <sup>x</sup>Abram drove them away.

12 And when the sun was going down, <sup>y</sup>a deep sleep fell upon Abram:

q xxiv. 12-14. Judg. vi. 17-24. 36-40. 2 Kings xx. 8. 1a. vii. 11. Luke i. 18. 84.

r xxii. 13. Lev. i. 3. 10. 14. iii. 1. 6. ix. 2. 4. xii. 8. xiv. 22. 36. Luke ii. 24. 1s xv. 5.

t Jer. xxxiv. 18. 19.

u Lev. i. 17.

x Ps. cxix. 113.

y ii. 21. 1 Sam. xxvi. 12. Job iv. 13. 14. Dan. x. 8, 9.

and take vengeance on him. The Lord therefore assured him that he was his "Shield," to defend him from all assailants; as well as his "exceeding great Reward," to compensate his generous behaviour to Lot, and disinterested contempt of wealth, in his conduct towards the king of Sodom.—(*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2, 3. In this answer of Abram, the striving of unbelief and impatience, against his better judgment, is very discernible. Outward prosperity and security seemed of little importance, as he still continued childless; and a stranger born in his house, and entrusted by him, was likely to be his heir. The numerous posterity before mentioned, and the blessings comprised in the promised Seed, lay near his heart: nothing else could satisfy him; and perhaps the long delay almost induced him to conclude, that he had misunderstood the divine revelation.

V. 5, 6. Some expositors think, that the several particulars which follow were only presented in a vision to Abram; and they urge in support of this opinion, that "the sun was not gone down" (12), and yet he was called on to "look toward heaven and tell the stars." But it is most unreasonable to interpret one part, as a visionary representation to the mind, and the other as a real transaction: or to suppose that the whole narrative of this solemn sacrifice, and of Abram's deep sleep and prophetic dream, and of the covenant ratified with him, is merely the relation of a vision. And, if it be well considered, what time would be employed in preparing for the commanded sacrifice and other events; we shall be induced to conclude, that Abram was led forth early in the morning, before the stars disappeared, and that he spent the whole day till after sun-set in religious duties, and in receiving divine revelations and assurances.—An innumerable posterity having been again promised him, his faith was strengthened; and, depending on the divine power and faithfulness, he rose superior to discouragement on account of delays and difficulties. Thus he gave glory to God by firmly believing, that "what he had promised he was able also to perform; and therefore "it was imputed to him for righteousness."—It is evident from the apostle's reasoning, that Abram's faith had a special respect to the promised Seed and to salvation by him: and therefore, though in himself a sinner, and his very faith itself not free from defect, he was accounted righteous,

and dealt with as if he had personally performed a perfect righteousness; being "made the righteousness of God in Christ." This had no doubt been the case from the time when he first believed, that in "his Seed all nations should be blessed;" but it was now more expressly attested for his encouragement: and the sacred historian records this circumstance, as a remarkable instance and example of that faith, which was counted to Abram for righteousness. (*Notes, Rom. iv. Gal. iii. Marg. Ref. n. o.*)—Christians may believe in God, with respect of the common concerns of this life; and such faith may ascertain, that they are in a justified state: yet this is not, strictly speaking, the faith by which they are justified, which invariably has respect to the person and work of Christ. Abram believed in God as promising Christ; they believe in him as having raised him from the dead. Fuller.

V. 7, 8. The favours already shewn to Abram, were earnestness of the fulfilment of all the promises of God, whose unchangeable perfections were engaged to perform them: yet Abram, that his faith might be confirmed, desired an external token as an assurance that his posterity should inherit the land; which the Lord graciously vouchsafed him.

V. 9, 10. In order to give Abram the desired token, the Lord was pleased to prescribe a solemn sacrifice. The heifer, she-goat, and ram, were supposed to be arrived at maturity, when three years old. As the ratification of a covenant between the Lord and his servant was intended, the animals were divided asunder, the birds alone excepted: because the form of covenanting required, that the persons concerned should pass between the parts of the sacrifice; perhaps intimating, that he, who broke the covenant, might expect in like manner to be cut asunder by the avenging sword of justice. The Gentiles, as well as the Jews, used a form of this kind in confirming covenants and treaties; which custom might perhaps be derived by tradition from this transaction; or the Lord saw good, in this instance, to condescend as far as practicable, to a custom already established.

V. 11. When Abram had prepared the sacrifices, he spent the rest of the day in watching them, no doubt also pouring out his heart in fervent prayer: and when the birds of prey attempted to devour them, he drove them away.

V. 12—15. Perhaps Abram did not understand how the

z Ps. iv. 3-5. Acts ix. 8, 9.  
a Ex. i. 11. v. Ps. cv. 23-25. Acts vii. 6, 7.  
b Ec. xii. 40, 41. Gal. iii. 17.  
c Ex. vi. 5, 6. vii. —xiv. Deut. vi. 22. Ps. lxxviii. 43-51. cv. 27-57. cxcv. 9, 14.  
d Ex. iii. 21, 22. xxi. 35, 36.  
e xxv. 8. Num. xx. 24. xxviii. 13. Judg. ii. 10. Ec. xii. 7. Acts xiii. 36.  
f 2 Chr. xxxiv. 28. Pa. xxxvii. 37. Is. lvii. 1, 2. Dan. xii. 13. Matt. xxiii. 32. Heb. vi. 13-19. xi. 13-16.  
g xxiii. 4, 19. xcv. 9. xcv. 29. xlii. 20. 31. i. 13. Ec. vi. 8. Jer. vii. 1, 2.  
h xxv. 7, 8. 1 Chr. xxiii. 1. xxix. 28. Job v. 26. xlii. 17.  
i Ex. xii. 40.  
k 1 Kings xxi. 26. 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9.

and lo, 'an horror of great darkness fell upon him.

13 And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety, that 'thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them: and they shall afflict them <sup>b</sup> four hundred years.

14 And also 'that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterward shall they come out <sup>d</sup> with great substance.

15 And 'thou shalt go to thy fathers <sup>f</sup> in peace; thou shalt be <sup>g</sup> buried in <sup>h</sup> a good old age.

16 But in <sup>i</sup> the fourth generation they shall come hither again; for the iniquity of <sup>k</sup> the Amorites <sup>j</sup> is not yet full.

1 Dan. viii. 23. Zech. v. 5-11. Matt. xxiii. 32-35. 1 Thes. ii. 16

transaction would end, but he patiently waited on the Lord; and about sun-set, he was cast into a supernatural sleep, in which he received important prophetic information concerning the future condition of his posterity.—The "horror of great darkness" was doubtless emblematical of their affliction and bondage in Egypt, and many of their subsequent calamities. From the birth of Isaac to the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, Abram's descendants were strangers in a land, in which they possessed no inheritance; for part of the time they were sojourners in Canaan, and the rest of it they spent in Egypt, where for many years they were enslaved and cruelly oppressed. Their departure out of Egypt is supposed to have been exactly four hundred and thirty years from the call of Abram: but the birth of Isaac was twenty-five years later, and the prediction especially relates to him and his posterity. This is therefore computed to have occurred four hundred and five years before that event; but, in so long a term, the five odd years are not mentioned. Some however think that the term began from the weaning of Isaac, when Ishmael, the son of an Egyptian, mocked him. (Note, xxi. 8-12.)—The continuance of Israel in Egypt is calculated to have been two hundred and fifteen years.—Their bondage in Egypt being introductory to subsequent honour and prosperity, and attended with signal judgments on their enemies, differed widely from the permanent slavery of the Canaanites. Abram, however, would not witness these scenes; but would live to a good old age, and then die in peace: and while his body would be decently interred, his soul would enter on a state of blessedness among those of his believing progenitors.—*Afflict them, &c.*] Four hundred years would elapse, before the end of their afflicted state.

V. 16. "The fourth generation" may mean the completion of the four hundred years before mentioned: but indeed the Israelites of the fourth generation, from those who went down into Egypt, seem actually to have inherited Canaan.—Among other reasons for these delays, this was one; that the inhabitants of the land, (of whom the Amorites seem to have been the chief,) though wicked, were not yet ripe for vengeance.

17 ¶ And it came to pass, that when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a <sup>m</sup> smoking furnace, and <sup>n</sup> a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

18 In that same day the LORD <sup>a</sup> made a covenant with Abram, saying, <sup>b</sup> Unto thy seed have I given this land, <sup>c</sup> from the river of Egypt, unto the great river, the river <sup>d</sup> Euphrates:

19 The <sup>e</sup> Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites,

20 And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and <sup>f</sup> the Rephaims,

21 And <sup>g</sup> the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and <sup>h</sup> the Gîrgashites, and the Jebusites.

xxiii. 23-28. xxxiii. 2. xxxiv. 11. Deut. vii. 1.

m Ex. iii. 2, 3. Deut. iv. 20. Judg. vi. 21. xiii. 20. 1 Chr. xxi. 26. Is. lxii. 1. Jer. xii. 4.  
n Heb. a lamp of fire. 2 Sam. xxii. 29.  
a ix. 8-17. xvii. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Is. iv. 3. Jer. xxxi. 31-34. xxxii. 40. xxxiii. 20-23. Gal. iii. 15-17. Heb. xii. 18.  
b xii. 7. xlii. 15. xxvi. 4. xxxviii. 13. Deut. i. 7, 8. xi. 24. xxxiv. 4. Josh. i. 3, 4. 1 Kings iv. 21. 2 Chr. ix. 26. Neh. ix. 8. Pa. cv. 11.  
c Num. xxxiv. 5. Josh. i. 4. Is. xxxvii. 12.  
d Is. 14. 2 Sam. viii. 3. 1 Chr. v. 9.  
e Num. xxiv. 21, 22.  
f xiv. 5. Is. xvii. 5. g x. 15-19. Ex. u Matt. viii. 28

V. 17. "The smoking furnace and burning lamp" represented the severe trials of Israel in Egypt, and their joyful deliverance; with the hopes and supports in the mean while afforded them. (Notes, Ex. iii.) Thus the Lord attested his acceptance of Abram's sacrifices, by the symbols of his presence passing between the parts of them, and probably at length consuming them; but not, as it may be supposed, till Abram also had passed between them.

V. 18-21. In this manner God confirmed the promise of Canaan to the seed of Abram, by a solemn covenant, and more explicitly stated what was included in it. "The river of Egypt" is supposed to have been a small current, just at the entrance of that country; and not the river Nile.—In the days of David and Solomon, the Israelites ruled over the whole extent of country here described: and it was the effect of their sins, that they neither got possession of it sooner, nor kept it longer.—During the course of four hundred years, several of the tribes here mentioned were either extinct, or blended with other tribes, or had changed their names. (Marg. Ref.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1-11.

They who trust in God, and serve him, should fear no enemies, for they have an omnipresent and omnipotent Protector. Nor need they hesitate to renounce the most valuable temporal advantages for his sake; for he will abundantly recompense them; yea, he himself will be their Shield and Portion, their exceedingly great and everlasting Reward.—Yet "hope deferred maketh the heart sick:" the strongest faith has its misgivings, the most courageous spirit has its fears, and the most resigned believer his complaints: these the Lord graciously notes, pities, pardons, and relieves.—He who in one instance, upon the single testimony of God, stedfastly expects things exceedingly difficult and improbable, will be enabled to believe all that God has revealed when he becomes acquainted with it, and will embrace and expect whatever he promises: and this man's "faith is accounted to him for righteousness." Yet he will seek, and God will grant, further tokens of his love, to confirm and strengthen his faith; and he will be encour-

## CHAP. XVI.

Sarai being barren gives Hagar to Abram, 1—3. Hagar despises Sarai, who complains to Abram; he gives up Hagar to her, and Hagar, being harshly treated, flees from her, 4—6. An Angel commands her to return and submit, promises her a son and a numerous posterity, and shews their character and condition, 7—12. Hagar gives a name to the place, and returns to Sarai, 13, 14. The birth of Ishmael, and the age of Abram, 15, 16.

**N**OW Sarai Abram's wife <sup>a</sup>bare him no children; and she had an handmaid <sup>b</sup>an Egyptian, whose <sup>c</sup>name was Hagar.

**2** And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, <sup>d</sup>the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee go in unto my maid; it may be that I may <sup>e</sup>obtain children by her: and Abram <sup>f</sup>hearkened to the voice of Sarai.

raged to consider former mercies as earnest of future blessings.—The covenant of God with sinners has always been ratified by sacrifice and the shedding of blood: and, in attendance on his ordinances, we must wait for the confirmation of our faith, and guard against all intrusion on our devotions: especially those vain thoughts, which are apt, on the most solemn occasions, to arise, and interrupt the exercise of faith, hope, and love.

## V. 12—21.

The knowledge of future events, if attainable, would seldom add to our comfort: in the most favoured families and most happy lives, there are such chequered scenes and so many afflictions, that it is merciful in God to conceal from us what will befall us and ours; for, if we knew the whole, we should painfully anticipate the troubles of life; and even distress ourselves about things, which will not take place till we are in the silent grave, or rather in the eternal world. Yet multitudes far more desire to partake with Abraham in this kind of information, than in his <sup>g</sup>most <sup>h</sup>'holy faith!'—God waits till iniquity be ripe ere he punishes, and in the mean time gives space for repentance: let the sinner then count his long-suffering to be salvation, and improve it; and let believers also wait for their mercies till they are prepared for them.—Finally, the diligent Christian will daily obtain fuller assurances and more explicit knowledge, of the blessings of the covenant, which God hath ratified with him.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1—3. Ten years had elapsed since Abram arrived in Canaan; and a numerous posterity had repeatedly been promised him, from among whom that Seed was to arise, "in whom all the families of the earth would be blessed:" yet Sarai, though amiable and faithful, still continued childless, and was now seventy-five years of age. The promise had not hitherto been expressly restricted to her: and though we never before read of a pious person

**3** And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram <sup>i</sup>'had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and <sup>j</sup>'gave her to her husband Abram to be <sup>k</sup>his wife.

**4** And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived: and when she saw that she had conceived, <sup>l</sup>her mistress was despised in her eyes.

**5** And Sarai said unto Abram, <sup>m</sup>'My wrong be upon thee; I have given my maid into thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: <sup>n</sup>'the LORD judge between me and thee.

**6** But <sup>o</sup>'Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is <sup>p</sup>'in thy hand; do to her <sup>q</sup>'as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai <sup>r</sup>'dealt hardly with her, she <sup>s</sup>'fled from her face.

having two wives at once; yet such marriages appear to have been common, and perhaps in no bad repute in the world: and not only the natural desire of children, but the fulfilment of the promises, seemed to be concerned. Sarai therefore, no longer expecting to be herself the ancestor of the promised Seed, proposed to Abram to take a secondary wife, and expressed an intention of adopting his children by her. She indeed acknowledged the hand of God in her trial, and acquiesced in his will: yet her plan resulted from carnal policy and weakness of faith; and it was too hastily approved by Abram: it was also a bad example, a fatal precedent, and a source of manifold uneasiness. 'The father of mankind sinned, by hearkening to his wife; and now the father of the faithful imitates his example!' Fuller.—Probably, Hagar was one of the maid-servants, whom Pharaoh had given Abram.

V. 4—6. Hagar, forgetful of God who had specially favoured her, was lifted up with pride and self-preference; flattering herself that she should now secure Abram's affections, and probably expecting to be the mother of the promised Seed. Sarai also, instead of condemning herself, seemed to claim merit from her conduct; unreasonably blamed Abram, as if he had encouraged Hagar's insolence; improperly appealed to the Lord; and betrayed much passion and peevishness, and a very uneasy frame of mind. 'Passionate appeals to God, instead of indicating a good cause, are commonly the marks of a bad one.' Fuller.—In these perplexing circumstances Abram indeed acted wisely in relinquishing Hagar, and shewed that he had not been influenced by carnal affection: but he conceded too far in leaving one, whom he was bound to protect, entirely in the power of Sarai, whose mind was too much embittered to act with equity and impartiality: so that she exacted rigorously from Hagar her former service, which in her situation was unjustifiable; and she otherwise used her with harshness. And Hagar, not brooking to be treated as a slave, when she had expected the privilege of a wife, passionately and inconsiderately left Abram's house and family.

7 ¶ And the Angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by <sup>1</sup> the fountain in the way to Shur.

8 And he said, Hagar, <sup>2</sup> Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

9 And the Angel of the LORD said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and <sup>3</sup> submit thyself under her hands.

10 And <sup>4</sup> the Angel of the LORD said unto her, <sup>5</sup> I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.

11 And the Angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou *art* with child, and shalt bear a son, and <sup>6</sup> shalt call his name <sup>7</sup> Ishmael; <sup>8</sup> because the LORD hath heard thy affliction.

12 And he will be <sup>9</sup> a wild man; <sup>10</sup> his hand *will be* against every man, and every man's hand against him: and <sup>11</sup> he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

13 And she <sup>12</sup> called the name of the LORD that spake unto her, <sup>13</sup> 'Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?'

14 Wherefore the well was called <sup>14</sup> 'Beer-lahai-roi; behold, *it is* between 'Kadesh and Bered.

15 And <sup>15</sup> Hagar bare Abram a son: and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, <sup>16</sup> Ishmael.

16 And Abram *was* fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.

V. 7—9. Probably, Hagar set out with the design of returning to Egypt, her native country; but being unable to proceed, she sat down, fatigued and overwhelmed with distress, by a fountain of water.—The Angel addressed her, as *Sarai's servant*, not as *Abram's wife*: thus her marriage was tacitly censured and disallowed, which would tend to humble her for despising and fleeing from her mistress. By enquiring of her whence she came, and whither she would go; the Angel implicitly charged her with leaving her proper station, acting inconsistently with her duty and interest, forsaking her own mercies, and rushing on destruction: and by commanding her to return and submit to her mistress, he reminded her, that her trouble was the consequence of sin, and that she must patiently endure it.—This is the first time the appearance of an angel is mentioned: but the following verses shew us who this Angel was.

V. 10, 11. The Angel said to Hagar, "I will multiply thy seed;" not "The LORD will multiply thy seed:" and there is not the least intimation that he spake in the name of another.—This confirms the opinion of those, who think the words should be rendered the ANGEL-JEHOVAH: JEHOVAH himself; yet, the Angel or Messenger of the Covenant, the eternal Word and Son of God: and the interpretation is established by the subsequent narrative. (*Marg. Ref.*)—"Ishmael" signifies *God will hear*; "he hath heard," and therefore he will hear "thy affliction;" intimating that the relief was not only unmerited, but unsolicited.

V. 12. The word, rendered "a wild man," properly signifies a *wild-ass man*: and perhaps this emblem was descriptive of Ishmael's character; but his posterity were principally intended. The Hagarenes, Saracens, and various other tribes of Arabs, are allowed to have descended in great measure from Ishmael: and they have, in all ages to this present day, been a hardy untamed race of free-booters, unlike every other nation in the world. They have chiefly subsisted by plundering their neighbours, and passengers; as it appears by the united testimony of all the historians and travellers, who have written of those countries. They have provoked the enmity of the neighbouring nations, and

lived in a state of hostility with all men; so that there is no travelling in safety through those countries, except in large armed companies, called Caravans; and these are often plundered. Yet have they set at defiance the mightiest conquerors in every age, and stood their ground against them all. The Persians, Macedonians, and Romans, successively attempted to subjugate them; and made many powerful, but ineffectual, efforts to that purpose. At length Mohammed arose, and under him and his successors, they subdued a large part of the world. After a time indeed, the power of the Mohammedans was transferred to the Turks, who have repeatedly attempted to subdue the Saracens, or Arabs. but, instead of succeeding, they have for above three hundred years been obliged to pay a large tribute to them, for the safe passage of their pilgrims to Mecca, the city which is the centre of their religion! The descendants of Ishmael also lived as ravagers in the neighbourhood of the Israelites and Edomites, and other descendants of Abram, and yet were never subjugated by any of them. See *Bp. Newton on the Prophecies. Diss. 1.*

V. 13, 14. JEHOVAH spake to Hagar, and she called his name, "Thou God seest me:" yet we read of no other speaker, than the Angel.—Admiring the Lord's condescension and mercy, she added, "Have I also here looked after him that seeth me?" "Have I, who am so unworthy, here, in this desert, at a distance from his ordinances, and out of the path of duty, been favoured with such an encouraging appearance of the LORD!"—Accordingly, she called the name of the place, *The well of him that liveth and seeth me*. She was now brought to a better temper, returned home, and, probably, by proper behaviour, pacified Sarah, and experienced better usage.

V. 15. Abram named his son Ishmael, having been informed by Hagar of what had taken place. (11.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—6.

In every relation and situation of life there is some trouble to bear; and the exercise of faith greatly consists in patiently submitting to it, waiting the Lord's time, and

## CHAP. XVII.

The Lord again ratifies the covenant with Abram; changes his name to Abraham, and Sarai's to Sarah, and institutes circumcision, 1—15; he promises him a son by Sarah; accepts his prayer for Ishmael; and fixes the time for the birth of Isaac, 16—22. Abraham circumcises himself and the males of his family,

a xvi. 16  
b xii. 1.  
c xviii. 14. xxviii. 23—27.

**AND** when Abram <sup>a</sup> was ninety years old and nine, <sup>b</sup> the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I *am* the <sup>c</sup> Almighty God: <sup>d</sup> walk before me, and be thou <sup>e</sup> perfect.

d v. 24. vi. 9.  
e Or, upright, or, sincere. Deut. xviii. 13. Job i. 1. Matt. v. 48.  
ix. 9. xv. 18. Ps. cv. 8—11. Gal. iii. 17, 18.

2 And <sup>f</sup> I will make my covenant be-

using those means, and those only, which he appoints and authorizes, for its removal. But unbelief is frequently shewn by impatience, and hastily using unhallowed means of obtaining those things, which we inordinately desire.—Very bad actions may be sanctioned by the example of very good men; they may appear plausible, be supported with some shew of reason, and be suggested by those who are justly dear to us. But we never have more cause to be upon our guard, than when “Satan thus transforms himself into an angel of light.” Then especially we should appeal “to the law, and to the testimony:” “What hath God said?” Then indeed we should act with deliberation, be afraid of leaning to our own understanding, and seek counsel of the Lord by earnest prayer.—In Hagar's insolence, in Sarai's impatience, and in Abram's uneasiness; and also in Sarai's severity, and in Hagar's flight and distress, we see the effects of carnal projects, and of deviating from the original institution of marriage: and they who consent together in sin will generally be chastened together, and will often correct each other.—Anger and discord should indeed be shunned: yet even peace may be bought too dear; and we ought not to allow any person injuriously to treat those, who are entitled to our protection. But it is never safe or prudent to quit our situation, under the influence of pride, impatience, and resentment. A haughty spirit indeed will disdain contradiction: but it is best to endure it, and to consider, that “yielding pacifieth great offences.”

## V. 7—16.

Important lessons of wisdom are couched under the answer, which ought to be made to such questions, as the Angel put to Hagar. Recollecting “who we are,” would teach us our duty, and suggest motives for quietly attending to it. Seriously enquiring in many cases, “whence we came,” may shew us our sin and folly: and considering, “whither we will go,” may often discover our danger and misery, before it be too late; and prepare us to listen to the counsel of him, who calls on us to repent of what we have done in pride and passion.—How free from fear and care, how conscientious in duty, how watchful against sin, and how resolute in resisting temptation should we be, if we always were suitably impressed with this thought, “Thou God seest me!” The good Lord, who always sees us, and despises not the meanest, but hears the affliction of the distressed, even before it vents itself in prayer, help us

tween me and thee, and will <sup>f</sup> multiply thee exceedingly. f xii. 2. xiii. 16.

3 And Abram <sup>g</sup> fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,

g Ex. iii. 6. Lev. ix. 23. 24. Num. xvi. 22. 45. Josh. v. 14. Judg. xiii. 20. Ezr. i. 28. ii. 23. ix. 8. Dan. viii. 17. x. 9. Matt. xvii. 6. Rev. i. 17.

4 As for me, behold my covenant *is* with thee, and thou shalt be <sup>h</sup> a father of <sup>i</sup> many nations.

h xvi. 10. xxv. 1—18. xxxvi. Rom. iv. 11—18. Gal. iii. 29.  
i Heb. multitude of nations.  
j 1b. xxxv. 28. 2 Sam. xii. 25. Neh. ix. 7. 1a. lxii. 2—4. lxv. 15. Jer. xxx. 8. xliii. 6. Matt. i. 21—23. John i. 42.  
k 4. xxxv. 11. l 16. xxxvi. 31, &c. Ezr. i. 20. Matt. i.

5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram; but <sup>l</sup> thy name shall be Abraham, for a father of many nations have I made thee.

6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make <sup>k</sup> nations of thee; and <sup>l</sup> kings shall come out of thee.

to realize his present, to trust in his goodness, to submit to his will, and to all those whom he commands us to honour and obey for his sake; and with admiring, humble gratitude, to acknowledge his mercies to us, which are innumerable and unmerited, and often surprise us when we least expect them.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1—3. This appearance of the Lord to Abram, was nearly fourteen years after his marriage with Hagar: and, perhaps, this long trial of his faith implied a rebuke for his misconduct in that transaction.—The Lord, by revealing himself as “the Almighty,” or *the all-sufficient God*, most powerfully enforced the subsequent exhortation to Abram, “to walk before him,” without being discouraged; and to “be perfect,” or not to waver and decline, but to be constantly and entirely dependent on him, and devoted to him. “Have recourse no more to unbelieving expedients: keep thou the path of uprightness; and leave me to fulfil my promise in the time and manner that seem good to me.” *Fuller*.—Abram, perceiving the special presence of God, fell on his face in humble adoration, and the Lord continued to speak to him in an audible voice.

V. 4. The Lord thus engaged, that his covenant, before confirmed, and now to be further ratified and sealed, should certainly be accomplished, notwithstanding delays and difficulties.—This covenant was essentially different from that made with Israel, as a nation, at mount Sinai: (*Notes, Ex. xix. 5. Gal. iii.*) yet it was far more than a personal engagement to Abram, concerning a numerous posterity and the inheritance of Canaan, or even concerning his own salvation; though these were included, with all the peculiar advantages enjoyed by Israel till the coming of Christ, and even to the end of time. But, as the covenant, confirmed to Abram with an oath, is fulfilled to all believers as his children; (*Notes, Heb. vi. 13—20*;) it must have been in substance the same as the Covenant of Grace, of which Christ is the Mediator and Surety, and which was ratified with Abram, as “the father of the faithful.” In this view of the subject, the promised Seed was Christ, and Christians in him, of whom Israel as a nation was a type; Canaan typified heaven; every blessing was conferred on Abraham through “the righteousness of faith,” and all, who “are of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham.”

V. 5. (*Marg. Ref.*) The Ishmaelites, Midianites, and

an xv. 18. xxvi. 24.  
Ex. vi. 4. Ps. cv.  
8—11. Mic. vii.  
20. Luke i. 54.  
55. 72—75.

xxviii. 13. Ex. iii.  
6. 15. Lev. xxvi.  
12. Matt. xxii.  
32. Heb. x. 16.

Ex. xix. 8. 6.  
Rom. ix. 7—9

Heb. of thy so-  
journings. xxiii.  
4. xxviii. 4.

xxviii. 4. Ex. xxi.  
6. xxci. 16. 17.  
xl. 15. Lev. xvi.  
24. Num. xxv.

13. 2 Sam. xxiii.  
5. Ps. ciii. 17.  
2 Pet. i. 11.

Ex. vi. 7. Lev.  
xxvi. 12. Deut.  
xiv. 2. xxvi. 18.

xxix. 18.  
Ps. xxv. 10. ciii.  
18. Is. lvi. 4. 5.

7 And <sup>a</sup>I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; to be <sup>a</sup>a God unto thee, and <sup>o</sup>to thy seed after thee.

8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land <sup>a</sup>wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an <sup>a</sup>everlasting possession: and I will be <sup>a</sup>their God.

9 And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt <sup>a</sup>keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy seed after thee, in their generations.

10 This *is* my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee; <sup>a</sup>every man-child among you shall be circumcised.

11 And ye shall circumcise <sup>a</sup>the flesh of your fore-skin, and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.

12 And he that is <sup>a</sup>eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man-child in your generations, <sup>a</sup>he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which *is* not of thy seed.

xxiv. 15. Deut.  
x. 16. xxx. 5.  
Jer. iv. 4. ix. 25.  
26. Rom. ii. 28.  
29. iii. 1. 1 Cor.  
vii. 18. 19. Gal.  
v. 3—6. vi. 12.  
Eph. ii. 11. Phil.  
iii. 8. Col. ii. 11.  
Ex. iv. 25. Josh.  
v. 3. 1 Sam. xviii.  
25—27. 2 Sam.  
iii. 14.  
† Heb. a son of  
eight days. xxi.  
4. Lev. xii. 3.  
Luke i. 59. ii.  
21. John vii. 22.  
23. Acts vii. 8.  
Phil. iii. 5.  
u 28. Ex. xii. 48,  
49

other nations, were descended from Abraham by Hagar and Keturah; and the Edomites, as well as the Israelites, by Sarah. All these nations were, for many ages, powerful and prosperous, and governed by princes of their own; and some of them are so to this day. Besides the kings of Israel, (or the ten tribes,) David and Solomon were renowned monarchs, and, with their descendants, formed an illustrious race of kings for almost five hundred years.—This is intimated by the change of his name, from ABRAM, a *high father*, to ABRAHAM, a *father of a great multitude*.

V. 7, 8. Abraham chose the Lord for his portion, and devoted himself to his service; and the Lord answered his expectations by engaging to make him partaker of everlasting felicity: and his posterity according to the flesh had his oracles committed to them, his prophets sent to them, and his ordinances administered among them. Thus he was their God by external relation, and they enjoyed vast advantages, in spiritual things, above all the rest of the human race, till the coming of Christ. (Note, Rom. iii. 1, 2.)—The word rendered *everlasting*, must be understood according to the nature of the subject: when used about the things of this present world or outward privileges, it means *perpetual*, and *unalterable while the same state of things continues*: but when it relates to inward spiritual blessings, or the concerns of a future state; it seems generally, if not always, strictly to denote *eternal duration*. Thus JEHOVAH was a God to the Israelites, till the coming of the Messiah, when, according to the whole tenour of prophecy, that state of things was to terminate: yet the nation is still kept separate for gracious purposes, in remembrance of this covenant. But of Abraham and all his spiritual seed, God is the eternal Portion and Blessedness. (Notes, Matt. xxii. 23—33. Heb. xi. 13—16.) This covenant <sup>a</sup>shall involve great blessings to the world; yet, it was made with Abram. <sup>a</sup>...It made Abram the father of the church in all future <sup>a</sup>ages...All that the Christian world enjoys, or ever will <sup>a</sup>enjoy, it is indebted for to Abram and his Seed!...A high <sup>a</sup>honour this, to be the stock, whence the Messiah should <sup>a</sup>spring, and on which the church of God should grow. Fuller.

V. 9—12. Abraham was required to accede to the covenant, to profess his faith, and to give a proof of his ready acquiescence in the Lord's will, by submitting to circumcision; and he and all his posterity must observe this ordinance, as a pledge and mark of their being the worshippers

and servants of JEHOVAH. Many nations have practised circumcision, and do so to this day; and even some not descended from Abraham, or related to him: yet it is highly probable, that this was the first introduction of this singular observance.—Cutting off the fore-skin seems to have been intended as an intimation, that a sinful nature is propagated with the human species; and this depravity, called “the old man,” must be *put off*, or mortified and destroyed, by believers. (Note, Eph. iv. 20—24.) In them the “heart” is circumcised to love the LORD; and rebellion and enmity are gradually destroyed out of it by sanctifying grace. This observance was the sacrament of regeneration, “the seal of the righteousness of faith;” (Note, Rom. iv. 9—12;) for the circumcision of the heart is an inward seal, that the sinner is justified by the righteousness of faith, as Abraham was.—Circumcision was a bloody and painful ordinance: for the sanctification of the Spirit is vouchsafed to sinners through the blood of Christ; the mortification of sin is painful to the flesh; and, till the blood of Christ had been shed once for all, the ordinances of God were generally attended with the shedding of blood; but none since that time have been so.—Not only Abraham and Isaac, and Abraham's posterity by Isaac, were circumcised; but his son Ishmael and his very bond-servants; for circumcision sealed the covenant of God's giving, not only Canaan to Isaac's posterity, but heaven, through Christ, to the whole Church of God. The outward sign belonged to the professed people of God; but the inward seal of the Spirit is peculiar to those whom God knows, (and he alone can *know* them,) to be believers.—Infants were circumcised, because a part of the visible church, and because this was a proper profession of their parents' faith, and a pledge for the religious education of their children, thus early dedicated to God. Yet they must not be circumcised till the eighth day: and, under the law, even animals must not be presented to God before that age. (Ex. xxii. 30.) But, as many infants would die before the eighth day, this might intimate that the outward ordinance, though always the parents' duty, was not essential to salvation. Males only were capable of circumcision: but in Christ there is no more distinction between male or female, than between Jew and Gentile. The Gentile, who embraced the Jewish religion, was circumcised adult; but his future offspring at eight days old. The uncircumcised were ordered to be cut off (14): for the neglect of circumcision was in fact a

x xiv. 14. Ex. xii. 41.  
y xxviii. 27. 36.  
xxix. 1. Ex. xii. 2. 16. Neh. v. 5.  
8. Matt. xviii. 25.

13 He <sup>r</sup>that is born in thy house, and he that is <sup>r</sup>bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

14 And the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be <sup>r</sup>cut off from his people; he hath <sup>r</sup>broken my covenant.

z Ex. iv. 24—26.  
xii. 15. 19. xxx.  
33. 38. Lev. vii.  
20. 21. 25. 27.  
xviii. 29. xix. 8.  
Num. xv. 30. 31.  
a Ps. iv. 20. 1s.  
xxiv. 5. xxxiii.  
8. Jer. v. 10  
xxxii. 32.

15 ¶ And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah *shall* her name be.

b i. 28. xxiv. 60.  
c xviii. 10—14.

16 And <sup>b</sup>I will bless her, and <sup>c</sup>give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall <sup>b</sup>be a mother of nations; <sup>d</sup>kings of people shall be of her.

\* Heb. become nations. xxxv. 11.  
Gal. iv. 27—31.  
d See on 6. 1s. xlix. 28

17 Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?

e xviii. 12. xxi. 6.  
Rom. iv. 19, 20.

18 And Abraham said unto God, 'Oh, that Ishmael might live before thee!

\* Jer. xxxii. 39  
Acts ii. 39.

19 And God said, 'Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.

f xviii. 10—14. xxi. 2, 3. 2 Kings iv. 16. 17. Luke i. 13—20. Rom. ix. 6—9. Gal. iv. 28—31.

rejection of the covenant; and the *uncircumcised in heart* will be separated for ever from the Lord and his people. Doubtless the parent would be chargeable with the guilt of his neglect, and not the child till grown up. (Note, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.)

V. 13. *In your flesh.*] The outward seal of the covenant would remain in the flesh of Abraham, and Isaac, and their posterity, and of all who were thus incorporated among them; for the use of circumcision, as a religious rite, would distinguish them from other people.

V. 15, 16. SARAI signifies *my princess*; SARAH, a *princess*, to others as well as to Abraham: implying how honourable her name would be in the whole church of God, as well as in Abraham's family. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 17. When Abraham heard the words of God, he again prostrated himself in reverential worship, and laughed, in admiring faith and joyful gratitude.—He himself was born when Terah was a hundred and thirty years old; as it is generally calculated; (Note, xi. 26, 27;) but, in the course of the last hundred years, it seems to have become very uncommon, for men to have children at so advanced an age. He had been so long married to Sarah, and she was now so far advanced in years, continuing barren, that it seems he had given up all expectation of having seed by her: and, previously to this explicit declaration, thought that the promises would be fulfilled in Ishmael.

20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, <sup>h</sup>I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly: twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.

h xvi. 10—12. xxv. 12—18.

21 But <sup>i</sup>my covenant will I establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear unto thee <sup>k</sup>at this set time in the next year.

i xxi. 10—12. xxvi. 2—5. xli. 1. xlviii. 15. Ex. ii. 24. iii. 6. Heb. xi. 9.  
k xxi. 2. Job xiv. 13. Acts i. 7.

22 And He left off <sup>i</sup>talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.

l x. xviii. 33. xxxv. 9—15. Ex. xxx. 22. Num. xii. 6.—8. Deut. v. 4. John i. 18. x. 30.

23 ¶ And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and <sup>m</sup>circumcised the flesh of their fore-skin, in the self-same day, as God had said unto him.

m xviii. 19. xxxiv. 24. Josh. v. 2—9. Acts xvi. 3. Rom. ii. 25—29. iv. 9—12. 1 Cor. vii. 18, 19. Gal. v. 6. vi. 15. n l. 17. Rom. iv. 19, 20.

24 And <sup>n</sup>Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his fore-skin.

25 And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his fore-skin.

26 <sup>o</sup>In the self-same day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son.

o xii. 4. xxii. 3, 4. Ps. cxix. 60

27 And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were <sup>p</sup>circumcised with him.

p xviii. 19.

V. 18. Though Abraham "*staggered* not at the promise through unbelief, but was strong in faith giving "glory to God;" yet, he seems to have had some struggle with unbelief, in which he came off victorious, through the repeated assurances which the Lord gave him.—This verse, however, may be interpreted as a natural and earnest desire that Ishmael might have a blessing also; and not be excluded from the favour of God, or separated from his worshippers, though the promised Seed was not to descend from him.

V. 19—21. It was the purpose of God, that Christ should descend from Isaac and his son Jacob: in that family true religion was chiefly supported; to them Canaan, the type of heaven, was granted; and they represented the spiritual Seed of Abraham. Yet Ishmael and others, after this limitation, being at that time a part of the visible church, were commanded to be circumcised; and we are not authorized, from the circumstance of the covenant concerning the promised Seed being restricted to the line of Isaac, to determine that any of them finally perished. (Notes, xvi. 10—12.)—Ishmael was the son of a bond-woman: how unlikely that his sons should be twelve princes, even when the twelve sons of Jacob were only shepherds!—*His name Isaac.*] Note, xxi. 3, 4.

V. 22. *Left off, &c.*] The whole narration suggests the idea of a personal conference; and leaves no reasonable

## CHAP. XVIII.

The Lord again appears to Abraham, who entertains angels, 1—8. A son is promised to Sarah, at which she laughs, and her misconduct is rebuked, 9—15. The Lord discovers to Abraham his purpose of destroying Sodom, &c. 16—22; who earnestly intercedes for the inhabitants, 23—33.

a xv. 1. xvi. 1—3.  
22. xxi. 2. xlviii.  
3. Ex. iv. 1. 2 Chr.  
i. 7. Acts vii. 2.  
b xlii. 18. xiv. 13.

c 22. xix. 1.

AND the LORD <sup>a</sup>appeared unto him in the plains of <sup>b</sup>Mamre: and he sat in the tent-door in the heat of the day.

2 And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and lo, <sup>c</sup>three men stood by him: and when he saw *them*, he ran to meet

ground of doubt, whether he, who here calls himself “the ALMIGHTY GOD,” was the same as afterwards in human nature said, “I and my Father are One;” and, “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.” (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 23—27. Abraham prepared every thing for immediate and exact obedience, in a painful appointment, against which many objections might have been urged, and which might seem even to counteract the accomplishment of the promise sealed by it: and this obedience was not peculiar to him, but was imitated by his household, who seem to have made no opposition; and we may conclude that many of them were partakers of his faith.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

## V. 1—8.

The Lord, from time to time, vouchsafes to his servants peculiar manifestations of his presence and favour, and seasons of special consolation: yet their daily walk with him must be maintained by that faith, which “sees Him who is invisible.”—With however long delays, and great discouragements, the faith of true believers may be tried, God will strengthen it: and they who walk before him, trust in him, and wait for him, shall never be ashamed.—It is our part to look to our own temper and conduct; and to leave all in his hands, who is all-sufficient and almighty; and who, for the purposes of his own glory, often delays to interpose, till expectation from every other quarter fails.—But let us well consider, that the Lord’s gracious condescensions should excite our adoring reverence, lest we forget who He is, and what we are! (*Ps. lxxxix. 7. Heb. xii. 28. Rev. xv. 4.*)

## V. 9—27.

Not only the doctrines of revelation, but the very seals of the new covenant, remind us that we are guilty and polluted, evince our need of atoning blood, and point to the promised Saviour; they teach us to exercise faith in him; and prove, that without regeneration, sanctification by his Spirit, and the mortification of our corrupt and sensual inclinations, we cannot bear a covenant-relation to him. Let us then remember, that the true “circumcision is that of the heart, by the Spirit;” that they are “the true circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh;” (*Note, Phil. iii. 1—7;*) and that, both under the old and the new dispensation, many have had the external profession, the

them from the tent-door, and <sup>d</sup>bowed himself toward the ground;

3 And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant.

4 Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and <sup>e</sup>wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree.

5 And <sup>f</sup>I will fetch a morsel of bread, and <sup>g</sup>comfort ye your hearts: after that ye shall pass on; for therefore <sup>h</sup>are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do as thou hast said.

6 And Abraham hastened into the

d xxxii. 7. xxxiii. 3.  
—7. xlv. 14.  
Ruth. d. 10.  
2 Kings ii. 15.

e xix. 2. xxiv. 32.  
xlii. 24. 1 Sam.  
xxv. 41. Luke  
vii. 44. John xii.  
5—15. 1 Tim. v.  
10.

f Judg. vi. 18. xiii.  
15.  
\* Heb. stay Judg.  
xix. 5

† Heb. ye have  
passed. xix. 8.

sacramental sign, and the outward seal, who were never “sealed by the holy Spirit of promise.”—True faith evidences itself by prompt and unreserved obedience in the most difficult instances: and if our faith be of this kind, we may be confident that God is our God and everlasting Portion; that the everlasting covenant is confirmed to us, by the security vouchsafed to Abraham; and that he, who has given us a new heart, hath also “given us a new name, “which no man knoweth, save he who receiveth it.” (*Note, Rev. ii. 17.*) And while we thankfully embrace the pledges of his love, and make open profession of our faith; let us not forget to seek in earnest prayer, the same blessings for our children, our servants, and all connected with us.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1, 2. It is here expressly said, that “JEHOVAH appeared to Abraham,” or *was seen* by him; and the manner of this *appearance* is afterwards related.—Abraham was waiting for an opportunity of exercising hospitality, by entertaining any weary traveller, who might need refreshment and a cooling shade; (for inns were not then to be met with, as among us;) and at that time three persons, appearing as men, presented themselves before him. It is generally agreed, that two of these were created angels; but many infer from the context, that the other was the eternal Son visibly appearing as in human form. Indeed, there is not the *least intimation* in the narrative of any other appearance, except that of the three men whom Abraham entertained. If this were the only instance, in which language naturally suited to warrant such a conclusion was used, it would not be proper to ground much upon it: but passages frequently occur, which seem incapable of any other construction, without having recourse to human tradition, in explaining the words of inspiration, even that very tradition which our Lord opposed; (*Mark vii. 9;*) and thus implying that the simple narrative of the sacred historian was calculated to mislead the unlearned. (*Note, xxxii. 30. Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3—8. Abraham addressed himself to one of the three, who appeared to have the pre-eminence; but, it is probable, he did not at first know his guests: for his bowing to them seems to have been rather a token of civil respect, as to persons who appeared venerable and honourable, than an act of religious adoration. (*Marg. Ref. d.*)—Washing the feet was customary and necessary in those hot climates

\* Heb. hasten. tent unto Sarah, and said, \* Make ready quickly <sup>g</sup> three measures of fine meal, knead *it*, and make cakes upon the hearth.

<sup>h</sup> And Abraham <sup>h</sup> ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave *it* unto a young man; and he hastened to dress it.

<sup>i</sup> And <sup>i</sup> he took butter and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set *it* before them; <sup>k</sup> and he stood by them under the tree, <sup>l</sup> and they did eat.

<sup>m</sup> And they said unto him, <sup>n</sup> Where <sup>o</sup> is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, <sup>p</sup> in the tent.

<sup>q</sup> And <sup>o</sup> He said, I will certainly return unto thee <sup>r</sup> according to the time of life: and lo, <sup>s</sup> Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard *it* in the tent-door, which *was* behind him.

<sup>t</sup> Now Abraham and Sarah *were* <sup>u</sup> old, and well stricken in age: and it ceased to be with Sarah after <sup>v</sup> the manner of women.

<sup>w</sup> Therefore Sarah <sup>x</sup> laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old, shall I have pleasure, <sup>y</sup> my lord being old also?

<sup>z</sup> And the LORD said unto Abraham,

where only sandals were worn; and the several particulars here related are suited to give us an idea of the simple, liberal, active, and obliging hospitality of the ancient patriarchs.—*Butter.*] ‘We read of *cheese* in Homer, Euripides, Theocritus, and others; yet they never mention *butter*: nor hath Aristotle a word about it, though he hath sundry observations about cheese. For butter was not then known among the Greeks.’ *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 9—12. This attention to Abraham’s concerns would gradually shew him whom he had entertained. At first, they enquired after Sarah, who was in her tent: and then one of them, **JEHOVAH**, (as it must appear to every plain reader,) spake to Abraham respecting that promise *as his own*, which had been given in the foregoing chapter by the almighty God; and he expressly engaged for its accomplishment! (Note, xvii. 19—21.) But as this had been delayed, till it had become unprecedented, according to general observation; Sarah, who heard what passed, “laughed within herself;” and spake words, not very dissimilar to those of Abraham in the preceding chapter. Yet the heart-searching God saw, that her’s was the expression of unbelief; and his, of faith, admiration, and joy.—“According to the time of life,” is supposed to mean the usual term of pregnancy.—It is observable, that from this very speech of Sarah, the apostle Peter quotes her words concerning Abraham, in which she calls him, “My lord,” as a commendable instance of her dutiful subjection to him! (1 Pet. iii. 6.)

V. 13—15. Here the speaker is expressly called **JEHO-**

Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?

14 Is <sup>v</sup> any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed <sup>x</sup> I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.

15 Then Sarah <sup>y</sup> denied, saying, I laughed not: for she was afraid. And he said, <sup>z</sup> Nay, but thou didst laugh.

16 ¶ And the men rose up from thence, and looked towards Sodom: and Abraham went with them <sup>a</sup> to bring them on the way.

17 And the LORD said, <sup>b</sup> Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;

18 Seeing that Abraham shall surely <sup>c</sup> become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

19 For <sup>d</sup> I know him, that he will <sup>e</sup> command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment: <sup>f</sup> that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

20 And the LORD said, Because <sup>g</sup> the

Num. xi. 23  
2 Kings vii. 1, 2  
Jer. xxxii. 17  
Zech. viii. 6  
Matt. iii. 9. xix.  
26. Luke i. 37.  
Eph. iii. 20. Phil.  
iii. 21. iv. 13.  
Heb. xi. 19.  
x 10. Deut. xxx. 3.  
Ps. xc. 13.  
y iv. 9. xii. 13. Job  
ii. 10. John xviii.  
17. 25—17. John  
i. 8.  
z Ps. xlv. 21. Prov.  
xii. 19. Mark ii.  
8. John ii. 25.  
Rom. iii. 19.

a Acts xvi. 5. Rom.  
xv. 24. 3 John 6.  
b 2 Kings iv. 27.  
Ps. xxx. 14. Am.  
iii. 7. John xv.  
15. Jam. ii. 23.  
c See on xii. 2, 3.  
—xxii. 17, 18. Ps.  
lxxii. 17. Acts  
iii. 25, 26. Gal.  
iii. 8. 14. Eph. i.  
3.  
d 2 Sam. vii. 20.  
Ps. i. 6. John  
xxi. 17. 2 Tim.  
ii. 19.  
e xvii. 23—27.  
Deut. iv. 9, 10.  
vi. 6, 7. xi. 19—  
21. xxxii. 46.  
Josh. xxiv. 15.  
Job i. 5. Ps.  
lxxviii. 5—8.  
Prov. vi. 20, 21.  
xxii. 6. Eph. vi.  
4. 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5.  
12. 2 Tim. i. 5.  
iii. 15.  
f 1 Sam. ii. 30, 31.  
Acts xxvii. 23.  
24. 31.  
g iv. 10. xix. 13.  
Jam. v. 4.

**VAH.**—By manifesting that he was acquainted with what Sarah did secretly, he shewed that he could accomplish his word, however contrary to the ordinary course of things. The conduct of Sarah shewed great weakness, and was exceedingly faulty; yet the rebuke was very gentle, and connected with a renewal of the promise!

V. 17. The Lord would not conceal from “Abraham his friend,” his intention of destroying the cities of the plain; for he was concerned in the event, both on account of Lot, and as the inheritance of the adjacent countries was covenanted to his posterity. God would also give his servant an opportunity to intercede for the criminals; and shew him the reasons of his conduct, that he might approve of it, and glorify him on that account. (Note, John xv. 12—16.)

V. 18, 19. The promises to Abraham and his posterity, and, through Christ, to the nations of the earth, were absolute; yet Abraham’s conduct was an essential part of the gracious plan. The Lord also approved his servant’s integrity, piety, and zeal; and knew that he would perseveringly instruct his family, set them a good example, and pray for them; and use his authority in restraining evil, and promoting justice and godliness among them. Of this he had just before given a remarkable proof, by obeying the Lord’s command in circumcising himself and family. He would also train up Isaac in the same pious manner; and thus the way would be prepared, for the promised blessings to be conferred on his posterity.

V. 20, 21. The just judge does not pronounce sentence.

cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their <sup>a</sup>sin is very grievous;

21 I will <sup>1</sup>go down now, and <sup>2</sup>see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, <sup>1</sup>I will know.

22 And <sup>a</sup>the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham <sup>a</sup>stood yet before the LORD.

23 ¶ And Abraham <sup>a</sup>drew near, and said, <sup>1</sup>Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?

24 Peradventure <sup>1</sup>there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not <sup>1</sup>spare the place for the fifty righteous that *are* therein?

25 That <sup>1</sup>be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that <sup>1</sup>the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: <sup>2</sup>Shall not <sup>2</sup>the Judge of all the earth do right?

26 And the LORD said, <sup>1</sup>If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

27 And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, <sup>1</sup>I have taken upon me to

speak unto the LORD, which *am* but <sup>a</sup>dust and ashes.

28 Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: <sup>1</sup>wilt thou destroy all the city for *lack of* five? And He said, <sup>1</sup>If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy *it*.

29 And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And He said, I will not do *it* for forty's sake.

30 And he said *unto him*, <sup>1</sup>Oh, let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And He said, I will not do *it*, if I find thirty there.

31 And he said, <sup>1</sup>Behold now I have taken upon me to speak unto the LORD: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And He said, I will not destroy *it* for twenty's sake.

32 And he said, <sup>1</sup>Oh, let not the LORD be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And <sup>1</sup>He said, I will not destroy *it* for ten's sake.

33 And <sup>1</sup>the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: <sup>1</sup>and Abraham returned unto his place.

h xiii. 18

i xi. 6. 7. Ex. iii. 8. xxxiii. 5. Mic. i. 3. John vi. 38. i Thes. iv. 16. k Jer. xvii. 1. Zeph. i. 12. Heb. iv. 13. l Deut. xlii. 2. m 2. xix. 1.

n Ps. cvi. 23. Jer. xv. 1. xviii. 20. Ez. xxxii. 30. Acts vii. 55. o Ps. lxxviii. 28. Jer. xxx. 21. Heb. x. 22. p xx. 4. Num. xvi. 22. 2 Sam. xxiv. 17. 1s. xi. 4-7. Rom. iii. 5, 6. q 32. 1s. i. 9. Jer. v. 1. Matt. vii. 13, 14.

r Acts xxvii. 24.

s Jer. xii. 1.

ob viii. 20. bz 22, 23. Ec. vii. 15. viii. 12, 13. 1s. iii. 10, 11. lvii. 1, 2. Mat. iii. 18. u Job viii. 3. xxxiv. 17-19. Ps. lviii. 11. xciv. 2. xcvi. 9. Rom. iii. 6. x John v. 22-27. 2 Cor. v. 10. y 1s. lxx. 8. Ez. xlii. 30. Matt. xxiv. 22.

z 30-32. Ezra ix. 6. Job xlii. 6-8. 1s. vi. 6.

a ii. 7. iii. 19. Job iv. 19. Ps. viii. 4. cxliv. 3. Ec. xii. 7. 1s. lxiv. 8. i Cor. xv. 47. o Num. xiv. 17-19. i Kings xx. 32. 33. Job xxxiii. 8, 4. c 26. 29

d xlv. 18. Judg. vi. 39. Est. iv. 11. -16. 1s. iv. 8, 9.

e 27. Luke xi. 8. xviii. 1. Eph. vi. 18. Heb. iv. 16

f Prov. xv. 8. 1s. lxxi. 6, 7. Jam. v. 15-17. i John v. 15, 16.

g Ez. xxxiv. 6, 7. Ps. lxxxvi. 6. Mic. vii. 18. Eph. iii. 20.

h 16. 22. xxxii. 26. xxxi. 55.

on mere rumour; but ascertains the criminal's guilt, before he executes vengeance. Thus the Lord declared, that he would impartially judge and punish the guilty cities, on full proof of their atrocious wickedness.

V. 22. The two, whom we suppose to have been created angels, departed at this time; and accordingly *two* entered Sodom at evening: while the One, called JEHOVAH throughout the chapter, continued with Abraham, who "stood yet before the LORD;" before the same Person with whom he had hitherto been communing.

V. 23-26. When Abraham "engaged his heart" to intercede for the devoted cities: (*Note*, Jer. xxx. 19-22. v. 22:) he assumed it as an unquestionable truth, that "the Judge of all the earth would do right." But, knowing how "the righteous LORD delighteth in mercy," he not only pleaded that the pious remnant might be preserved, but likewise that the rest might be spared for their sakes.—"He does not plead, that the wicked may be spared for their own sakes, or because it would be too severe to destroy them.—This would have been siding with sinners against God!—Thus Christ makes intercession for sinners; not by arraigning the divine law, not by alleging aught in extenuation of human guilt; but by pleading his own obedience unto death." Fuller.

V. 27, 28. While Abraham, with magnanimous philanthropy, pleaded for the guilty cities; he did not forget that he himself was but "dust and ashes," a poor, sinful, dying

man.—His argument also was very ingenious: he had obtained from the divine condescension an assurance, that Sodom should be saved, if fifty righteous persons could be found in it; and would the merciful God destroy the whole city for the want of only five of that number?

V. 32. *Ten.*] It is probable, that Abraham thought that he had now got within the limits of Lot's family; if, however, there were not that small number in Sodom and its dependencies, he must allow the justice of the sentence.—"Not a soul seems to have been won over, by Lot's residence in the place, to the worship of the true God." Fuller.

V. 33. Surely this is calculated to convey to us the idea of a visible appearance and a personal conference! But "no man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him:" and thence we infer, that this was an anticipation of the future incarnation of the Son of God.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1-15.

We should not "be forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares;" nay, the Lord of angels himself; as indeed we always do, when for his sake we entertain one of the least of his brethren.—Cheerful liberality, and an obliging manner in shewing kindness, are great ornaments to true piety: and wealth,

## CHAP. XIX.

Lot entertains two angels, 1—3. The abandoned Sodomites are smitten with blindness, 4—11. Lot is warned, and in vain warns his sons-in-law; 12—14. He is directed to flee with his family to the mountain, but obtains leave to retire to Zoar, 15—23. Sodom and Gomorrah are destroyed; and Lot's wife, looking back, becomes a pillar of salt, 24—26. Abraham beholds the destruction of Sodom, &c. 27—29. Lot

retires from Zoar; and is betrayed into drunkenness and incest; 30—35. The birth of Moab and Ammon, 36—38.

AND there came <sup>a</sup> two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing *them*, <sup>b</sup> rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;

<sup>a</sup> xviii. 1, 2. 22.

<sup>b</sup> xviii. 2—5. Job xxxi. 32. Heb. xiii. 2.

used to pious and beneficent purposes, becomes indeed a blessing to the possessor and to many others.—Though our condescending Lord does not vouchsafe to us his personal visits, yet still, by his word and Spirit, he “stands at the door and knocks;” and when we are inclined to open, he deigns to enter; and by his gracious consolations provides a rich entertainment, on which “he sups with us, and we with him.” (Note, Rev. iii. 20—22.)—Even the strongest believers need repeated confirmations of their faith, and in trying circumstances sometimes “stagger through unbelief.”—One sin is commonly the introduction to another: and it is hardly to be expected that we should strictly adhere to truth, when we allow ourselves to question the divine veracity: but those “whom the Lord loves, he rebukes,” silences, and brings to repentance; when they sin against him.—The same action may in some cases be either good, or bad, as it springs from opposite internal principles.—Our discouragements also would be greatly removed, and our temptations prevented, did we more fully realize the almighty power of God, as engaged to fulfil his largest promises.

## V. 16—22

The righteous Lord exactly determines the degree of criminality, both of individuals and nations, and proportions his punishments to their sins; but, alas! the more particular the scrutiny is, the more numerous and atrocious abominations are generally detected and exposed.—“The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him:” and whether he does, or does not, discover to his people what he is about to do, he will eventually satisfy them of his wisdom and justice in his most awful judgments on the wicked; so that the whole will animate their admiring adorations and praises.—He graciously notices our attention to family-religion: and when we use our authority, and ability, in governing and instructing our households, it is not only an acceptable service, and conducive to the diffusion and continuance of piety in the world; but is also the means of entailing spiritual advantages on our posterity: while the neglect of it is often visited by sore judgments on them, as in the case of Lot, of Eli, and of Jehoshaphat.

## V. 23—33.

“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much:” and the ungodly are little aware how deeply they are indebted, as to temporal comforts, and that long-suffering, which frequently makes way for their conversion and salvation, to the prayers of the very persons whom they despise and injure; nay, a number in any nation or city, who stand in the gap by their intercessions and exertions, are a stronger defence, than armies, navies, or fortifications.—It is our duty and privilege thus to stand be-

fore the Lord, not only in behalf of our relatives, friends, brethren, and country, but likewise of all on whom we apprehend the wrath of God is about to be poured; and to fill our mouth with arguments, and order our cause before him in the best manner we can. And though our unworthiness and vileness, compared with his majesty and holiness, must frequently excite a consciousness, how unmeet we are, thus “to engage our hearts to approach unto God;” yet, coming through our great and merciful High Priest to a throne of Grace, we, sinful dust and ashes, need not fear, that the Lord will be angry at our humble, compassionate, and fervent petitions: for they are “spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” We shall always find him more ready to hear, than we to ask; and shall commonly discontinue our requests, before he ceases to grant them. Yet in many cases we must be satisfied with the assurance, that our “prayers will return into our own bosom.”—In praying for sinners, we should be careful not to impeach the justice of God in their condemnation: for we could not desire, that the destruction of the finally impenitent should be prevented.—The Lord will by no means deal alike with the righteous and the wicked. “That be far from him: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” Yet the best of men are sinners, and may justly be involved in public calamities; especially when they have not decidedly protested against prevailing impiety, and separated from the wicked: but God will make a more exact discrimination in a future world. He delighteth, however, in mercy; and for the sake of a few who really serve him, he often prolongs the tranquillity and preserves the lives of multitudes; so that believers are not only *blessed*, but a *blessing* wherever they live. The good Lord be pleased to increase the number of them in our land, and in every part of the world!

## NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 1. The sacred historian, more agreeably occupied, as it were, by the history of faithful Abraham, had for some time been silent as to Lot: but in this chapter he is again introduced, though not greatly to his credit. The apostle Peter says, that “Lot was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked; for that “righteous man, dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds.” We must therefore conclude, that his character was upright, and on the whole his example good. But he wanted firmness, and was not fit for the situation, into which he had intruded himself; nor was he able to “set his face like a flint” against the wicked inhabitants of Sodom. He went thither from unworthy motives, and continued there with unwarrantable

2 And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall arise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, 'Nay, but we will abide in the street all night.

3 And he 'pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house: and he made them 'a feast, and did bake 'unleavened bread, and they did eat.

4 ¶ But 'before they lay down, the men of the city, *even* the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, 'all the people from every quarter.

5 And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, 'Where *are* the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.

6 And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him,

7 And said, 'I pray you, brethren, 'do not so wickedly.

8 Behold now, 'I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as *is* good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for 'therefore came they under the shadow of my roof.

9 And they said, 'Stand back. And they said *again*, 'This one *fellow* came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. 'And they pressed sore upon the man, *even* Lot, and came near to break the door.

10 But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door.

11 And they smote the men that *were* at the door of the house with 'blindness, both small and great: so that 'they 'wearied themselves to find the door.

12 ¶ And the men said unto Lot, 'Hast thou here any besides? 'son-in-law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring *them* out of this place.

13 For we will destroy this place, because the 'cry of them is waxen great before the face of the LORD, and 'the LORD hath sent us to destroy it.

14 And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons-in-law, which married his daughters, and said, 'Up, get ye out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city: but he seemed 'as one that mocked unto his sons-in-law.

15 And when the morning arose, then the angels 'hastened Lot, saying,

c Judg. xix. 17—21. Luke xxiv. 28, 29. Acts xvi. 15.  
d 2 Kings iv. 8. Luke xiv. 23.  
2 Cor. v. 14.

e xviii. 6—8. xxi. 8. Luke v. 29. John xii. 2.

f Ex. xii. 15. 89. Judg. vi. 19. 1 Sam. xxviii. 24. 1 Cor. v. 8. g Prov. iv. 16. vi. 18.

h xiii. 13. xviii. 20. Ex. xvi. 2. Jer. v. 1—6. 31. Matt. xxvii. 20—25.

i Lev. xviii. 22. xxx. 13. Judg. xix. 22. 1a. i. 9. iii. 9. Ez. xvi. 49. 51. Matt. xi. 23. 24. Rom. i. 26. 27. 1 Cor. vi. 9. 1 Tim. i. 10. Jude 7.

k Judg. xix. 23. 1 Sam. xxx. 23. 24. Acts xvii. 26. 1 Ex. xxxii. 22.

m 31—38. xlii. 37. Judg. xix. 24. Mark ix. 6. Rom. iii. 8.

n xviii. 5.

o 1 Sam. xxv. 17. Prov. ix. 7, 8. Jer. ii. 3. vi. 14. viii. 12. Matt. vii. 6. p xiii. 12. Ez. ii. 14. Acts vii. 28. 2 Pet. ii. 7, 8. q xi. 6. 1 Sam. ii. 16. Prov. xiv. 16. xvii. 12. xxvii. 3. Ec. ix. 3. x. 13. Dan. iii. 19—22.

r 2 Kings vi. 18. Acts xiii. 11. Ec. x. 15.

t vii. 1 Num. xvi. 25. Josh. vi. 22. 23. Jer. xxxii. 39. u 14.

x xviii. 20. Jam. v. 4.

y 1 Chr. xxi. 15. 16. 1s. xxxvii. 36. Ez. ix. 5, 6. Matt. xiii. 41, 42. 49, 50. Acts xii. 23. Rev. vi. 1—12.

z Num. xvi. 21. 45. Rev. xviii. 4—8.

a Ex. ix. 21. 2 Chr. xxx. 10. xxxvi. 16. Prov. xxix. 1. Jer. v. 12—14. Luke xvii. 23—30. Acts xvii. 32. 1 Thea. v. 3.

b Num. xvi. 24—27. Prov. vi. 4. 5. Luke xiii. 24. 25. 2 Cor. vi. 2. Heb. iii. 7, 8.

pertinacity: and accordingly, he seems to have done no good, and to have got much harm himself, and his family still more. He however waited for an opportunity of entertaining strangers; setting an example of hospitality in the midst of triumphant abominations: and in this he imitated Abraham.—Two angels appeared to Lot, and He who spake as JEHOVAH was not sensibly present. Lot must be delivered as "a righteous man," and in regard to Abraham's intercession; but sharp rebukes, rather than peculiar honour and consolation, were most suited to his case.—The angels appeared to him as men; but there seems to have been something extraordinary and attractive in their form and manner.

V. 2, 3. In order to evince the cordiality of Lot's invitations, the angels at first declined them: but "he pressed "on them greatly;" aware that insults awaited them in the street. (*Kαὶ ἐπείσασατο. Sept.—Marg. Ref. c. d.*)

V. 4, 5. This simple narration conveys more forcibly an idea of the extreme and unparalleled wickedness of Sodom, and of all ranks and descriptions of its inhabitants, than the most laboured descriptions and rhetorical declamations could have done; and is a most beautiful example of giving intimations concerning practices, too shameful to be mentioned, in language which excites no other sensation than horror and indignation.

V. 6—9. The regard to the rites of hospitality, which Lot expressed on this occasion, was very commendable; but, having used all proper means of preserving his guests, he ought to have left the cause with God; and on no account to have made a proposal to the outrageous Sodomites concerning his daughters, which was entirely inconsistent with every moral obligation. It may indeed be ascribed in part to the excessive perturbation of his mind; but probably his judgment was rather perverted, and his feelings blunted, by the conversation and example of his profligate neighbours. (1 Cor. xv. 33.) He thus, however, gave them occasion, by violently resenting so gentle and feeble an admonition, to manifest their excessive depravity, in the most striking manner imaginable.

V. 11. The persons, thus smitten with blindness, seem not to have been aware of their real condition: but, supposing they saw objects which indeed they did not see, they were entirely bewildered, and wearied themselves with seeking the door, while incapable of perceiving where it really was. (*Notes, 2 Kings vi. 18—20.*)

V. 13. *We will destroy... the Lord hath sent us.* This is the language of servants obeying orders; and very different from that employed in the preceding chapter. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 14, 15. Probably the sons-in-law, here mentioned,

Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters which \* are here; lest thou be consumed in the <sup>†</sup> iniquity of the city.

\* Heb. are found.  
† Or, punishment.  
c Ps cxix. 60

16 And while he \* lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; <sup>†</sup> the LORD being merciful unto him: and they \* brought him forth, and set him without the city.

d Ex. xxxiv. 6. Is. lxiii. 9. Lam. iii. 22. Rom. ix. 15. 16. 18. Eph. ii. 4. 5. Tit. iii. 5. e Josh. vi. 22. Ps. xxxiv. 22. 2 Pet. ii. 9.

17 And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, 'Escape for thy life; \* look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.

f 1 Sam. xix. 11. 1 Kings xix. 3. Matt. iii. 7. xxiv. 16—18. Heb. ii. 3. g 28. Luke xvii. 31, 32.

18 And Lot said unto them, <sup>h</sup> Oh, not so, my Lord.

h 2 Kings v. 11, 12. John xiii. 6—8. Acts ix. 13. x. 14.

19 Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, <sup>i</sup> and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life: and I cannot escape to the mountain, <sup>k</sup> lest some evil take me, and I die.

i 1 Tim. i. 14—16.

k xii. 12, 13. 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. Ps. lxxvii. 7—11. cxvi. 11. Matt. vii. 26, 27. Mark ix. 19. Rom. viii. 31. l 30. Prov. iii. 5—7.

20 Behold, now, <sup>i</sup> this city *is* near to flee unto, and it *is* a little one: Oh, let

me escape thither, (*is it not a little one?*) <sup>m</sup> and my soul shall live.

m xii. 13. Ps. cxix. 175. n Ps. cii. 17. cxv. 19. Matt. xii. 43. Heb. ii. 17. iv. 15, 16. t Heb. thy face. o xii. 2. xviii. 24.

21 And he said unto him, See, <sup>n</sup> I have accepted <sup>t</sup> thee concerning this thing also, <sup>o</sup> that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken.

p xxxii. 26—28. Ex. xxxii. 0. Deut. ix. 14. Mark vi. 5. 2 Tim. ii. 13. Tit. i. 2.

22 Haste thee, escape thither: <sup>p</sup> for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was <sup>q</sup> called Zoar.

q xiii. 10. xiv. 2. Is. xv. 5. Jer. xlviii. 34. t Heb. gone forth.

23 The sun was <sup>r</sup> risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.

24 Then <sup>r</sup> the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven.

r Deut. xxix. 23. Job xviii. 15. Ps. xi. 6. Is. xiii. 19. Jer. xlix. 18. 1. 40. Lam. iv. 6. Ez. xvi. 49, 50. Hos. xi. 8. Am. iv. 11. Zeph. ii. 9. Matt. xi. 23. 24. Luke xvii. 28, 29. 2 Pet. ii. 6. Jude 7. s xiii. 10. xiv. 3.

25 And he overthrew those cities, and <sup>s</sup> all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

26 But his wife <sup>t</sup> looked back from behind him, <sup>u</sup> and she became a pillar of salt.

t 17. Prov. xiv. 14. Luke xvii. 31. 32. Heb. x. 38. u Num. xvi. 38.

27 ¶ And Abraham gat up early in the morning, <sup>x</sup> to the place where he stood before the LORD.

x xviii. 22.

28 And he looked toward Sodom and

had married other daughters of Lot; who either were dead, or they perished in the ruin of the city. (Note, Rev. xviii. 4—8.)

V. 16—22. Lot was forbidden to look behind him; as this would indicate great reluctance to leave his property in Sodom, and to quit the fertile plain which had so long ensnared him. Indeed, his attachment was so strong to Sodom, and his lingering so criminal, that it was an instance of *special indulgence*, that he was not left to loiter till it was too late to escape. And at last, through unbelief and undue valuation of worldly things, he was unwilling entirely to quit the plain and flee to the mountain: yet mercy prevailed; and Zoar, a small city, was spared in condescension to his infirmity, and in answer to his request! Zoar signifies *Little*: it was before called Bela; but being spared because it was a *little* city, it afterwards retained the name of Zoar.—Lot addressed himself especially to the angel, who led him out of Sodom, and was answered by him; yet the other seems to have continued with his family. Many indeed suppose, that he, who appeared and spake to Abraham as JEHOVAH, had now joined them; but there is no decided proof of it. The angels might have a commission to spare Zoar at Lot's request; and he might express his gratitude to the instrument of his preservation, when *visibly present*, in the language here used, without ascribing to him the honour due to God alone.—Lot *must* arrive at a place of safety, before vengeance *could* be inflicted on Sodom: this implied a rebuke of his unbelieving fears, as well as a most condescending assurance of the Lord's merciful care of him.

V. 23. The rising sun promised a cheerful day; but how speedily and awfully was the prospect changed!

V. 24, 25. The language here is remarkable; "JEHOVAH rained...from JEHOVAH out of heaven:" and it is supposed by many expositors to confirm the opinion, that He, who appeared and spake to Abraham as JEHOVAH, was visibly present at Sodom, immediately commanding the fire and brimstone from heaven to destroy the city. The judgment came, however, "as a destruction from the Almighty;" and we need not enquire how he effected it. But the cities and all the inhabitants were totally destroyed; and the whole plain was converted into a great lake, called the Salt Sea, or Dead Sea; which exhibits an appearance, in many respects extraordinary, and dissimilar to that of all other seas or lakes.

V. 26. This unhappy woman, contrary to God's express command, in unbelief and love to Sodom and its riches, regretting what was left behind, and probably purposing to return, "looked back;" and as some think, actually attempted to return; and our Lord's words, "Let him not *return back*; remember Lot's wife," favour this supposition. She was therefore instantaneously struck dead and petrified, and thus remained to after-ages a visible monument of the divine displeasure; being punished as a warning to others through successive generations.—Perhaps she was a native of Sodom, as nothing is said of Lot having a wife, when with Abraham.—Above twenty years had passed, from the time that Lot went to Sodom.

V. 27—29. Abraham rose early to enquire after the success of his prayers, and probably to renew them: but the awful scene which he witnessed effectually precluded

Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, <sup>1</sup>and lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.

29 And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that <sup>2</sup>God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt.

30 ¶ And <sup>3</sup>Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountain, and his two daughters with him; for <sup>4</sup>he feared to dwell in Zoar: and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters.

31 And the first-born said unto the younger, Our father is old, and *there is* not a man on the earth <sup>5</sup>to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth.

32 Come, let us make our father <sup>6</sup>drink wine, and we will lie with him, that we may preserve <sup>7</sup>seed of our father.

33 And they made their father <sup>8</sup>drink wine that night: and the first-born went

in, and lay with her father; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.

34 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the first-born said unto the younger, Behold, <sup>9</sup>I lay yesternight with my father: let us make him drink wine this night also; and go thou in, and lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father.

35 And they made their father drink wine <sup>10</sup>that night also: and the younger arose, and lay with him; and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose.

36 Thus <sup>11</sup>were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.

37 And the first-born bare a son, and called his name Moab: the same *is* the father of the <sup>12</sup>Moabites unto this day.

38 And the younger she also bare a son, and called his name Ben-ammi: the same *is* the father of the <sup>13</sup>children of Ammon unto this day.

further intercession for those cities. Yet God remembered Abraham, and rescued Lot, more in answer to Abraham's prayers, than as approving Lot's behaviour.

V. 30. Lot retired from the place which he had chosen, perhaps finding it as wicked as Sodom: and that consideration, joined to the inundating of the neighbouring plain by the obstructed waters of Jordan, might excite apprehensions for his safety. He went, therefore, to reside in a cave, probably on the very mountain, to which he was at first commanded to flee.—But what hindered his return to Abraham? Doubtless Abraham would have received him, though stript of all, and a wretched outcast. We cannot but attribute his conduct to stoutness of spirit, and fear of contempt, if he should appear so degraded among those, who had known him in more prosperous days. Whatever were his reasons, he forsook his own mercies.—No doubt his herdmen, as well as his herds, perished in the overthrow of Sodom. How different was his family from that of Abraham!

V. 31—38. Many conjectures have been formed concerning the motives, which induced Lot's daughters to this most atrocious conduct; and many excuses have been attempted. It is not indeed improbable that the desire of having children, of which they seemed to have no other prospect, was one powerful inducement: but there is little reason to think that they had any expectations of being the ancestors of the promised Seed, for that distinction was expressly limited to the seed of Abraham. The truth seems to be, that, though preserved from gross crimes, they had been accustomed in Sodom to hear and witness wickedness, till their consciences were become unfeeling, and their sense of shame blunted. No sufficient excuse can be made either for them or for Lot; and indeed, scarcely any account can be given of the transaction, but this, that "the

"heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; "who can know it?"—After this we read no more, in the history, of Lot, or of his daughters. Peter's testimony satisfies us, that he lived to repent; yet there is no proof that his daughters did. But he died under a dark cloud; all his substance and part of his family perished in Sodom: his wife in looking back lost her life; and it might almost have been wished, that his daughters had been taken away too, that his and their sin and shame might have been prevented: for, though he was not "written childless," his posterity were the monuments of his reproach, and their very names perpetuated the memory of their disgraceful original.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—15.

When angels entered Sodom, they found out the only righteous man residing there. Thus they still invisibly encamp round them that fear the Lord: and thus we ought to associate with the righteous in every place to which we go. Nor is it in general very difficult to distinguish them; for "by their fruits we may know them," and by the hatred which the wicked bear them: and hospitality prudently shewn for the Lord's sake will engage his protection and a gracious recompence.—But to what a pitch of wickedness do some sinners arrive! Who does not allow the justice of God in the destruction of abandoned Sodom? and could our eyes at once behold all those abominations, which the Lord every moment witnesses in other cities and countries, we should probably expect that they would share Sodom's doom. Indeed, "except the Lord of Hosts had left unto *us* a very small remnant, even *we* should" ere this, "have been like unto Sodom and Gomorrah." The good Lord increase that remnant!—But when, at the day of judgment, God shall "bring to light the hidden things of dark-

## CHAP. XX.

Abraham sojourns in Gerar, and denies his wife; whom Abimelech takes, but is warned in a dream to restore, 1—7. Abimelech expostulates with Abraham, and restores Sarah with presents and a gentle reproof, 8—16. Abimelech and his family are healed, in answer to Abraham's prayer, 17, 18

**AND** Abraham journeyed from <sup>a</sup>thence toward the south-country, and dwelled between <sup>b</sup>Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in <sup>c</sup>Gerar. **2** And Abraham <sup>d</sup>said of Sarah his wife, She *is* my sister. And <sup>e</sup>Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. **3** But God came to Abimelech in <sup>f</sup>a dream by night, and said to him, Be-

ness, and manifest the counsels of all hearts;" and when the wicked shall "suffer the vengeance of eternal fire:" we shall see that the Lord hath not without cause denounced the dreadful sentence, but shall wonder at his patience and long-suffering towards them.—In attempting to do good, or prevent evil, we must take care that the methods which we adopt are justifiable: nor must we commit a less sin to prevent others from perpetrating a greater.—Nothing marks sinners more ripe for destruction, than when, being mad upon their lusts, they resent the least check, and will bear no controul: for "he, that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." And they who treat the friendly warnings of God's servants and ministers as idle tales and groundless fears, will be awfully convinced of their mistake by the event.

## V. 16—38.

"The salvation of the righteous is of the LORD." Being merciful to them, he warns them, and neither suffers them to neglect the warning, nor leaves them to the effect of their procrastinating folly: but, by the mixed influence of hopes and fears, he disposes them to leave all for the salvation of their souls; and he even condescends compassionately to accommodate himself to their infirmities. Let us, however, at the same time remark his awful severity on apostates: let us "remember Lot's wife," and not allow one hankering wish after forbidden or forsaken objects; and let us be much afraid, lest, "after having escaped the corruption which is in the world, through the knowledge of Christ, we should be again entangled and overcome thereby." For, though "the Lord will not forsake his people," the severity of his multiplied chastisements may well fill our souls with holy awe: and if he pursue his children with the rod, even unto the grave, what will be the dreadful doom of his enemies?—It is grievous to observe, that chastisement seems in some cases to lose its effect; that, for a time, they who are corrected sin more and more! and that those who have escaped contamination amongst bad examples, are overcome in solitude; and remain unimpressed by the awful judgments which they have witnessed! These may expect to suffer more and more,

hold, thou *art but* <sup>g</sup>a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken: for she *is* <sup>h</sup>a man's wife.

**4** But Abimelech <sup>i</sup>had not come near her: and he said, Lord, <sup>j</sup>wilt thou slay also a righteous nation?

**5** Said he not unto me, She *is* my sister? and she, even she herself, said, He *is* my brother: <sup>k</sup>in the <sup>l</sup>integrity of my heart, <sup>m</sup>and innocency of my hands, have I done this.

**6** And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also <sup>n</sup>withheld thee from <sup>o</sup>sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not <sup>p</sup>to touch her.

<sup>g</sup> 7. Ps. cv. 14. Ez. xxxiii. 14. Jon. iii. 4.

<sup>h</sup> Heb. married to an husband. 6. 18.

<sup>i</sup> xviii. 23—25. xix. 24. 2 Sam. iv. 11.

<sup>k</sup> Josh. xxii. 22. 2 Kings xx. 3. 1 Chr. xxix. 17. 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 Thes. ii. 10.

<sup>l</sup> Or, simplicity, or sincerity.

<sup>m</sup> Job xxxiii. 9. Ps. xxvi. 6. lxxii. 13. Dan. vi. 22. m 18. xxxix. 7.

<sup>n</sup> xxv. 5. 1 Sam. xxv. 26. 34. Hos. ii. 6, 7.

<sup>o</sup> xxxix. 9. Ps. li. 4. o iii. 8. xxi. 11. 1 Cor. vii. 1. 2 Cor. vi. 17.

and to die in uncertainty and dishonour; and it is an evident fact, that children do suffer for their parents' sin. Let us then watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation; and especially let us guard against covetousness and drunkenness, which are inlets to all other crimes.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1—6. Gerar was inhabited by the Philistines, and seems to have been their capital city.—*Abimelech* signifies *My father the king*. He took Sarah with intent to espouse her, though he had already at least one wife (17). She still retained her beauty; which appears wonderful to us, but might not be so very remarkable at that time. Probably Sarah was then pregnant, which circumstance would increase her anxiety and that of Abraham; and it was also an aggravation of their sin, which was indeed in every respect much more heinous than before. (Note, xii. 11—16.) Before revelation by the written word was afforded and completed, the Lord was pleased more frequently to make known his will, in ordinary cases, by dreams, as distinct from prophetic discoveries to be communicated to others: but every impression of that kind, and indeed all supposed discoveries of the divine will, must now be tried by the infallible and perfect standard of the holy Scriptures; and no farther regarded than they are warranted by them.—As Sarah was another man's wife, Abimelech was warned that he should inevitably die, unless he restored her: and he was alarmed lest his people also should be visited with overwhelming judgments on her account. Yet he was conscious, that he had not intended to commit adultery, but had been misled by the express declarations of both Abraham and Sarah; nor could he suppose that the Lord would "slay also a righteous nation." He evidently referred to the late destruction of Sodom and the cities of the plain, which doubtless had caused great consternation, and probably a degree of reformation in that neighbourhood.—As the Lord admitted Abimelech's plea, we may suppose that both he and his subjects were free from the abominations of Sodom; and were not generally idolaters, but had some remains of true religion among them; and thus were comparatively "a righteous nation."—The Lord had "withheld Abimelech from

7 Now therefore restore the man *his* wife; for he *is* a <sup>p</sup> prophet, and he shall <sup>q</sup> pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore *her* not, know thou that thou shalt <sup>r</sup> surely die, thou, and <sup>s</sup> all that *are* thine.

8 Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid.

9 ¶ Then Abimelech called Abraham, and said unto him, 'What hast thou done unto us? and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me, and on my kingdom, <sup>t</sup> a great sin? thou hast done deeds unto me that <sup>u</sup> ought not to be done.

10 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing?

11 And Abraham said, Because I thought, <sup>y</sup> Surely the fear of God *is* not in this place: and they will <sup>z</sup> slay me for my wife's sake.

12 And <sup>a</sup> yet indeed *she is* my sister; she *is* the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother: and she became my wife.

13 And it came to pass, when <sup>b</sup> God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, <sup>c</sup> This *is* thy kindness which thou shalt shew unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He *is* my brother.

14 And Abimelech <sup>d</sup> took sheep, and oxen, and men-servants, and women-servants, and gave *them* unto Abraham, and restored him Sarah his wife.

15 And Abimelech said, Behold <sup>e</sup> my land *is* before thee: dwell <sup>f</sup> where it pleaseth thee.

16 And unto Sarah he said, Behold, I have given <sup>g</sup> thy brother a thousand pieces of silver: <sup>h</sup> behold, he *is* to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that <sup>i</sup> are with thee, and with all *other*: <sup>k</sup> thus she was reprov'd.

17 So Abraham <sup>l</sup> prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maid-servants; and they bare *children*.

18 For the LORD had <sup>m</sup> fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

"sinning against him;" probably by some uncommon disease, with which his subjects also were visited (18). This was in fact a merciful dispensation, to keep him from bringing guilt, and heavier condemnation, on himself and his people.—If all adulterers were *dead men*, in this *Christian* land, how would it decrease our numbers, and especially how would it thin the ranks of the superior orders in the community!—*Against me* (6). Note, Ps. li. 4.

V. 7. *Prophet*.] Abraham is the first person called a *prophet* in the scripture. The title seems to denote one who is favoured with a peculiar intercourse with God, who receives communications from him in his own personal concerns, or is employed to deliver his mind and will to others; whether he utter predictions of future events or not. Various external circumstances attended these communications; and some prophets had more intimate access to God, and explicit discoveries of his will, than others: but this general definition will apply almost to every place in the sacred oracles, where the word is used; except when false prophets are meant, who *pretended* to that special intercourse with God which the true prophets actually enjoyed.—The intercession of prophets was deemed peculiarly effectual. (*Marg. Ref.* p. q.)

V. 8. 'His council were all of the same mind, that this <sup>r</sup> was a divine admonition, which it was not safe to disobey.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 9—13. Abimelech's expostulation and remonstrance were weighty, convincing, and mild: but Abraham's answer implied criminal distrust of God, groundless suspicion of

the Gerarites, and a settled plan of misconduct; and his excuse was tinctured with equivocation.—(*Note*, xi. 28—32.)

V. 16. Abimelech either gave Abraham a thousand pieces of silver, (probably shekels,) in money, besides the presents before-mentioned; or this was the value of the whole. In stating this to Sarah, he calls him her *brother*, which implied a rebuke of her misconduct.—Some expound the following words of the *money given to Abraham*;—"This is a covering of the eyes, &c." 'I have given him this money to buy thee a veil, that all who converse with thee here, or in any other country where thou shalt come, may know thee to be a married woman.'—A veil was worn as a token of subjection to a husband.—Others refer them to Abraham: "He is to thee a covering of the eyes, &c." 'Thou shouldst have avowed thy relation to him, which would have sufficiently protected thee, either here or elsewhere.'—'Instead of, "And with all other, &c.;" the Septuagint read, 'And in all things speak truth.'—Thus she was *reprov'd*, or *instructed*.

V. 17, 18. The disorders inflicted on Abimelech and his family, not only withheld him from sin, but tended to shew the efficacy of fervent prayer, and to put honour upon Abraham, and so to promote the knowledge of God among the Philistines. (1 Sam. v. vi.)—'Man's wisdom <sup>r</sup> leads him into a pit; but God's wisdom must draw him out.' Fuller.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is very affecting here again to notice even 'the father of the faithful' manifesting distrust of God, and undue

## CHAP. XXI.

Isaac is born and circumcised, and Abraham and Sarah rejoice, 1—7. Isaac is weaned, 8. Ishmael mocks, and, at Sarah's instance and by God's direction, is sent away with Hagar, 9—14. They are distressed, but delivered; and Ishmael prospers and marries an Egyptian, 15—21. Abraham covenants with Abimelech, and worships God at Beersheba, 22—34.

**AND** the LORD <sup>a</sup>visited Sarah as he had said; and the LORD did unto Sarah <sup>b</sup>as he had spoken.

2 For Sarah <sup>c</sup>conceived and bare Abraham a son in his old age, <sup>d</sup>at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

3 And Abraham <sup>e</sup>called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.

4 And Abraham circumcised his son

Isaac, <sup>f</sup>'being eight days old, as God had commanded him.

5 And Abraham was <sup>g</sup>an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

6 And Sarah said, <sup>h</sup>God hath made me to laugh, *so that* all that hear <sup>i</sup>'will laugh with me.

7 And she said, <sup>k</sup>Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in his old age.

8 ¶ And the child grew, <sup>l</sup>and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the *same* day that Isaac was weaned.

9 And <sup>m</sup>Sarah saw the son of Hagar, the <sup>n</sup>'Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, <sup>o</sup>mocking.

10 Wherefore she said unto Abraham, <sup>p</sup>'Cast out this bond-woman, and

<sup>a</sup> 1. 24. Ex. iii. 16.  
iv. 31. xx. 5.  
Ruth i. 6. 1 Sam.  
ii. 21. Ps. cvi. 4.  
Luke i. 68. xix.  
44.  
<sup>b</sup> Ps. xii. 6. Matt.  
xxiv. 35.  
<sup>c</sup> 2 Kings iv. 16.  
17. Luke i. 24.  
25. 36. Gal. iv.  
22. Heb. xi. 11.  
<sup>d</sup> xvii. 19. 21. xviii.  
10. 14. Rom. ix.  
9.  
<sup>e</sup> xvii. 19. xxii. 2.  
Josh. xxiv. 3.  
Matt. i. 2. Acts  
vii. 8. Heb. xi.  
18.

<sup>f</sup> xvii. 10—12. Lev.  
xii. 3. Luke i.  
59. ii. 21. John  
vii. 22, 23.  
<sup>g</sup> xvii. 1. 17. Rom.  
iv. 19.

<sup>h</sup> xvii. 17. xviii.  
12—15. 1 Sam.  
i. 29—28. Ps.  
cxlii. 9. cxvii. 2.  
Ja. i. 1. Gal.  
iv. 27.  
<sup>i</sup> Luke i. 14. 59.  
Rom. xii. 15.  
<sup>k</sup> Num. xxiii. 23.  
Deut. iv. 32—34.  
Ps. lxxxvi. 8. 13.  
lxvi. 8. 2 Tues.  
i. 10.

B. C. 1893, or 1892.  
1 Sam. i. 22. Ps.  
cxvii. 2. Hos. i.  
8.

<sup>m</sup> xvi. 3—6. 15.  
xvii. 20.

<sup>n</sup> xvi. 1.  
<sup>o</sup> 2 Kings ii. 23.  
24. 2 Chr. xxx.  
10. xxxvi. 16.  
Neh. iv. 1—6. Ps.  
xlii. 10. xlv. 13.  
14. Prov. xx. 11.  
Gal. iv. 29. Heb.  
xi. 36.

<sup>p</sup> Prov. xxii. 10.  
John viii. 35.  
Gal. iv. 30, 31.

solicitude about life; equivocating with intent to deceive; relapsing into his former sin; drawing in Sarah to share his guilt, exposing her honour and chastity, and even endangering a question about the legitimacy of his promised Isaac; throwing temptation into Abimelech's way; occasioning affliction to him and his family; exposing himself and Sarah to just rebukes, and yet vainly attempting an excuse. Shall we commend or imitate Abraham in these things? by no means. They are written for our warning, that, "while we think we stand, we may take heed lest we fall." Even "Abraham hath not whereof to glory," but must be justified in "that righteousness of God, which is upon all and unto all them that believe."—We must not condemn all as hypocrites, who relapse into sin, even with aggravation, if they do not continue in it; nor need we ourselves despair, if humbly conscious of having thus relapsed. But let the unhumbled and impenitent take heed to themselves; for their case is unspeakably perilous: and let all men abhor the thoughts of "sinning on, that grace may abound."—It should also be noted, that artifice, of whatever kind, is more certainly unsuccessful, and more speedily detected, when used by religious characters, than in the case of others. The irreligious may for a season practise it and prosper; but the servants of God must for their good be soon put to shame.—On the other hand, though some things in Abimelech must be blamed; and it should be observed that indulgence gives force to all our passions; yet we must commend, and should imitate, the calmness and mildness of his reproof, his ready return of good for evil, and the salutary counsel which he gave to Sarah: and it is pleasing to find that he mentions adultery as a horrible sin against God, and temptation to it as a great injury; and that he so seriously expostulates with Abraham about his misconduct in that respect.—To appeal to God in particular instances, concerning our integrity, is not at all inconsistent with a humble consciousness, that we cannot stand before him in judgment, but continually need his pardoning mercy. He will indeed graciously

admit such appeals, when well grounded; but it is difficult to vindicate ourselves, without seeming to reflect upon his righteousness.—We often disquiet ourselves, and even are led into temptation and sin, by groundless suspicions; and we sometimes find the fear of God where we least expected it.—Combinations to deceive generally issue in shame and sorrow: and restraints from sin, though by suffering, should thankfully be acknowledged. But though the Lord rebukes, yet he will pardon and deliver his people, and for his own glory put honour upon them and their prayers. He will give them favour in the sight of those with whom they sojourn; and will so over-rule even their infirmities, when they are humbled for them, that they shall prove an *occasion* of good to themselves and others.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1, 2. The word *visit*, when thus used, denotes the visible effects of the Lord's presence and power, either in mercy or in judgment. Here it signifies his gracious attention to Sarah, and his faithful accomplishment of his promise; when in the natural course of things, it could not be expected that she should bear a son.

V. 3, 4. *Isaac* signifies *laughter*; and this child of promise was so named, in remembrance of Abraham's believing, and Sarah's unbelieving, laughter; and as an expression of joy and gratitude. In this, as well as in circumcising Isaac on the eighth day, Abraham was implicitly obedient to the commandment of God.

V. 5—7. The joy of Abraham and Sarah, on this extraordinary occasion, and the congratulations which they would receive from friends and neighbours, were but feeble earnest of the rejoicing of many millions in Him, who descended from Isaac, to bless the nations of the earth.

V. 8—12. It is probable, that Isaac was not weaned very early; some think not till he was five years old: and Abraham made a feast on that occasion, as thankfully rejoicing that his son was thus far advanced towards maturity. It appears that Ishmael derided Isaac as the child of pro-

her son: for the son of this bond-woman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.

11 And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight, <sup>a</sup> because of his son.

12 And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight, because of the lad, and because of thy bond-woman: in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, <sup>b</sup> hearken unto her voice: for <sup>c</sup> in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

13 And also <sup>d</sup> of the son of the bond-woman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.

14 And Abraham <sup>e</sup> rose up early in the morning, and <sup>f</sup> took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave <sup>g</sup> it unto Hagar, (putting <sup>h</sup> it on her shoulder,) and the child, and sent her away: and she departed and <sup>i</sup> wandered in the wilderness of <sup>j</sup> Beer-sheba.

15 And <sup>k</sup> the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.

16 And she went, and sat her down over against <sup>l</sup> him, a good way off, as it were a bow-shot: for she said, <sup>m</sup> Let

me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against <sup>n</sup> him and <sup>o</sup> lifted up her voice and wept.

17 And God <sup>p</sup> heard the voice of the lad: and <sup>q</sup> the Angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, <sup>r</sup> What aileth thee, Hagar? <sup>s</sup> Fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is.

18 Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand: for <sup>t</sup> I will make him a great nation.

19 And <sup>u</sup> God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water: and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.

20 And <sup>v</sup> God was with the lad, and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became <sup>w</sup> an archer.

21 And he dwelt <sup>x</sup> in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him <sup>y</sup> a wife out of the land of Egypt.

22 ¶ And it came to pass at that time, that <sup>z</sup> Abimelech, and Phichol the chief captain of his host, spake unto Abraham, saying, <sup>aa</sup> God is with thee in all that thou doest.

c xxvii. 38. xxix. 11. Judg. ii. 4. Ruth. 9. 1 Sam. xxiv. 16. xxx. 4. 2 Sam. xii. 36. d xvi. 11. Es. iii. 7. xxii. 27. 2 Kings xiii. 4. 23. e See on xvi. 9. 11. f Judg. xviii. 23. 1 Sam. xi. 5. Is. xxxi. 1. g xv. 1. xvi. 3. Ex. xiv. 13. Is. xlii. 10. 14. h 13. xvi. 10. xvii. 20. i Num. xxii. 31. 2 Kings vi. 17—20. Luke xxiv. 16. 3.

j 13. xvi. 10. xvii. 20. k xxvii. 15. xxxiii. 2. 3. 21. Judg. xlii. 24. 25. Luke 1. 80. ii. 40. l x. 9. xvi. 12. xxv. 27. xxvii. 3. xlii. 23. 24. m Num. x. 12. xii. 16. xiii. 3. 26. 1 Sam. xxv. 1. n xxiv. 3. 4. xxvi. 34. 35. xxvii. 45. xxviii. 1. 2.

o xxvii. 38. xxix. 11. Judg. ii. 4. Ruth. 9. 1 Sam. xxiv. 16. xxx. 4. 2 Sam. xii. 36. d xvi. 11. Es. iii. 7. xxii. 27. 2 Kings xiii. 4. 23. e See on xvi. 9. 11. f Judg. xviii. 23. 1 Sam. xi. 5. Is. xxxi. 1. g xv. 1. xvi. 3. Ex. xiv. 13. Is. xlii. 10. 14. h 13. xvi. 10. xvii. 20. i Num. xxii. 31. 2 Kings vi. 17—20. Luke xxiv. 16. 3.

j 13. xvi. 10. xvii. 20. k xxvii. 15. xxxiii. 2. 3. 21. Judg. xlii. 24. 25. Luke 1. 80. ii. 40. l x. 9. xvi. 12. xxv. 27. xxvii. 3. xlii. 23. 24. m Num. x. 12. xii. 16. xiii. 3. 26. 1 Sam. xxv. 1. n xxiv. 3. 4. xxvi. 34. 35. xxvii. 45. xxviii. 1. 2.

o xxvii. 38. xxix. 11. Judg. ii. 4. Ruth. 9. 1 Sam. xxiv. 16. xxx. 4. 2 Sam. xii. 36. d xvi. 11. Es. iii. 7. xxii. 27. 2 Kings xiii. 4. 23. e See on xvi. 9. 11. f Judg. xviii. 23. 1 Sam. xi. 5. Is. xxxi. 1. g xv. 1. xvi. 3. Ex. xiv. 13. Is. xlii. 10. 14. h 13. xvi. 10. xvii. 20. i Num. xxii. 31. 2 Kings vi. 17—20. Luke xxiv. 16. 3.

j 13. xvi. 10. xvii. 20. k xxvii. 15. xxxiii. 2. 3. 21. Judg. xlii. 24. 25. Luke 1. 80. ii. 40. l x. 9. xvi. 12. xxv. 27. xxvii. 3. xlii. 23. 24. m Num. x. 12. xii. 16. xiii. 3. 26. 1 Sam. xxv. 1. n xxiv. 3. 4. xxvi. 34. 35. xxvii. 45. xxviii. 1. 2.

o xxvii. 38. xxix. 11. Judg. ii. 4. Ruth. 9. 1 Sam. xxiv. 16. xxx. 4. 2 Sam. xii. 36. d xvi. 11. Es. iii. 7. xxii. 27. 2 Kings xiii. 4. 23. e See on xvi. 9. 11. f Judg. xviii. 23. 1 Sam. xi. 5. Is. xxxi. 1. g xv. 1. xvi. 3. Ex. xiv. 13. Is. xlii. 10. 14. h 13. xvi. 10. xvii. 20. i Num. xxii. 31. 2 Kings vi. 17—20. Luke xxiv. 16. 3.

j 13. xvi. 10. xvii. 20. k xxvii. 15. xxxiii. 2. 3. 21. Judg. xlii. 24. 25. Luke 1. 80. ii. 40. l x. 9. xvi. 12. xxv. 27. xxvii. 3. xlii. 23. 24. m Num. x. 12. xii. 16. xiii. 3. 26. 1 Sam. xxv. 1. n xxiv. 3. 4. xxvi. 34. 35. xxvii. 45. xxviii. 1. 2.

q xvii. 18. xxti. 1. 2. 2 Sam. xviii. 33. Matt. x. 37.

r 1 Sam. viii. 7. 9. Is. xlvii. 10. xxvii. 19. 21. Rom. ix. 7. 8. Heb. xi. 18. 20. xvi. 10. xvii. 20. xxv. 12—18.

s xix. 27. xxi. 3. xxiv. 54. xxvi. 31. Prov. xxvii. 14. x xxv. 6. xxxvi. 6. 7.

t xvi. 7. xxvii. 15. Ps. cvii. 4. Is. xvi. 8. z 33. xxi. 19. xxvi. 33. xlii. 1. Kings xix. 8. a 14. Ex. xv. 22—25. xvii. 1—3. 2 Kings iii. 9. Ps. lxiii. 1. Is. xlii. 12. Jer. xiv. 8.

b xlv. 34. Esth. viii. 6.

mise; and that his mocking was a kind of persecution, implying profane contempt of the covenant and promise of God, and opposition to his purpose, and some indications of malice against Isaac.—Sarah, however, seems to have been actuated, in some measure, by disdain and resentment, in requiring Abraham to send away Hagar and Ishmael: yet she was led to utter words, which were afterwards to be made use of in illustrating a most important part of divine truth. (Note, Gal. iv. 21—31.)—Abraham was grieved, on account both of Ishmael's misconduct, and Sarah's severity; and he might also be perplexed, how to reconcile the duty, which he owed to his son and to Hagar, with his affection to his wife. But the Lord made his duty plain to him, and shewed him that Ishmael must be sent away, in order that the promises might be fulfilled to Isaac and his Seed.

V. 13. *Thy seed.*] Ishmael should have many blessings, as Abraham's son; though not the special blessing of being the ancestor of the promised Seed.

V. 14—19. "Bread and water" denote necessities for the journey of Hagar and Ishmael, probably into Egypt to her relations, she being now liberated from bondage. Ishmael was more than sixteen, some think he was nineteen, years of age at this time: yet the provisions were put upon Hagar's shoulder, as more inured to labour; and the lad was committed to her care. No doubt, these circumstances were ordered according to instructions given to Abraham; perhaps for Hagar's humiliation, and with some view to the future state of Ishmael's posterity. She, however, "wandered," or *lost her way*, in the desert, which may ac-

count for the distress which ensued; for it does not appear that the provisions were consumed, or that she was sent away without money. But the water was spent, and the climate was hot; so that Ishmael was overcome with fatigue and thirst, and ready to die; and Hagar assisted him in reaching the shade of some shrubs, and lying down as his circumstances would admit: and, fully expecting that he would die, she sat down at a distance and wept. In this season of deep distress the Lord heard the voice of Ishmael's groaning, perhaps of his prayer, and addressed Hagar by an angel, saying, "What aileth thee, Hagar?" "Fear not:" intimating that the promise, before made to her, (xvi. 10—13,) was a full security that Ishmael should not die at this time, and that therefore her anguish was needless, and her fear groundless. At the same time the Lord directed her attention to the relief, which was near at hand, but which she had not before observed.

V. 20, 21. The Lord prospered Ishmael in his outward circumstances: nor can we positively conclude, either from his past misconduct, his general character, or the typical meaning of his expulsion from Abraham's family, that he lived and died destitute of the special grace and favour of God. He became, however, an archer and a hunter; and thus the prophecy concerning him began to be accomplished, in his person, as it has been ever since in his posterity. (Note, xvi. 12.)—We have no reason to conclude, that he was never visited by his father, or that he came no more to see him. (Note, xxv. 9, 10.)

V. 22—24. Abimelech was convinced that the promises of God would be fulfilled to Abraham; and he was there-

q xxiv. 3. xxxi.  
53. Josh. ii. 12.  
1 Sam. xx. 42.  
xxiv. 21, 22. xxx.  
15. Heb. vi. 16.  
• Heb. if thou  
shalt lie unto me.

23 Now therefore <sup>a</sup>swear unto me here by God, <sup>b</sup>that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son; *but* according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned.

24 And Abraham said, I will swear.

r xxvi. 15—22.  
Prov. xvii. 10.  
xxv. 9. xxvii. 5.  
Matt. xviii. 15.  
s xiii. 7. Ex. ii. 16.  
17

25 And Abraham <sup>r</sup>reproved Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's <sup>s</sup>servants had violently taken away.

t 2 Kings v. 20—  
24.

26 And Abimelech said, 'I wot not who hath done this thing; neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I *of it* but to-day.

u xiv. 22, 23. Prov  
xviii. 24. 1s.  
xxxii. 8.

27 And Abraham <sup>u</sup>took sheep, and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech: and both of them <sup>v</sup>made a covenant.

x xxvi. 28—31  
1 Sam. xviii. 3.  
Es. xvii. 13.  
Rom. i. 31. Gal.  
iii. 15.

28 And Abraham set seven ewe-lambs of the flock by themselves.

29 And Abimelech said unto Abraham, <sup>y</sup>What mean these seven ewe-lambs which thou hast set by themselves?

y xxxiii. 8. Ex.  
xii. 28. 1 Sam.  
xv. 14.

30 And he said, For *these* seven ewe-lambs shalt thou take of my hand, <sup>z</sup>that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well.

z xxxi. 44. 52.  
Josh. xxii. 27,  
28. xxiv. 27.

31 Wherefore he <sup>a</sup>called that place <sup>t</sup>Beer-sheba: because there they swore both of them.

a xxvi. 33.  
† That is, *The well of the oath.* 14.  
Josh. xv. 28

32 Thus <sup>b</sup>they made a covenant at Beer-sheba: then Abimelech rose up and Phichol the chief captain of his host, and they returned into the land of <sup>c</sup>the Philistines.

b 27. 1 Sam. xviii  
3.

33 And *Abraham* planted a <sup>d</sup>grove in Beer-sheba, and <sup>d</sup>called there on the name of the Lord, the <sup>e</sup>everlasting God.

c x. 14. xxvi. 8.  
14. Ex. xiii. 17.  
Judg. xiii. 1.  
d Or, tree.  
e Deut. xxxiii. 27.  
Ps. xc. 2. 1s xl.  
28. lvi. 15. Rom.  
xvi. 26. 1 Tim.  
i. 17.

34 And Abraham <sup>f</sup>sojourned in the Philistines' land many days.

f xx. 1. 1 Chr.  
xxix. 15. Ps.  
xxxix. 12. Heb.  
xi. 9. 13.

fore desirous of securing his friendship, and the benefit of it, to himself, to his posterity, and to his people.—Perhaps he too was a true believer: at least his character seems not at all inconsistent with that supposition. (*Notes*, 1 Sam. xx. 12—17.)—*Phichol*.] *Note*, xxvi. 26.

V. 25, 26. Wells of water, being scarce, were very valuable in those countries. (*Marg. Ref. r.*)

V. 31. *Beer-sheba*.] *The well of the oath: or, The well of the seven*, alluding to the seven ewe lambs. Perhaps these were given to Abimelech, as the proprietor of the land, in which the well was digged, and as the rent of it, that the well might be the more clearly Abraham's property.—The verb rendered "to swear," is derived from the word translated *seven*; probably with reference to the number of the sacrifices frequently offered on these solemn occasions.

V. 32. *Into the land of the Philistines*.] That is, to Gerar. Beer-sheba seems at that time to have been under the dominion of the king of the Philistines: (33:) but it was not generally considered as a part of Philistia.

V. 33. Perhaps Abraham planted this grove to shelter his tent; and to form a shade for the performance of sacred worship, which was at that time usually performed in the open air.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—21.

Blessed are they whose hope is in the Lord, and who patiently wait for him; for their expectations shall certainly be answered, and even exceeded. The delay may seem tedious, and the exercise of faith and patience sharp: but they shall at length acknowledge, that their blessings were only deferred, that they might have them with additional comfort, by perceiving more plainly the power, love, and faithfulness of God in them; and that his name might be the more glorified. He does not indeed relieve and comfort, when we should choose it; but he always

observes his own set time, which is the best that infinite wisdom can select: and they, who uprightly serve him, will never be ashamed of any thing, except their unbelief; and this shame will be swallowed up in their thankful joy for the largeness of his performances.—As he keeps his time in giving blessings, so we must observe the appointed season for performing his commandments, and not be induced by any consideration to omit or defer our obedience.—Grievous things speedily follow joyous events in this world, and the effect of former miscarriages often interrupts the satisfaction of present advantages. Even children are more certain cares than comforts; and their ill behaviour and contentions, with the fear or pain of parting with them, greatly alloy the pleasure which we might otherwise derive from them.—In all our anxieties, we should observe the directions, obey the commandments, and depend on the promises and providence of God: and thus, "casting our care on him," our minds will be kept in peace; and he will take care of those whom we love, when we are no longer able to do it.—Let us not, however, neglect to notice the secret influence of the Lord in this domestic transaction; nor overlook the instruction given us, not to rest in external privileges, or in our own performances, lest we be outcasts with Ishmael: but let us learn to seek the blessings of the new covenant, by faith in its divine Surety; and that grace and Spirit of adoption, which mark the children and heirs of God, and enable them to walk at liberty in his commandments, and cheerfully to expect the fulfilment of his promises. And let us habitually recollect, that our despondency and complaints arise from forgetfulness of his word; that relief is often nearer than we perceive; that the Lord always hears the prayer of faith, and frequently the very cry of distress; and that numerous advantages are conferred on the posterity of those who have honoured God, for the sake of their pious ancestors.

## CHAP. XXII.

Abraham, tried by the command to sacrifice Isaac, shews his faith by obeying, 1—10 He is prevented from slaying his son, and offers a ram in his stead, 11—13. A name is given to the place; and the covenant is renewed with Abraham, 14—19. Some account of Nahor's family, 20—24.

a Ex. xv. 25, 26.  
xvi. 4. Deut. viii.  
2 xiii. 3. Judg.  
ii. 22. 2 Chr.  
xxiii. 31. Prov.  
xiii. 3. 1 Cor. x.  
13. Heb. xi. 17.  
Jam. i. 12—14.

AND it came to pass after these things, that \*God did tempt Abraham, and

said unto him, Abraham: and he said, \*Behold, *here I am*.

2 And he said, \*Take now thy son, thine only *son* Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of \*Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

3 And Abraham \*rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and

Heb. Behold me.  
7. 11. Ex. iii. 4.  
Is. vi. 8.  
b xiii. 19. xxi. 12.  
John iii. 16.  
Rom. v. 8. viii.  
32. 1 John iv. 9.  
10.  
c 2 Chr. iii. 1.  
d Judg. xi. 31. 39.  
2 Kings iii. 27.  
Mic. vi. 7.  
e xvi. 26. Ps. cxix.  
60. Ec. ix. 10. Is.  
xxvi. 3, 4. Matt.  
x. 37. Mark x.  
29—31. Luke  
xiv. 26. Gal. i.  
16. Heb. xi. 8.  
17—19.

## V. 22—34.

The behaviour of believers may be so undeniably excellent, and the Lord's favour to them so manifest, as to convince observers that "God is with them in all they do:" and this conviction is often the means of their conversion. How important then is it, that we "walk in wisdom towards those that are without!"—Common prudence might suffice to teach men, that it is advantageous to be connected with those whom the Lord blesses; did not the enmity of the carnal mind counteract its influence.—They who would "live peaceably with all men," must watch over their servants, and be careful whom they trust, as well as be circumspect in their own conduct; especially if affluence or high station require many to be employed: for injuries are often committed, and charged on the principal, of which he knows and hears nothing. On this, as well as on other accounts, it is far better mildly to reprove those by whom we suppose ourselves ill-used, than to complain to others, without giving them the opportunity of clearing themselves.—They who profess to serve God, should act in all cases with strict fidelity; requite every kindness liberally, to the benefactor, or his relatives and descendants; and exhibit, in all things, an example of integrity and disinterestedness. In general it is advisable to avoid oaths or vows; yet on important occasions, and when due solemnity is observed, the honour of God and religion, and the cause of justice and peace, may require us to confirm our covenants by these awful obligations. In this case, however, it is incumbent on us to be very explicit in our requirements and engagements; that we may neither entangle our own consciences, nor give others the least ground to suspect that we have failed in fulfilling our promises. Indeed, honest and friendly purposes naturally lead to an unreserved frankness, which is the best security of peace and harmony.—But while we attend to outward matters with prudence and equity, we must never forget that we are strangers and pilgrims on earth: and, wherever we sojourn, we must neither neglect, nor be ashamed of, the worship of JEHOVAH, the everlasting God, our Refuge, Rest, and Portion, through all generations, and to all eternity.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1. "After these things;" "after five" and twenty years' waiting; after the promise had been frequently repeated; after hope had been raised to the highest pitch, yea, after it had been actually turned into enjoyment: and when the child had lived long enough 'to discover an amiable and godly disposition.' Fuller. —Tempt.] This word, as here used, conveys an idea, which may seem inconsistent with other testimonies of the sacred

oracles; but the case is different as to the original languages, in which, to *tempt*, and to *try* or *prove*, are expressed in the same manner. Accordingly, the old translation very properly renders the clause, "God did prove Abraham."—Every trial indeed is eventually a temptation, and tends to manifest the prevailing dispositions of the heart, whether holy or unholy. As to the state of the heart, or the influence of external agents upon it, exciting to sin, "let no man say, he is tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man:" but he appoints all external circumstances, he gives us general or particular commandments, and he allots us our several services. In all these respects, he acts in perfect wisdom and holiness: yet his appointments are intended "to prove us, and shew what is in our hearts;" and they frequently give occasion to our evil propensities to manifest themselves, and to Satan and wicked men to tempt us. Thus the Lord may be said, not only to try us, but also to "lead us into temptation;" (Note, Matt. vi. 13;) which, conscious of our weakness, we are taught to deprecate.—If the young man, whom our Lord required "to sell all and follow him," had possessed Abraham's strength of faith, he would have given an illustrious example of self-denying obedience. Had Abraham, when commanded to sacrifice Isaac, been under the power of unbelief and carnal attachments, he would have been recorded as a lamentable instance of defection in the day of trial.—Joseph overcame a far more dangerous temptation to adultery, than that by which David fell; because his heart was vastly more under the influence of holy dispositions, than David's was on that awful occasion. This is universally applicable. The holy law gives occasion to all manner of concupiscence; and even the blessed gospel, to still deeper malignity, when sin reigns in the heart: while the most horrid temptations tend to illustrate the power of divine love and zeal, when holy affections completely possess it; as the conduct of our tempted, suffering, and holy Redeemer most evidently shews.—We may apply these remarks to the case of Abraham. The Lord saw good to put his faith and obedience to a most severe trial. The evil propensities of our fallen nature are, in no sense, to be ascribed to God; for that would make him the author of sin. He did not tempt Abraham, by suggesting evil thoughts to his mind, or exciting sinful passions; for thus a man is tempted by his own lust, by the devil, and by his fellow-sinners; but he placed him in such circumstances, as effectually shewed the ruling dispositions of his heart, and proved them to be very excellent.

V. 2. Every word in this surprising command is marked with emphasis of terror, when we consider it as

took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and clave the wood for the burnt-offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

<sup>f</sup> Ex xix. 11. 15.  
<sup>1</sup> Cor. xv. 4. 4 Then on the 'third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off.

<sup>g</sup> Heb. xii. 1. 5 And Abraham said unto his young men, <sup>g</sup> Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and <sup>h</sup> come again to you.

<sup>h</sup> Heb. xi. 19. 6 And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and <sup>i</sup> laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife: and they went both of them together.

7 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his

father, and said, <sup>k</sup> My father: and he said, <sup>\*</sup> Here *am* I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: <sup>l</sup> but where is the <sup>†</sup> lamb for a burnt-offering?

8 And Abraham said, My son, <sup>m</sup> God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering: so they went both of them together.

9 And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order; and <sup>n</sup> bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

10 And Abraham <sup>o</sup> stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.

11 ¶ And the <sup>p</sup> Angel of the LORD <sup>p</sup> called unto him out of heaven, and said,

directed to a tender parent: "Thy son"—"thine only son" by Sarah thy wife—"whom thou lovest—even Isaac."—Go into the land of Moriah;—then, after that long journey, offer him there for a burnt-offering, shed his blood, and burn his body to ashes!—How many objections might Abraham have started to this command! He might have urged the divine prohibition of murder; and the evil report which such an action would bring on his character, on the religion which he professed, and the God whom he worshipped. He might have pleaded the fatal consequences of such an example; and even the very promises and covenant of God, ratified again and again with him.—*Moriah.*] *Moriyah*—*JAH* is *shevn*: nearly the same as *JEHOVAH-jireh*. (Note, 14.)—The temple was built on mount Moriah, which was doubtless in the land of Moriah. (2 Chron. iii. 1.) This therefore must have been some adjacent mountain, of which there were many in that neighbourhood: and there is no improbability in the general opinion, that it was mount Calvary, where Christ, the great Anti-type, was afterwards crucified; and that it was selected with reference to that event.

V. 3, 4. Being assured that this was a divine command, Abraham implicitly confided in the infinite wisdom, justice, holiness, faithfulness, goodness, and power of God; and neither hesitated nor objected. Nay, the very energy of the command, compared with past mercies received, and the promises made to him, excited a firm expectation, that God would, from the ashes, immediately restore his son to life, though there had never been an instance of the kind from the beginning of the world. (Note, Heb. xi. 17—19.) It does not appear that he manifested that anguish or anxiety, which might have been expected from the command; or that either Sarah, or his attendants, or even Isaac, perceived any thing unusual in his conduct. It is probable, that he did not inform Sarah, lest her feebler faith and more tender frame might not support so severe a shock; or lest she should start some objection, or make some opposition, to the heavenly mandate.—Till the third day Abraham's faith was thus tried, that his obedience might appear to be the result, not of rash precipitation, but of calm deliberation: and then he *saw the place*; per-

haps, marked out by an appearance of glory, such as had probably on some occasions been the token of the Lord's presence with him.

V. 5, 6. Abraham left the servants behind, lest their affectionate, but ill-timed interference should create him disturbance.—The expression, "We will come again to you," (the original is plural,) clearly implies, an expectation that God would raise Isaac again, to return along with him.—Isaac was evidently grown up at this time; some say he was twenty-five years of age, some thirty, and some thirty-three or thirty-five.—In carrying the wood for the intended sacrifice, he typified Christ bearing his cross.

V. 7, 8. Isaac's question, so full of consideration and filial respect, must have tended to put Abraham's resolution to the sharper trial: but he deemed it not proper as yet to disclose this solemn business; and the Holy Spirit by his mouth seems to have predicted "the Lamb of God" which God hath provided, and "which taketh away the sin of the world." (Note, John i. 29.)

V. 9. It is probable, that Abraham previously explained to Isaac the nature and obligations of the divine command, the principle of his obedience, and the expectation of his faith in respect of the event; and Isaac yielded submission and concurrence: for certainly he did not attempt to escape or resist, but yielded up himself voluntarily to be a sacrifice.—When he lay bound upon the altar, he typified Christ, as bound by the officers of the high priest, and as nailed to the cross: and as "bruised" and put to grief by his heavenly Father, "when he made his soul a sacrifice for sin," even for our sins.

V. 10. Abraham acted with firm and calm determination, as if about to offer an ordinary sacrifice, and was allowed to proceed thus far, that his obedience might be complete: but at this crisis he was stopped; for it was not the intention of God that Isaac should actually be sacrificed. Thus it was intimated, that nobler blood than that of animals, even the blood of the only begotten Son of God, was in due time to be shed for sin: but that in the mean while, the Lord would in no case have human sacrifices used, as typical of that atoning blood.

V. 11, 12. The Angel called to Abraham out of heaven

<sup>q</sup> 1. Ex. iii. 4. <sup>a</sup> Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.

<sup>r</sup> 1 Sam. xv. 22. <sup>12</sup> And he said, <sup>1</sup> Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for <sup>2</sup> now I know that thou fearest God, <sup>3</sup> seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me.

<sup>13</sup> And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, <sup>4</sup> behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering <sup>5</sup> in the stead of his son.

<sup>14</sup> And Abraham <sup>6</sup> called the name of that place <sup>7</sup> JEHOVAH-jireh: as it is said to this day, <sup>8</sup> In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

<sup>15</sup> And <sup>9</sup> the Angel of the Lord

called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

<sup>16</sup> And said, <sup>10</sup> By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

<sup>17</sup> That <sup>11</sup> in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying <sup>12</sup> I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore<sup>13</sup>; and <sup>14</sup> thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

<sup>18</sup> And <sup>15</sup> in thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast <sup>16</sup> obeyed my voice.

<sup>19</sup> So <sup>17</sup> Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up, and went together to <sup>18</sup> Beer-sheba, and Abraham dwelt at Beer-sheba.

by name: and he says, "Thou hast not withheld thy son... from me;" and by this he knew, that Abraham feared the Lord.—Doubtless God knew the reality and vigour of Abraham's piety previous to this trial; but he saw good to require experimental evidence of it, for the glory of his own grace, for Abraham's comfort, and for the benefit of his whole church.—"The fear of God" is frequently put for the whole of true religion, being an essential part of it, and necessarily connected with all the rest. (*Marg. Ref. s.*) It seems to comprise, a reverential regard to the majesty, authority, presence, and purity of God; an influential dread of his displeasure, accompanied with a desire and hope of his favour; (otherwise it would drive us from him, inspire hard thoughts, excite enmity, and discourage all endeavours to please him; *Matt. xxv. 24, 25*;) a submissive acquiescence in his appointments; a conscientious obedience to his commandments, and a serious devoted attendance on his worship, in his holy ordinances: nor can it be ever separated from a real belief of his truth, and a cordial acceptance of his salvation, as far as we are acquainted with them; or from love, gratitude, and other holy affections. In proportion as faith and hope deliver the soul from *terror*; humble, admiring reverence of God will be increased: and when "perfect love shall have cast out," entirely and finally, that "fear which hath torment;" the filial reverential regard to God, as our adorable Friend and Father, will be enlarged and perfected for ever, even as it is in the holy angels. (*Notes, Ps. lxxxix. 6—12. v. 7.*)

V. 13. The ram now became the type of the sacrifice of Christ's death, and indicated what sort of prefigurations of that event God would approve and accept.—Isaac thus rescued, after having been three days under the sentence of death, and living to be the progenitor of the promised innumerable posterity, represented the Saviour rising on the third day, "to see his seed, and prolong his days, that the pleasure of the Lord might prosper in his hand."

V. 14. JEHOVAH-jireh perhaps alludes to Abraham's

words, "God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering." The latter clause should be translated, "In the mount the LORD will appear;" that is, just in the crisis, as he did upon the mount to Abraham. This it seems became a proverb, similar to that in our language; 'Man's extremity is God's opportunity.'

V. 16—18. "Because he could swear by no greater, the Lord swore by himself;" and thus he solemnly pledged the honour of his holy name, and of all his perfections, as the security for the fulfilment of his engagements to Abraham. The promises before given had been formed into a covenant; that covenant was signed, sealed, and ratified; and now it was solemnly confirmed with an oath. (*Notes, xii. 1—5. xv. xvii.*) This was done, not only that Abraham, but also "that we, might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us" in Christ. (*Notes, Heb. vi. 13—20.*)—To the former promises it is here added, "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;" or, by occupying their cities, shall acquire the dominion over them. 'Thy seed shall inherit the cities of the adversaries.' *Sept.* This was accomplished when the Israelites conquered Canaan, and in the victories of David, and the extensive authority of Solomon; but in a far higher sense, when Christ, the promised Seed, ascended the mediatorial throne; when the Gentiles were converted to Christianity; and when opposing nations were crushed before him, or submitted to him.—The language of the last clause also is changed. It had before been said, "In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed:" but here the expression literally is, "They shall bless themselves;" perhaps implying, how highly they would value the promised Saviour, and how desirous they would be to declare to others their blessedness in him, that they might come and share it.—Abraham's obedience evinced the strength of his faith, and the sincerity of his love: thus "faith wrought with his works, and by works was his faith made perfect." As a sinner, he was justified before God by faith alone; as a professed believer, he was justi-

20 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, that it was told Abraham, saying, Behold <sup>1</sup> Milcah, she hath also born children unto thy brother <sup>1</sup> Nahor;

21 <sup>m</sup> Huz his first-born, and <sup>n</sup> Buz his brother, and Kemuel the father of Aram,

22 And Chesed, and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel.

23 And <sup>o</sup> Bethuel begat <sup>p</sup> Rebekah: these eight Milcah did bear to Nahor, Abraham's brother.

24 And his <sup>q</sup> concubine, whose name was Reumah, she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah.

fied before the whole world, by the works which his faith produced. (Note, Jam. ii. 21—24.)—"Hast not withheld." (16.) Οὐκ ἐφείσω. Sept. 12. See Rom. viii. 32. 2 Pet. ii. 4, 5. Gr.

V. 20—24. This is introduced as a preface to the account given of Isaac's marriage with Rebekah, and afterwards to that of Jacob with Leah and Rachel. (Marg. Ref.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—12.

N. B. The practical observations on this chapter cannot well be divided; but the first section, being on Abraham's example, may be read with the former part; and the second, on the typical import of the transaction, with the latter

While we remain in this world, we must never expect to be exempt from trials, and frequently the sharpest come last: we should therefore "put on," and keep on, "the whole armour of God," that when summoned to the conflict, we may answer "Here I am."—Where God bestows much grace, he will be sure greatly to try it; and though the conflict is painful, the event will be glorious and joyful. Conscious of our weakness, we ought not to rush uncalled into difficult services, and should pray "not to be led into temptation;" yet, if we be upright and watchful, we may be confident "that the Lord will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able:" nay, we may "count it all joy, when we fall into divers temptations;" firmly believing that "the trial of our faith shall be to praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ."—If there be any earthly object which seems to rival God in our affections, we may expect that he will in that particular try the sincerity and supremacy of our love; and by cheerfully parting with even our beloved Isaacs for his sake, we most undeniably prove that we have given him our hearts.—They who would perform unreserved obedience, when satisfied what the will of God is, must neither be influenced by carnal affections, listen to plausible objections, consult partial counsellors, make needless delays, nor leave an opening to interruption and disturbance; but, committing all into the Lord's hand, they must simply follow his direction, and leave all consequences with him: and they need not doubt, but in the trying moment he will appear for their comfort or relief.—But what a wonderful sight is in this chapter set before us! The long-expected seed, the son of joy, the child of promise, the well-beloved Isaac, now grown up to maturity, and entwining every day more closely round the tender affections of his parents, of which he was justly deserving; nay, the church's hope, and the declared progenitor of him "in whom all the families of the earth are blessed;" bound, laid upon the altar, and mildly expecting the fatal blow from the hand of his loving father; who, with col-

lected firmness and intrepid resolution, takes the knife to shed his blood, and prepares immediately to kindle that fire which is to consume him to ashes!—For this singular conduct Abraham could render no other reason, than the express command of God: nor was there any other principle of obedience to that extraordinary command, (an obedience never equalled by mere man,) but faith, an unshaken belief of the Lord's testimony, a firm expectation of the accomplishment of his promises, and a full confidence in his wisdom, power, and love. Though the command seemed to run counter to those promises, Abraham knew it only *seemed* to do so: obedience was his part, and the Lord would take care to glorify his own faithfulness. He had received Isaac from God, who had a right to dispose of him: honour and comfort were in his path; and, though untried before, with undaunted constancy he walked in it.—Hear this, ye inattentive objectors, who traduce the doctrine of salvation by faith, as inimical to practical godliness; go, and upon your principles equal and exceed this obedience: till then be dumb, or allow that, though you understand it not, this apparently weak principle produces effects beyond comparison prodigious. Hear this likewise, ye abusers of this most holy faith, whose conduct merits still deeper indignation; who "say you have faith," yet cleave to your sins, renounce not the world, deny not yourselves, refuse the cross, are lovers of yourselves, of pleasure, of money, or of worldly honour, more than lovers of God; and, instead of parting with a deservedly beloved Isaac at God's command, like Judas, kiss Christ, and sell him to his enemies for a few pieces of silver, or some vile sensual gratification! Here then compare your faith with Abraham's, and acknowledge that ye are no genuine sons of this "father of the faithful;" but that your faith is dead, your hope presumptuous, and that Abraham disowns and is ashamed of you.—In plain language, nothing but faith will carry a man through with unreserved obedience, in every possible trial; and that is no true faith, which perseveres in refusing to obey a plain command, in any case whatever. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."—In proportion as faith stands this test, when sharply and repeatedly tried, we may be assured that we are Abraham's children, interested in his covenant, and in the oath by which it was confirmed; and have a right to that strong consolation which by it God wills and intends for his people.

##### V. 13—24.

In the wonderful transaction recorded in this chapter, faith discerns one infinitely more stupendous: What was the love which Abraham or Isaac bore to the Lord, compared with the love of God the Father in giving his only begotten Son? and with that of the only begotten Son in giving himself a sacrifice upon the cross, for the sins of

## CHAP. XXIII.

The age and death of Sarah, 1, 2. Abraham communes with the sons of Heth, and purchases the field and cave Machpelah of Ephron, 3—18; where Sarah is buried, 19, 20.

<sup>a</sup> xvii. 17.  
<sup>b</sup> xiii. 18. Num.  
xiii. 22. Josh.  
xiv. 15. xx. 7.  
Judg. i. 10.  
<sup>c</sup> xxvii. 41. i. 10.  
Num. xx. 29.  
Deut. xxxiv. 8.  
1 Sam. xxvii. 3.  
2 Chr. xxxv. 25.  
Jer. xxii. 10. 18.  
Ez. xxiv. 16—18.  
Acts viii. 2.  
<sup>d</sup> 5. 7. x. 13. xxy.  
10. xxvii. 46.  
xiv. 30. 1 Sam.  
xxvi. 6. 2 Sam.  
xxiii. 39.  
<sup>e</sup> xvii. 8. xlvii. 9.  
Lev. xxv. 23.  
1 Chr. xxix. 15.  
Ps. xxxix. 12.  
cv. 12. Heb. xi.  
9. 13. 1 Pet. iv.  
11.  
<sup>f</sup> iii. 19. xlix. 30.  
1. 14. Job xxx.  
23. Ec. xii. 7.  
Acts vii. 5.  
<sup>g</sup> 10.

**AND** Sarah was <sup>a</sup>an hundred and seven and twenty years old: *these were* the years of the life of Sarah.

2 And Sarah died in <sup>b</sup>Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to <sup>c</sup>mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.

3 ¶ And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of <sup>d</sup>Heth, saying,

4 I am a <sup>e</sup>stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a <sup>f</sup>burying place with you, that I may <sup>g</sup>bury my dead out of my sight.

men? God commanded Abraham previously to his yielding up his son; but the sacrifice of Christ prevented even solicitation! The Lord had an undoubted right to demand that life which he had given: but where shall we sinners, deserving of eternal misery, ground our claim to such a gift, as that of Christ to be "the propitiation for our sins?" The Lord had been a most liberal Friend to Abraham, before he was required to offer Isaac as a burnt-offering; but "God commended his love to us, in that when we were *yet sinners* Christ died for us:" and in that, "when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." Isaac was a sinner born to die: but the Son of God *assumed human nature* for the very purpose of dying for us; and in human nature being free from sin, he was under no obligation to suffer death, except the bond of his love to us. If Isaac was justly beloved by Abraham; Jesus was the "beloved Son of the Father, in whom he was well pleased." Had Isaac died, it had been with inward peace, without extraordinary pain, and with singular reputation: but Christ tasted death in all its bitterness, died by violence, surrounded with contempt and insult, treated with indignity and cruelty, and loaded with the weight of our iniquities; while "it pleased the LORD to bruise him, and to put him to grief, and make his very soul a sacrifice for sin." By this we know the loving-kindness of God our Saviour towards sinful man, in that "he hath not withheld his Son, his only Son from us:" by this we perceive the love of Christ, in that he gave himself a sacrifice for our sins.—Behold, he dies; yet rises! lives, ascends, and intercedes for us! and calls on sinners to come to him, and partake of his blood-bought salvation. Let them therefore be warned to hear his voice, and encouraged to trust in him. He calls to his redeemed people to rejoice in him and glorify him: "What then shall we render for all his benefits?" May this "love constrain us to live no longer to ourselves, but to him who died for us and rose again;" and, admiring and adoring his grace, let us devote our all to his service, who laid down his life for our salvation. Thus every Christian

5 And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him,

6 Hear us, <sup>a</sup>my lord: thou art <sup>b</sup>a mighty <sup>c</sup>prince amongst us; in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead: none of us shall withhold from thee <sup>d</sup>his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead.

7 And Abraham stood up, and <sup>e</sup>bowed himself to the people of the land, *even* to the children of Heth.

8 And he communed with them, saying, If it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and <sup>f</sup>intreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar:

9 That he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which is in the end of his field; for <sup>g</sup>as much money as it is worth he shall give it me,

may be sure, that in all emergencies, the Lord will appear for his relief, be his shield in all dangers, provide effectually for all his wants, order all events for his good, and make him conqueror over all enemies, till he shall sit down with him upon his throne of glory.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 1, 2. Sarah is the only woman whose entire age is recorded in Scripture.—"She was ten years younger than Abraham, and died thirty-eight before him. —God often takes the youngest before the eldest." Fuller. It seems that Abraham had some time before her death left his residence at Beer-sheba, and come to sojourn at Hebron. When she died, he came to her tent, to express his unfeigned sorrow, and pay her the last tribute of affection.

V. 3, 4. The sons of Heth are called elsewhere Hittites, that is, *Hethites*. Abraham was "a stranger and a sojourner" among them; one who had no fixed settlement, and did not attempt to acquire any. (*Marg. Ref. e.*) —It has generally been the custom, in the church of God, to *inter* the dead; though *burning* has elsewhere been much in use: and indeed interring more aptly expresses an acquiescence in that sentence, "until thou return unto the ground, whence thou was taken: ... for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

V. 6. According to those times, Abraham's retinue, wealth, and prosperity, would rank him among the surrounding princes. Yet the sons of Heth, in calling him "a prince of God," (*marg.*) might perhaps also advert to his religion, as respecting his honourable character.

V. 7. *Bowed.*] Abraham rendered honour and respect to the sons of Heth, according to the custom of that age and country.—It is evidently no part of the religion of the Bible, to refuse such expressions of regard; but an ornament to godliness to render them, as far as it can be done, without flattering the persons, or countenancing the crimes, of those to whom they are addressed.

V. 9. Abraham would have a *separate* burying-place;

for a possession of a burying-place amongst you.

10 And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth. And Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth, *even* of all that went in at the gates of his city, saying,

11 Nay, <sup>m</sup> my lord, hear me: the field give I thee, and the cave that *is* therein, I give it thee; in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee: bury thy dead.

12 And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land.

13 And he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the people of the land, saying, But if thou *wilt* give it, I pray thee hear me: <sup>n</sup> I will give thee money for the field; take *it* of me, and I will bury my dead there.

14 And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him,

15 My lord, hearken unto me: the land *is* worth four hundred shekels of

silver; what *is* that betwixt me and thee? bury therefore thy dead.

16 And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron, and Abraham <sup>o</sup> weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, <sup>p</sup> four hundred shekels of silver, current *money* with the merchant.

17 And <sup>q</sup> the field of Ephron, which *was* in Machpelah, which *was* before Mamre, the field and the cave which *was* therein, and all the trees that *were* in the field, that *were* in all the borders round about, were <sup>r</sup> made sure

18 Unto Abraham, for a possession, in the presence of the children of Heth, before all that went in at the gate of his city.

19 ¶ And after this, Abraham <sup>s</sup> buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre: the same *is* Hebron in the land of Canaan.

20 And the field, and the cave that *is* therein, were made sure unto Abraham for a possession of a burying place, by the sons of Heth.

• Heb. *even*

18. xxxiv. 20. 24.  
Ruth iv. 1—4.  
Job xxix. 7. Is.  
xxxviii. 6.

21. 6. 2 Sam. xxiv.  
20—24. 1 Chr.  
xxi. 22—24

2. xiv. 22, 23. Phil.  
iv. 5—8. Col. iv.  
8. Heb. xiii. 5.

o xliii. 21. Est.  
viii. 25—30. Job.  
xxviii. 15. Jer.  
xxxii. 9. Zech.  
xi. 12.

p 15. Ex. xxx 13  
Ez. xiv. 12

q xxv. 2. xlix. 30  
32. 1. 13. Act.  
vii 16

r Ruth iv. 7—10.  
Jer. xxxii. 7—14.

s xxv. 9, 10. xxxv.  
27—29. xlvii. 30  
xlix. 29—32. 1  
13. 25.

perhaps intimating, that, though the righteous live intermingled with the ungodly in this world, there will be a separation after death.

V. 15, 16. *Shekel* comes from a Hebrew verb, signifying to weigh; for money was not then coined and stamped; but the precious metals passed by weight. A shekel is about half an ounce. (*Tables*.)

V. 20. Thus Abraham, in a burying-place, had an earnest of Canaan, and a pledge of his reversionary inheritance!

“This chapter not only illustrates the excellent spirit of “the father of the faithful,” but exhibits a specimen of manners which might do honour to any age and country. The scene of the transaction appears to be a public assembly of the chief persons among “the sons of Heth,”—“in the audience of the people of the land.” Abraham “stands up and bows himself” before them, with respect and deference, at the commencement of his suit, and repeats this courtesy on hearing their kindness and readiness to comply with his wishes. He assumes no civil superiority on the ground of his high religious distinctions; nor cherishes any sense of right to what he asked, in virtue of the whole land being promised to his family: on the contrary, while they pronounce him “a mighty prince among them,” he styles himself a mere “stranger and sojourner” in the country: and when, in compliance with their invitations, he selects a particular portion of land as what he should desire, he requests the good offices of the assembly with one of their principal members, (such we may suppose Ephron to have been,) to obtain it for him. They, on the other hand, evidently sympathize with him, and

VOL. I.

study to shew him all the respect due to his character and his circumstances. They desire him to choose his own place of sepulture, assured that no one of them all would withhold from him the object of his choice. When he pitches upon the field of Ephron, Ephron immediately steps forward, without waiting for any such intervention as Abraham had requested, and begs he will accept the land as a free gift. “The field give I thee, and the cave that *is* therein, I give it thee; in the presence of the sons of *my* people give I it thee: bury thy dead” (11). Of this liberal offer Abraham, however, is too disinterested to avail himself, and Ephron consents to accept the price of the land, at the same time observing, that it was a matter of no consideration between him and Abraham.—Nothing could, throughout, be more agreeable to every principle of good manners, and it is impossible not to admire the behaviour of both parties.—How strong must have been the impression made by Abraham’s general character and conduct, to procure him such treatment among persons to whom his religion would naturally be obnoxious, and his prosperity an object of jealousy or envy!

The closing verses of the chapter exhibit the earliest instance on record of the regular conveyance of landed property: “the field, and the cave that was therein, and a “the trees that were in the field, and that were in all the “borders round about.”

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The longest life must shortly close; and the survivors among relations only live to experience painful separations.—The more valued any earthly enjoyment is, the

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## CHAP. XXIV.

Abraham commissions his servant to go to Mesopotamia in order to take a wife for Isaac, 1—9. The servant arrives at the city of Nahor; his prayer is answered, and he is entertained by Laban, 10—33. He proposes a marriage between Isaac and Rebekah, which is acceded to, 34—58. Rebekah goes with him, and is married to Isaac, 59—67.

a xviii. 11. xxi. 8.  
xxv. 20. 1 Kings  
i. 1. Luke i. 7.  
• Heb. goes into  
days.  
b 35. xii. 2. xlix.  
25. Ps. cxii. 1—  
5. Prov. x. 22.  
Is. li. 2. Gal. iii.  
9. Eph. i. 3.  
c xv. 2.  
d 10. xxxix. 4—6.  
8. 9. xlix. 1.  
e 9. xlvii. 29.  
f xxi. 23. xxvi. 28  
—31. xxxi. 63.  
Ex. xx. 7. xxii.  
11. Deut. vi. 13.  
x. 20. Josh. ii.  
12. 1 Sam. xx.  
17. Jer. iv. 2.  
xii. 16.  
g xiv. 22. 2 Kings  
xix. 15. 2 Chr.  
ii. 12. Neh. ix.  
6. Ps. cxv. 15.  
Jer. x. 11.  
h vi. 2. 4. xxvi.  
34. 35. xxvii. 46.  
xxviii. 5. Ex.  
xxxiv. 16. Deut.  
vii. 3. 4. 1 Cor.  
vii. 39. 2 Cor.  
vi. 14—17.  
i xii. 1. xlii. 20—  
28. xxviii. 2.

AND Abraham was <sup>a</sup>old and <sup>a</sup>well stricken in age; and the LORD had <sup>b</sup>blessed Abraham in all things.

2 And Abraham said unto his <sup>c</sup>eldest servant of his house, that <sup>d</sup>ruled over all that he had, <sup>e</sup>Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh:

3 And I will make thee <sup>f</sup>swear by the LORD, <sup>g</sup>the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, <sup>h</sup>that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son, of the daughters of the Canaanites amongst whom I dwell:

4 But thou shalt go unto my country, and <sup>i</sup>to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

5 And the servant said unto him, <sup>k</sup>Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest?

6 And Abraham said unto him, <sup>l</sup>Be-ware thou, that thou bring not my son thither again.

7 The <sup>m</sup>LORD God of heaven, which <sup>n</sup>took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and <sup>o</sup>which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his <sup>p</sup>angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.

8 And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then shalt thou be <sup>q</sup>clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again.

9 And the servant <sup>r</sup>put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter.

greater must be our anxiety about it, and our reluctance to part with it; and the sharper the anguish when this trial takes place: and when those, who have lived together in conjugal affection for many years, are parted by death, the separation bears some resemblance to the dissolution of soul and body. Thus the entrance of sin, and the sentence of death, have filled all below with vanity and vexation.—Blessed be God, that there is a world, where sin, death, anxiety, and sorrow, gain no admission; that there are relations formed, which even death cannot part; and that sinners are invited to enter into this indissoluble union and intimate relation, with “the everlasting God,” by faith in his only begotten Son. “He that is joined to the Lord <sup>“is one spirit;”</sup> and no separation can injure, or should terrify him, who can never feel that separation from God, <sup>“which is the second death.”</sup>—Soon they whom we most love, yea, our very bodies which we often inordinately care for, will become so deformed, that they must be “buried out of sight.” How vain then, to boast of vigour and comeliness! how mean to pamper and decorate these bodies of humiliation! and how loose should we be to all earthly attachments! Let us rather seek to have our souls adorned with heavenly graces: then shall they flourish in immortal beauty; and the very body shall rise incorruptible and glorious, meet for the eternal enjoyment of God, in the blessed society of the angelick hosts.—As we, if true believers, are “strangers and sojourners” here below, are seeking a heavenly city, and shall shortly want nothing but a burying-place; let us mourn departed friends with submission and in hope, and not indulge sorrow so as to interfere with present duty, any more than other passions, which are of worse repute: for indulged grief, however plausible, is rebellion against Providence; ingratitude for remaining undeserved mercies; and a proof of the want or

weakness of faith, and of confidence in the promises and all-sufficiency of the living God.—Let us also avoid every appearance of selfishness, and not be out-done by the people of this world, in courteousness or generosity, when consistent with sincerity and a good conscience; let us manage our concerns with punctuality and precision, in order to avoid contention; and thus let us stand prepared, and waiting for the coming of our Lord.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 1. These events took place three years after Sarah's death, when Isaac was forty years of age, and Abraham a hundred and forty.—It is remarkable, that though a numerous posterity was so eminent a part of the promised blessing, no great haste was made about Isaac's marriage, and much less afterwards about that of Jacob.—“The LORD had blessed Abraham in all things,” notwithstanding his trials, and even by means of them.

V. 2—9. There can be no reasonable doubt, that Eliezer of Damascus was the servant employed on this occasion. (xv. 2.) About sixty years had elapsed, since Abraham spoke of him as “the steward of his house;” and the words, rendered “the eldest servant of his house,” or *his servant, the elder of his house*, are of similar import. He was, therefore, not only far advanced in years, but a person of singular piety and wisdom.—“Lifting up the hand to the LORD” was before mentioned, as the form of taking an oath; (*Notes*, xiv. 22—24;) but “putting the hand under the thigh” might be used to express submissive duty and fidelity.—Eliezer was required to swear, that he would diligently use his influence to prevent Isaac from marrying a wife of the Canaanites, who were then generally idolaters, and not proper persons with whom to form so intimate a connexion; (especially as the Lord

10 ¶ And the servant took ten camels, of the camels of his master, and departed, (\* for \*all the goods of his master were in his hand :) and he arose, and went to \*Mesopotamia, unto the \*city of Nahor.

11 And he made his camels to kneel down without the city, by a well of water, at the time of the evening, even the time that †women go out to draw water.

12 And he said, \*O LORD God of

my master Abraham, †I pray thee send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham.

13 Behold, I stand *here* by the well of water, and the †daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water:

14 And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also; *let the same be she* \*that thou hast appointed

y xliii. 14. Neh. i. 11. ii. 4. Pa. xxxvii. 5. xc. 16, 17. cxviii. 25. Prov. iii. 6. Phil. iv. 6. 1 Thes. iii. 10, 11.

z 11. xxix. 9, 10.

a 44. Prov. xix. 14.

had shewn Abraham, that they were filling up their measure of iniquity, and were doomed to destruction;) but that he would endeavour to procure him one of Abraham's kindred, among whom the worship of God was still, in some measure, maintained.—‘There does not appear in ‘all this concern the least taint of worldly policy, or any ‘of those motives which usually govern men in the settlement of their children. No mention is made of riches, ‘or honours, or natural accomplishments; but merely of ‘what related to God.’ Fuller.—Before, however, Eliezer thus engaged, he enquired whether, if the proper person, when found, should not consent to leave home, and become a stranger in Canaan, Isaac ought to go and live in Mesopotamia. But the sojourning of the patriarchs in Canaan represented the state of believers in this world; and Isaac's returning and settling in that country, from which Abraham at God's command had come, would have been an emblem of apostasy in a professed worshipper of God. Abraham, therefore, declared his assurance, grounded on the former mercies of the Lord, and on his promises, and his covenant confirmed by an oath, that “he would “send his angel before him” to prosper his way. And this assurance, with the express stipulation, that the oath should not otherwise be binding, fully satisfied this faithful and conscientious servant.—We may here make some remarks about good angels, as we formerly did about fallen angels. (Note, Gen. iii. 1.) It appears then from Scripture, that the holy angels were created by God, complete in derived and dependent excellence; that they are very numerous, and of different orders, “angels, principalities, “and powers;” that they are now confirmed in holiness, and felicity; that they excel in wisdom, knowledge, and strength; and that they are as a flame of fire, with fervent love, gratitude, and active zeal; and yet proportionably influenced by deep humility, and reverential awe of God. They are represented as standing in his presence, waiting his commands; covering their faces with their wings, or prostrate in profound adoration; hearkening to his voice, doing his will, and fulfilling his pleasure. (Notes, Ps. lxviii. 17. ciii. 20—22. Is. vi. 1—4. Rev. v. 11—14.) They are, on this account, called *angels*, or *messengers*: for though he “puts no trust in them,” and even, in comparison with his own infinite wisdom, “charges them with folly;” yet he is pleased, to honour, and, (if we may so speak,) to indulge them with his commands, which they execute with unwearied alacrity: and when he appoints and approves, the meanest or the most important services are alike delightful to them. These blessed beings are the mi-

nisters of his providence, and are often introduced as executing his awful vengeance; but more generally they are considered as “sent forth to minister to them who “shall be heirs of salvation.” (Notes, 2 Kings xix. 35. Heb. i. 13, 14.) There is not a bright seraph through all the heavenly train, who would not delight and glory in attending a poor despised Lazarus, in a hospital or a dungeon, to ward off the machinations of evil spirits, to procure a calm to his dying moments, and to hail his departing soul to the mansions of the blessed: for they are all free from pride and envy, all full of love to the Redeemer and redeemed, and all rejoice, even over one sinner brought to true repentance. Our obligations to them are great: but all the adoration and praise belong to Him who works by them; for they are our fellow-servants, and have no claim to our worship, but abhor it as sacrilege and idolatry. (Note, Rev. xix. 9, 10.) We may, however, feel a love for them, and rejoice in the thought of being with them, and like them for ever: and we may well endeavour to copy the example of their humble zeal, their fervent love, their solemn worship and cheerful services; and, in our conduct to each other, take pattern from them, by condescending to the meanest, and the vilest, without envying, disdain, or overlooking one another. For the lowest and worst of human creatures is not so mean and vile, compared with the greatest and the best of men; as the greatest and best of men is mean and vile, compared even with a created angel.

V. 10. It is evident that these ten camels carried every thing requisite for the journey, and suited to the occasion; and that Eliezer was accompanied by other servants. (30—32. 59.)—The word rendered *Mesopotamia*, is literally *Aram of the two rivers*; that is, Aram, or Syria, which lies between the Euphrates and the Tigris. Nahor did not dwell at Ur of the Chaldees, but at Haran. (xi. 31. xxix. 4.)

V. 11—14. ‘That which is done for life, and which ‘may involve things of another life, requires to be done ‘well; and nothing can be done well, in which the will ‘of God is not consulted, and his blessing implored.’ Fuller. Great humility and caution are requisite, in imitating such examples as this of Abraham's servant: yet we must not limit God by our rules; and he may still at some times so impress the minds of his servants in perplexity, as to lead them to expect extraordinary interpositions, and then evidently to answer these expectations. We should not, therefore, hastily condemn every thing of this kind; provided it neither countenances unscriptural opinions or practices; nor takes men off from attending

b xv. 8. Ex. iv. 1 for thy servant Isaac; <sup>b</sup> and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master.

15 ¶ And it came to pass <sup>c</sup> before he had done speaking, that behold, <sup>d</sup> Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of <sup>e</sup> Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her <sup>f</sup> pitcher upon her shoulder.

<sup>g</sup> 16 And the damsel *was* very <sup>h</sup> fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her; and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher and came up.

17 And the servant ran to meet her, and said, <sup>i</sup> Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher.

18 And she said, <sup>j</sup> Drink, my lord: and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink.

19 And when she had done giving him drink, <sup>k</sup> she said, I will draw *water* for thy camels also, until they have done drinking.

20 And she hasted, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw *water*, and drew for all his camels.

21 And the man <sup>l</sup> wondering at her held his peace, to wit whether the LORD had made his journey prosperous, or not.

22 And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man <sup>m</sup> took a golden <sup>n</sup> ear-ring, <sup>o</sup> of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands, of ten *shekels* weight of gold;

23 And said, Whose daughter *art* thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room *in* thy father's house for us to lodge in?

24 And she said unto him, <sup>p</sup> I *am* the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Milcah, which she bare unto Nahor.

25 She said moreover unto him,

<sup>q</sup> We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in.

26 And the man <sup>r</sup> bowed down his head, and worshipped the LORD.

27 And he said, <sup>s</sup> Blessed *be* the LORD God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master <sup>t</sup> of his mercy and his truth: <sup>u</sup> I *being* in the way, <sup>v</sup> the LORD led me to the house of <sup>w</sup> my master's brethren.

28 And the damsel ran, and told *them* <sup>x</sup> of her mother's house of these things.

29 And Rebekah had <sup>y</sup> a brother, and his name *was* Laban: and Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well.

30 And it came to pass when he saw the ear-ring, and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man, and behold, he stood by the camels at the well.

31 And he said, Come in, <sup>z</sup> thou blessed of the LORD: wherefore standest thou without? <sup>aa</sup> for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels.

32 And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to <sup>ab</sup> wash his feet, and the men's feet that *were* with him.

33 And there was set *meat* before him to eat: but he said, <sup>ac</sup> I will not eat, until I have told my errand. And he said, Speak on.

34 And he said, I *am* Abraham's servant.

35 And <sup>ad</sup> the LORD hath blessed my master greatly, and he is become great: and he hath given him <sup>ae</sup> flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and camels, and asses.

36 And <sup>af</sup> Sarah my master's wife bare

xviii. 4—8. Judg. xix. 19—21. 12. xxix. 8. 1 Pet. iv. 9. 48. 52. Ex. iv. 31. xxxix. 8. Neh. viii. 6. Ps. xcv. 6. 12. Ex. xviii. 10. Ruth iv. 14. 1 Sam. xxv. 32. 2 Sam. xviii. 28. Luke i. 68. r xxvii. 10. Ps. xxviii. 8. c 5. Mic. vii. 20. John i. 17. s Prov. iii. 6. 19. 11—13. viii. 20. t 4. xiii. 8. Ex. ii. 11.

u 55. 56. 60. xxix. 8.

y xxvi. 29. Judg. xvii. 2. Ruth iii. 10. Ps. cxv. 15. Prov. xvii. 8. xviii. 16. xix. 6. z 25.

aa xviii. 4. xliii. 24. Judg. xix. 21. 1 Sam. xxv. 41. Luke vii. 44. John xiii. 4—14.

ab Job xxiii. 12. Ps. cxviii. 3—5. John iv. 31—34. 1 Tim. vi. 2.

ac 1. xxi. 2. xxv. 14. xxvi. 12. xlix. 25. Prov. x. 22.

ad xii. 16. xiii. 2. xxvi. 13, 14. Job i. 3. xlii. 12. Ps. cvii. 38. Matt. vi. 33.

ae xi. 29, 30. xvii. 15—19. xviii. 11—13.

to the ordinary means of instruction; nor is substituted as the foundation of hope, instead of the promises of God, and the work of his Spirit upon the heart.—It is observable that Abraham's servant had in mind, in this address, the *idea* of a wife for Isaac, as one who united in her character, simplicity, industry, humility, affability, and cheerfulness in being serviceable and hospitable.

V. 21. Abraham's servant had attendants, who might have spared Rebekah; and the labour of drawing water for ten camels must have been great: but he would not

interpose, that he might observe her conduct, and wait the answer to his prayer.

V. 22. About six ounces of gold, in all.

V. 28. 'It was her *mother's* house, not her *father's*.'—The whole narrative implies, that Bethuel, Rebekah's father, was dead; and that Bethuel, afterwards mentioned, was Laban's younger brother. (50. 53.)

V. 33—36. Abraham had received intelligence concerning the family of Nahor, and we may suppose they had also heard of him; but now the report was authen-

a son to my master when she was old: and 'unto him hath he given all that he hath.

g 2-9.

37 And <sup>e</sup>my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell;

38 But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son.

39 And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me.

40 And he said unto me, The LORD, <sup>h</sup>before whom I walk, 'will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way: and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house.

41 Then thou shalt be clear from *this* my oath, when thou comest to my kindred; and if they give not thee *one*, thou shalt be clear from my oath.

42 And I came this day unto the well, and said, <sup>k</sup>O LORD God of my master Abraham, if now thou do 'prosper my way which I go;

43 Behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin cometh forth to draw *water*, and I say to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher to drink;

m Heb. xiii. 2.

44 And she say unto me, <sup>n</sup>Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels: *let* the same *be* <sup>n</sup>the woman whom the LORD hath appointed out for my master's son.

n 14. ii. 22. Prov. xvi. 33. xlviii. 22. xix. 14.

45 And <sup>o</sup>before I had done <sup>p</sup>speaking in mine heart, behold Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder; and she went down unto the well, and drew *water*: and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee.

o 15-20. Is. lxxv. 24. Dan. ix. 19. 23. Acts iv. 24-33. x. 30. xii. 12-17. p 1 Sam. i. 13-16. Neh. ii. 4. Rom. viii. 26.

46 And she made haste, and let down

her pitcher from her *shoulder*, and said, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: so I drank, and she made the camels drink also.

47 And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter *art* thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and <sup>q</sup>I put the ear-ring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands.

q 22. 53. Pa. xlv. 9. 13. 14. Is. lxii. 3-5. Ez. xvi. 16-18. Eph. v. 26. 27.

48 And <sup>r</sup>I bowed down my head, and worshipped the LORD, and blessed the LORD God of my master Abraham, which had <sup>r</sup>led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son.

r 26. 27. 52.

49 And now <sup>s</sup>if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me: and if not, tell me: <sup>s</sup>that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left.

s 27. Ex. xviii. 20. Pa. xxxii. 8. xlviii. 14. cvii. 7. Prov. iii. 6. iv. 11. Is. xlviii. 17.

50 Then <sup>t</sup>Laban and Bethuel answered and said, <sup>t</sup>The thing proceedeth from the LORD: <sup>t</sup>we cannot speak unto thee bad or good.

t Num. xx. 17. Deut. ii. 27.

51 Behold, Rebekah *is* before thee, take *her*, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken.

x 15. 28. 55. 60.

52 And it came to pass, that when Abraham's servant heard these words, he <sup>u</sup>worshipped the LORD, *bowing himself* to the earth.

u Pa. cxviii. 23.

53 ¶ And the servant brought forth <sup>v</sup>jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment, and gave *them* to Rebekah: He gave also to her brother and to her mother <sup>v</sup>precious things.

v xxxi. 24. 29. 2 Sam. xiii. 22.

54 And they did eat and drink, he and the men that *were* with him, and tarried all night: and they rose up in the morning, and he said, <sup>w</sup>Send me away unto my master.

w 26. 48. 1 Chr. xxix. 20. 2 Chr. xx. 16. Pa. xcvi. 6. cvii. 21. 22. cvii. 1. 2. Matt. ii. 11. Acts x. 25. 26. Heb. vessels Ex. iii. 22. xi. 2. xii. 35.

55 And her brother and her mother

x Dent. xxxiii. 13-16. 2 Chr. xxxi. 8. Ezra i. 6. Is. xxxix. 2.

y 56. xxviii. 5. 6. xiv. 24. 2 Sara. xviii. 19. 27. 28. Luke viii. 88. 89.

ticated, and the particulars ascertained. The narration is beautifully simple; well suited to recommend Isaac, and to promote the object of the journey.—The servant's heart was so deeply engaged in the business, that he could not eat till he had declared it. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 44. *Appointed.*] Those events, which appear to us the effect of *choice*, *contrivance*, or *chance*, are matters of *appointment* with God: and the persuasion of this does not prevent, but rather encourage, the use of all *proper means*; at the same time that it *confines* us to *proper means*, and delivers the mind from useless anxiety about consequences.

V. 45. Some things form more proper subjects for secret than for social prayer: Abraham's servant therefore used mental prayer, and was silent, till the singularity of the answer required that it should be communicated.

V. 50. The whole concern was so evidently according to the appointment, and under the direction, of the Lord, that there was no room for hesitation or objection.

V. 53. *Her brother and mother.*] No mention is made of her father.

V. 55, 56. This good and faithful servant's desire of communicating the agreeable intelligence at home, no doubt induced him to hasten his departure as much as he

\* Or, a full year, or ten months. *Lev. xxv. 29.* said, Let the damsel abide with us \* a few days, at the least ten; after that she shall go.

d xlv 9—13. *Prov. xxv. 25.* 56 And he said unto them, <sup>d</sup> Hinder me not, seeing the LORD hath prospered my way: send me away, that I may go to my master.

57 And they said, We will call the damsel, and enquire at her mouth.

e Ps. xlv. 10, 11. *Luke i. 38.* 58 And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, <sup>e</sup> Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.

f 50. 53. 60. *g xxxv. 8.* 59 And they sent away Rebekah <sup>f</sup> their sister, and her <sup>g</sup> nurse, and Abraham's servant and his men.

h i. 28. ix. 1. xiv. 19. xvii. 16. xxviii. 3. x'viii. 15, 16, 20. *Ruth iv. 11, 12.* 60 And <sup>h</sup> they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou *art* our sister, be thou *the mother* of thousands of millions, and let <sup>i</sup> thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.

i See on xxii. 17. k xxxii. 34. i Sam. xxx. 17. *Ezth. viii. 10, 14.* 61 And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and <sup>k</sup> they rode upon the camels, and followed the man: and the ser-

vant took Rebekah, and went his way.

62 ¶ And Isaac came from the way of the well <sup>l</sup> Lahai-roi; for he dwelt in the south-country. *l xvi. 14. xxv. 11.*

63 And Isaac went out <sup>m</sup> to <sup>n</sup> meditate in the field at the even-tide: and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels *were* coming. *† Or, to pray. m Josh. i. 8. Ps. i. 2. lxxviii. 11, 12. civ. 34. cxix. 15. cxxxix. 17, 18. cxliiii. 4, 6.*

64 And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she <sup>n</sup> lighted off the camel. *n Josh. xv. 18. Judg. i. 14.*

65 For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant had said, It is my master: therefore she took a <sup>o</sup> veil and covered herself. *o xxx. 16. i Cor. xi. 6, 10. p Mark vi. 30.*

66 And <sup>p</sup> the servant told Isaac all things that he had done.

67 And Isaac brought her into <sup>q</sup> his mother Sarah's tent, <sup>r</sup> and took Rebekah, and she became his wife: and he loved her: and Isaac was <sup>s</sup> comforted after his mother's *death*. *q xviii. 6, 9, 10. r ii. 22—24. 2 Cor. xi. 1, 2. Eph. v. 22—33. s xxxviii. 85. xxxviii. 12. i Thes. iv. 18.*

could with propriety: yet the transaction may admit of a useful accommodation. (P. O. 33—67.)

V. 58. *I will go.*] The excellence of Rebekah's character forbids us to think, that there could be any thing in her answer inconsistent with true delicacy; though it does not accord to the modern standard, which is frequently subversive of sincerity. No doubt she saw with peculiar clearness, that the whole was the appointment of God; and she would not so much as seem to slight the honour and happiness of being a progenitor of the promised Seed; but, like his immediate parent, she answered, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." *Luke i. 38.*

V. 59, 60. *Their sister . . . our sister.*] Bethuel, as well as Laban, must have been her brother.—*Nurse.*] Note, xxxv. 8.

V. 63. *To meditate.*] To reflect on the works and truths of God, and pour out his heart in prayer and praise.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

##### V. 1—9.

The effect of good example and instructions, and the reverential worship of God, in publick ordinances and in private families, will generally appear in the piety, faithfulness, prudence, and affection of the domesticks: to live in pious families, or to be favoured with pious servants, is a blessing highly to be valued, and thankfully to be acknowledged.—No concern in life is of more importance to ourselves, to others, and to the church, and even to posterity, than contracting marriage; which therefore ought always to be undertaken with much circumspection and prudence, with an eye to the will and appointment of God, and with prayer for his direction and blessing.—It is an important part of a parent's duty, to direct, counsel, and assist his children in this particular, with great tenderness

and affection: and those young persons are highly favoured, who have parents that will, in a proper manner, and with suitable consideration, perform this duty; and they are wise who avail themselves of these advantages. But where such parents are not consulted and regarded, the blessing of God cannot be expected; nor when godliness is not regarded as the primary requisite in a companion for life.—They, who stay their minds on God, will be kept in peace, and enabled to disregard the *peradventures* which trouble others: they wait to know his appointment, are prepared to be satisfied with it, and assured that in due time it will take place, and correspond with his promises; and they only aim to know and to do their duty, and use the proper means. But, in binding ourselves by an oath, we should take great care that, through inattention, we do not ensnare our souls.

##### V. 10—32.

They, who acknowledge God in all their ways, will find him present to direct their paths, and make their way prosperous: and, when the prayer of faith meets with an immediate answer, the glory ought as speedily to be rendered to God in solemn praise and thanksgivings.—How are the times changed, since the chief persons, and their sons and daughters, cheerfully performed the most laborious services with their own hands! It is to be feared we have got but a poor exchange, in our excessive refinements, for the simplicity, diligence, and usefulness, which characterized the patriarchs. And surely common sense must allow, that these are the most valuable endowments in one, who is to fill up the important duties of a wife and a mother; to be the companion of a wise and pious man's retired hours; and to be entrusted with the management of his domestick concerns, and with forming the tender minds of his children!

## CHAP. XXV.

Abraham marries Keturah, 1 : his sons by her, 2—4. He gives his substance to Isaac ; and sends them away with gifts, 5, 6. His age, death, and burial, 7—10. God blesses Isaac, 11. The posterity, age, and death of Ishmael, 12—18. Isaac prays for Rebekah, who was barren ; and is heard, 19—21. Circumstances preceding and attending the birth of Esau and Jacob, 22—26. Their different characters and pursuits, 27, 28. Esau sells his birth-right to Jacob, 29—34

a xxiii. 1, 2. 1 Chr. i. 32, 33

**T**HEN <sup>a</sup>again Abraham took a wife, and her name *was* Keturah.

2 And she bare him Zimran, and

Jokshan, and Medan, and <sup>b</sup>Midian, and Ishbak, and <sup>c</sup>Shuah.

3 And Jokshan begat <sup>d</sup>Sheba and <sup>e</sup>Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were <sup>f</sup>Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leumim.

4 And the sons of Midian ; <sup>g</sup>Ephah, and Ephher, and Hanoah, and Abidah, and Eldaah. All these *were* the children of Keturah.

5 And Abraham <sup>h</sup>gave all that he had unto Isaac.

6 But unto the sons of the <sup>i</sup>concubines, which Abraham had, Abraham

b xxxvi. 35. xxxviii. 28. 36. Ec. ii. 15. 16. xviii. 1—4. Num. xxii. 4. xxv. 17, 18. xxxi. 2. 8. Judg. vii. viii. Job ii. 11. c 1 Kings x. 1. Job vi. 19. Ps. lxxii. 10. d Jer. xxv. 23. xlix. 8. Ez. xxxv. 13. xxxvii. 20. e Ez. xxxvii. 6. f Is. lx. 6. g h xxi. 10—12. xxiv. 36. Matt xi. 27. xxviii. 18. John iii. 35. Rom. viii. 17. 32. ix. 7—9. 1 Cor. iii. 21—23. Gal. iii. 29. iv. 28. Heb. i. 2. i 1. xvi. 8. xxx. 4. 9. xxxii. 22. xxxix. 22. Judg. xix. 1. 2. 4.

## V. 33—67.

Whatever business we are entrusted with, we should, like this pious servant, attend to it in preference to our own indulgence or refreshment : and when our purpose is honourable, and we are waiting to know the Lord's appointment, a plain recital of facts, in which the hand of God appears evident, is more becoming, and frequently more effectual, than all the trappings of oratory, which too often disguise the real truth.—The remarkable private experience, which we have of God's mercy and faithfulness, ought to be declared among those who fear God, for his glory and their encouragement.—Though the counsel and consent of parents should be obtained ; yet, before marriage is solemnized, the mutual and cheerful compliance of the contracting parties is also requisite, being essential to the comfort and happiness of that honourable state : and when matters are thus begun, and completed in faith, and with the prayer of all parties, the blessing of God on them and their posterity may reasonably be expected ; while the comfort of one relation will compensate for the loss of another.—But, will not the most sober judgment allow, that in this transaction we have a type of Christ and his church ? We know who is the Bridegroom, that in perfect harmony with his heavenly Father, having offered himself as a sacrifice for sin, espouses his church unto himself, by the ministration of his servants, the preachers of the gospel ; who, with his commission, go to find out those who are afar off, " that they may present " them as a chaste virgin unto Christ." They represent to sinners his glory, his excellency, his suitableness and loving-kindness ; their own experience of his grace, and his unsearchable riches, to induce their willingness : and by these representations, the drawings of his Spirit, and some foretastes of his goodness, they are prevailed on to consent to their own happiness, and made willing to forsake their own country, and to renounce all for him. (Note, John xvi. 14, 15.) Then he adorns them with the robe of his righteousness, and the graces of his Spirit ; endows them with all his riches ; ennobles them by their relation to him, and makes them happy in his love, and their fellowship with him. They are now supremely attached to his person and interest, and faithful to their engagements to him ; they give him their heart, and devote body and soul to his service, in sincerity and simplicity. He greatly delights in the beauty which he hath put upon them : being thus

united to him, they bring forth fruit unto God ; and at length he will wash away every spot and blemish, and present them, (adorned as a bride for her husband,) faultless before his presence with exceeding joy.—In this view, how punctual, laborious, faithful, self-denying, disinterested, fervent in prayer, watchful of providence, jealous for Christ, and affectionately desirous of souls, ought all to be, who sustain the sacred ministerial character ! The good Lord send forth many such labourers and stewards, and make them wise to win souls !

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXV. V. 1—4. Abraham was a hundred and thirty-seven years of age when Sarah died ; and, nearly forty years before that event, his age had rendered it very improbable he should have children : yet he had six sons by Keturah, whom he sent away in his life-time : and on these grounds it has been conjectured that he had married this wife long before.—But the language of the original text, " And Abraham added, and took a wife," as well as the unnatural disturbance, which this supposition occasions in the simple narration, militates against the opinion. The Lord had promised him an innumerable posterity, and the long delay both served to try his faith, and to illustrate the divine power and faithfulness ; when at length, beyond all probability, the promise was so remarkably fulfilled. And, as Abraham lived thirty-eight years after Sarah's death, all these children might be grown up, and much older than Ishmael was when he was sent away, and might be settled in the world before his death.—They were afterwards intimately connected with the Ishmaelites ; and many great nations at this very day claim Abraham for their progenitor, by some of these branches.—Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, was descended from Midian : and Job and some of his friends, either from others of Keturah's sons, or from Ishmael, or from Esau. (Marg. Ref. Note, Job ii. 11.)

V. 5, 6. Abraham gave the bulk of his substance to Isaac, as his legitimate heir, his only son by Sarah the free woman, according to the promise. Isaac typified the Son of God, " whom he hath appointed Heir of all things ;" and also represented believers, to whom with Christ the Father giveth all things.—The word *concubine* is used, not only for one who cohabited with a man that had another wife, as Hagar ; but also for one who was a lawful wife,

<sup>b</sup> Ps. xvii. 14, 15. gave <sup>a</sup> gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, (while he yet lived,) eastward, unto the <sup>1</sup> east-country.

<sup>1</sup> Judg. vi. 3. Job 3.  
7 ¶ And these *are* the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years.

<sup>17</sup> xxxv. 18. 8 Then Abraham <sup>m</sup> gave up the ghost, and died in a <sup>a</sup> good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was <sup>o</sup> gathered to his people.

<sup>7</sup> xlix. 33. Acts v. 5, 10. xii. 23. 9 And his sons, <sup>p</sup> Isaac and Ishmael, buried him <sup>a</sup> in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre;

<sup>17</sup> xlii. 36. 10 The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.

<sup>2</sup> xxi. 9, 10. xxxv. 29. 11 And it came to pass <sup>r</sup> after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac: and Isaac dwelt by the well <sup>1</sup> Lahai-roi.

<sup>17</sup> xlii. 36. 12 ¶ Now <sup>r</sup> these *are* the generations of Ishmael Abraham's son, whom Hagar, the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham.

<sup>1</sup> Chr. i. 29—31. v. 19, 20. 13 And these <sup>a</sup> are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations: The first-born of Ishmael, <sup>a</sup> Nebajoth; and <sup>r</sup> Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam.

though not admitted to the full privilege of that relation, in respect of rank and possessions, as Keturah. Ishmael was one of the sons here mentioned; and we may hence infer, that he was not sent away destitute, or finally deserted by Abraham.

V. 7, 8. The sacred historian here concludes the history of Abraham, to prevent the subsequent interruption of his narrative; for Esau and Jacob were born fifteen years before the death of Abraham.—The word, rendered “Gave up the ghost,” means no more than *expired*, or *ceased to breathe*. A Greek word of similar import is used concerning Ananias and Sapphira: but the words of one Evangelist concerning our Lord signify, that “he yielded up his spirit.” (*Matt.* xxvii. 50.)—The words, *of years*, are not in the original; and the term employed seems to denote, that Abraham was satisfied with living in this world, and ripe for a better.—The expression, “gathered to his people,” decides nothing concerning the eternal state of the persons spoken of, being used without any exact discrimination of characters. (*Marg. Ref.* o.)

V. 9, 10. It is probable, that Isaac and Ishmael maintained a degree of friendly intercourse with each other; and that Ishmael was satisfied the inheritance belonged to Isaac, as the son of Sarah, and that his father had acted properly in leaving it to him.

V. 11. God blessed Isaac with that special blessing, which had been engaged to his believing father.

14 And Mishma, and <sup>a</sup> Dumah, and <sup>z</sup> Is. xxi. 1. Massah,

15 <sup>a</sup> Hadar, and <sup>a</sup> Tema, Jetur, Na-<sup>a</sup> Or. *Hadar*. phish, and Kedemah. <sup>1</sup> Chr. i. 30. <sup>a</sup> Job ii. 11, vi. 19.

16 These *are* the sons of Ishmael, and these *are* their names, by their towns, and by their castles; <sup>b</sup> twelve princes according to their nations.

17 And <sup>a</sup> these *are* the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people.

18 And they dwelt from <sup>d</sup> Havilah unto Shur, that is before Egypt, <sup>a</sup> as thou goest <sup>r</sup> towards Assyria: and he <sup>r</sup> died <sup>r</sup> in the presence of all his brethren.

19 ¶ And these *are* the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: <sup>a</sup> Abraham begat Isaac.

20 And Isaac was forty years old <sup>r</sup> when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel <sup>a</sup> the Syrian of Padan-aram, the sister to Laban the Syrian.

21 And Isaac <sup>r</sup> intreated the LORD for his wife, <sup>a</sup> because she *was* barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, <sup>a</sup> and Rebekah his wife conceived.

22 And the children struggled to-

V. 16. The Ishmaelites were settled in towns and castles, when Moses wrote this history; and probably had been so a long time before the descendants of Isaac were delivered out of Egypt.

V. 18. The Ishmaelites inhabited the country to the east and south of Judea, from the entrance into Egypt almost to the river Euphrates: perhaps the direct road, from Egypt to Assyria, lay through their country. Thus Ishmael's lot fell among his brethren, Abraham's sons by Keturah, who probably survived him; and he died surrounded by them and their descendants.

V. 20, 21. The faith of Isaac was tried by the barrenness of Rebekah during twenty years, as that of Abraham and Sarah had been for a much longer time; but Isaac, depending on the promise of an innumerable posterity, ceased not to intreat the Lord to remove this hindrance to its fulfilment; and at length his prayer was answered.

V. 22, 23. The extraordinary sensations, experienced by Rebekah, convinced her that there was something supernatural in her case.—She therefore said, “If so, why is it thus with me?” “This must be enquired into.” Abraham was yet living, and was a prophet; and probably he directed her in enquiring of the Lord; but the particular method used on this occasion is not recorded. She however received for answer, that two nations, and two manner of people, were in her womb; namely, the Israelites, and the Edomites or Idumeans, being then in their com-

gether within her: and she said, If it be so, why *am* I thus? And she went to enquire of the Lord.

23 And the Lord said unto her, Two nations *are* in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels: and the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder shall serve the younger.

24 And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, *there were* twins in her womb.

25 And the first came out red, *all* over like an hairy garment: and they called his name Esau.

26 And *after* that came his brother out, and his hand *took hold* on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac *was* three-score years old when she bare them.

27 And the boys grew: and Esau was *a* cunning hunter, a man of the

field; and Jacob *was* *a* plain man, dwelling in tents.

28 And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of *his* venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.

29 ¶ And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, *and he was* faint.

30 And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, *with that same red pottage*; for I *am* faint: therefore was his name called *Edom*.

31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birth-right.

32 And Esau said, Behold, I *am* *at* the point to die: *and what* profit shall this birth-right do to me?

33 And Jacob said, *Swear* to me this day: and he sware unto him: *and he* sold his birth-right unto Jacob.

34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles: and he did *eat* and drink, and rose up, and went his way: *thus* Esau despised *his* birth-right.

Adam. (Note, v. 1, 2.) This name was given Esau, because he so eagerly desired the red pottage of Jacob.

V. 31—34. As it does not appear, that Jacob inherited a double portion of Isaac's substance, it is probable this was not meant by the birth-right. But it included the special blessings covenanted to Abraham and his posterity; not only in respect of the land of Canaan, but also in respect of the Messiah, who would arise from among them, and all the religious advantages connected with this distinction. These blessings, Jacob as a believer supremely valued; but unbelieving Esau despised them.—It cannot be conceived, that Esau was literally dying of hunger, nor would the transaction have been so severely condemned had this been so. He had indeed come in from hunting, in the field, where he had continued till he was faint for want of refreshment: but doubtless, other food might have been procured in Isaac's family, had he not inordinately craved Jacob's pottage, which he probably saw as soon as he entered the house, and determined at any rate to obtain. The words signify, 'I am going towards death;' and he seems to have meant, 'I shall never live to inherit Canaan, or any of these future supposed blessings; and what signifies it who has them when I am dead?' This was the language of profaneness, for which the Apostle condemns him; and it implied, a great contempt of the birth-right, which the historian notes with decided censure. (Note, Heb. xii. 15—17.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—18.

By repeated examples the Lord teaches us, that he tries the faith of his people by long delays; but at length vastly exceeds their expectations, by fulfilling to them his largest promises.—"The vision is for an appointed time, but at

M

mon parents, Jacob and Esau. They were men of very opposite dispositions, and their descendants were as dissimilar; they personally struggled hard for the pre-eminence, and so did their posterity during many ages. In the days of David, the descendants of Esau, the elder brother, were generally subject to those of Jacob the younger; and much more entirely in the latter times of the Jewish state.—These struggles may be considered as an emblem of the conflict between the world and the true church of God, the seed of the serpent and the Seed of the woman; in which the church, which is the younger, after many struggles, will gain a final mastery. (Note, iii. 14, 15.)—The conflict, between "that which is born of the flesh," and "that which is born of the Spirit," in the true believer, is of the same nature, and will have a similar event. (Notes, John iii. 7, 8; Gal. v. 16—18.)

V. 25, 26. Esau signifies *made*, or *formed*.—He was *as full of hairs* when he was born, as others are at man's *estate*. Bp. Patrick. Jacob, even at his birth, seemed to struggle for the primogeniture, which was an indication of his subsequent conduct. His name was given him with evident allusion to this circumstance; and signifies *a supplanter*, or one who throws down another, by taking hold of his heel.

V. 27. Esau hunted the beasts of the forest with dexterity and address; till probably, like Nimrod, he became a warrior and conqueror: accordingly, when he met his brother, he had with him four hundred men. But Jacob was a plain man dwelling in tents; an industrious, honest, pious character: "a stranger and pilgrim" in his spirit, and a shepherd all his days.

V. 28. (Notes, xxvii.)—*Venison*.] That which is taken in hunting. (Θῆρα. Sept.)

V. 30. Edom signifies *red*, and is nearly the same as

## CHAP. XXVI.

Isaac, because of a famine, sojourns in Gerar; and the Lord instructs and blesses him, 1—5. He denies his wife, and is detected and reproved, 6—11. The Philistines envy his prosperity; he removes from them, and they fill up, or take from him, the wells which his father and he had dug, 12—17. He digs several other wells, 18—22. The Lord blesses him at Beer-sheba, 23—25. Abimelech covenants with him, 26—33. Esau marries two Canaanitish wives, to the grief of his parents, 34, 35.

**AND** there was a famine in the land, besides <sup>a</sup>the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. <sup>b</sup>And Isaac went unto <sup>c</sup>Abimelech king of the Philistines, unto Gerar.

<sup>d</sup>2 And the LORD <sup>e</sup>appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt;

<sup>e</sup>dwelt in the land which I shall tell thee of. e xii. 1. Pa. xxvii. 8.

3 <sup>f</sup>Sojourn in this land, and <sup>g</sup>I will be with thee, and will bless thee: for <sup>h</sup>unto thee and unto thy seed I will give all these countries, and will perform the <sup>i</sup>oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father. f xii. 1. Pa. xxxix. 12. Heb. xi. 9. 13—16. g xxviii. 15. xxxix. 2. 21. Phil. iv. 3. h xii. 7. xiii. 15. 17. xv. 18. xvii. 8. i xxii. 16. 18. Ps. cv. 9. Heb. vi. 17.

4 And I will make thy seed to <sup>k</sup>multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries: and in thy <sup>l</sup>Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed: k xiii. 16. xv. 5. xxii. 17. Heb. xi. 12. l xii. 3. xxii. 19. Pa. lxxii. 17. Acts iii. 25. Gal. iii. 8. 16.

5 Because that Abraham <sup>m</sup>obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws. m xii. 4. xvii. 23. xviii. 19. xxii. 18. Pa. cxi. 1. 2. Matt. v. 19. vii. 24. Gal. v. 6. Heb. xi. 8. Jam. ii. 22.

6 ¶ And Isaac dwelt in Gerar.

“the end it shall speak and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.”

*Hab. ii. 3.*—A great part of this history relates to those who go off, and those who appear on, the stage of life; and it is of little consequence, whether our continuance on this grand theatre be short or long, provided we act in such a manner, as to quit the world with comfort to ourselves, with benefit to others, and with the approbation of our gracious God. Only let us be anxious to leave behind us a testimony from our lips to the faithfulness and goodness of the Lord, and in the consciences of others, to the uprightness and consistency of our walk before him; and the blessing of God to our families. Having then lived to every good purpose, and being ripe for the world above, we may cheerfully resign our souls into the hands of our Redeemer, expecting to join “the spirits of just men made perfect;” and leave our bodies to the silent tomb, in joyful hope of a happy resurrection. But God forbid, that the writer or any of the readers of these observations, should rest contented with earthly blessings, which the Lord bestows on the men of this world; or should come short of those special and eternal blessings, which belong to the children of the promise! Though the former seem to have the pre-eminence here, yet the latter will have their portion, when that of the former is spent and gone for ever.

## V. 19—34.

They who are stirred up, by the delays of promised and expected blessings, to “pray always and not faint,” will surely succeed; for “every one that asketh receiveth,” though perhaps not immediately.—In all our doubts and perplexities, we should enquire of the Lord by prayer, attendance on his ordinances, and attention to his word: and in many of our conflicts and struggles with sin and temptations, we may adopt Rebekah’s words: “If it be so, why am I thus?” “If a child of God, why so careless or carnal? If not a child of God, why so afraid of sin or burdened with it?”—In the best of characters we perceive infirmities, and in the best of parents sinful partialities; but surely those children are entitled to our superior regard, who are evidently beloved of the Lord!—Men, who

are slaves to their appetites, and who inordinately crave earthly things, and despise spiritual blessings, will, however sagacious in other respects, find themselves infinitely excelled in wisdom by those, who “choose that good part which shall never be taken from them.” But, while we should be of Jacob’s judgment in preferring the birth-right, we ought carefully to avoid all approaches to imposition, in seeking to obtain the most important advantages; and even the appearance of being a *supplanter*, should be shunned with scrupulous vigilance.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXVI. V. 1. Abraham sojourned in Gerar just before the birth of Isaac, and soon after entered into a treaty with Abimelech; and Isaac was sixty years of age when his sons were born, and a hundred when Esau married. (34.) Esau and Jacob are spoken of in the close of the former chapter, as grown up. The transaction, therefore, recorded in this chapter, must have been at least ninety years after the former covenant.—It is probable that Abimelech, (which signifies ‘my father the king,’) was the common name of the kings of the Philistines; and that this Abimelech was a successor to him with whom Abraham covenanted. (Note, Ps. xxxiv. title.)

V. 2—5. Abraham had gone down into Egypt during a famine, and we may suppose that Isaac was purposing to do the same; but God commanded him to dwell in some part of the land of Canaan, according to such intimations as should from time to time be given him. For the present he was directed to sojourn in the country of the Philistines: and the Lord promised to be with him, to supply his wants, and to protect and comfort him; and he renewed the promises, which had been repeatedly ratified to Abraham. God thus testified his approbation of Abraham’s remarkable obedience, for the honour of his own name, and the encouragement of Isaac, and of others in every age and nation. This obedience likewise conduced to the fulfilment of the promises. It was the evidence of that faith, by which Abraham was justified; and, in consequence of his prompt obedience, the covenant respecting his seed was confirmed to him by an oath.—The several expressions

7 And the men of the place asked <sup>a</sup> him of his wife; and he said, <sup>a</sup> She is my sister: for he feared to say, *She is my wife*; lest, *said he*, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah, because she *was* <sup>o</sup> fair to look upon.

8 And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at <sup>p</sup> a window, and saw, and behold, Isaac *was* <sup>q</sup> sporting with Rebekah his wife.

9 And Abimelech called Isaac, and said, Behold, of a surety, she *is* thy wife: and how saidst thou, *She is my sister*? And Isaac said unto him, Because I said, Lest I die for her.

10 And Abimelech said, <sup>r</sup> What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife, and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us.

11 And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that <sup>s</sup> toucheth this man or his wife, shall surely be put to death.

12 ¶ Then Isaac sowed in that land, and <sup>t</sup> received in the same year <sup>u</sup> an hundred-fold, and the LORD <sup>v</sup> blessed him.

13 And the man waxed great, and <sup>w</sup> went forward, and grew until he became very great.

14 For he had <sup>x</sup> possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of <sup>y</sup> servants. And the Philistines <sup>z</sup> envied him.

15 For all the wells which <sup>a</sup> his father's servants had digged, in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.

16 And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us: for thou art much <sup>a</sup> mightier than we.

17 And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

18 ¶ And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them, after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.

19 And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of <sup>b</sup> springing water.

20 And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water *is* ours: and he called the name of the well <sup>c</sup> Esek, because they strove with him.

21 And they digged another well, and strove for that also: And he called the name of it <sup>d</sup> Sitnah.

<sup>x</sup> Job i. 3. Ps. cxii. 3.

<sup>z</sup> Or, husbandry. y xxxvii. 11. Job v. 2. Ps. cxii. 10. Prov. xxvii. 4. Ec. iv. 4. z xxi. 30.

<sup>a</sup> Ex. i. 9.

<sup>b</sup> Heb. living. Cant. iv. 15. John iv. 10, 11.

<sup>c</sup> That is, Contention.

<sup>d</sup> That is, Hatred.

made use of seem to refer to Abraham's unreserved obedience, in leaving his native country, sojourning in Canaan, offering sacrifices, being circumcised, and circumcising his sons and servants, and at length *intentionally* sacrificing Isaac, at God's command; as well as to his general course of piety, righteousness, and holiness.—As “Abraham was justified by faith,” which referred to the righteousness of Christ; so the Lord's blessing Isaac for Abraham's sake, was virtually blessing him through the Redeemer.—The principle of blessing some for the sake of others, seems to have been intended to prepare men's minds for receiving the blessings of salvation, not as due to them, but as given for the sake of the divine Saviour.

V. 7. (Notes, xii. 10—20. xx.) The questions of the men of Gerar excited Isaac's apprehensions: his answer contained a more direct falsehood than that used by Abraham; and his unbelief was the more inexcusable, because he lived in Gerar by God's express command, and under his immediate protection.

V. 8. *A long time.*] Without interruption, which shewed that Isaac's suspicions were injurious to the Philistines.

V. 11. Probably Abimelech recollected the reproof and

correction, which had been incurred on Abraham's account, in similar circumstances.

V. 12. *An hundred-fold.*] If this be the meaning of the passage, (for it is not without difficulty,) it was an extraordinary increase, and an evident effect of the divine blessing. In many parts of this land, with all our improvements in agriculture, an ordinary crop of grain is very seldom known to exceed twenty-fold; and much more frequently, without any remarkable mismanagement or disaster, to come short of ten-fold clear increase upon the seed sown.—And he found the barley increased unto him ‘an hundred-fold in that year.’ *Sept.*

V. 13—16. The conduct of the Philistines was a direct infringement of the covenant, which Abimelech had made with Abraham; but Isaac's prosperity excited their envy and jealousy, which induced forgetfulness of all moral obligations.

V. 17. *Valley of Gerar.*] Upon the borders of Abimelech's kingdom.

V. 21. *Sitnah.*] *Hatred*, (marg.) or *opposition*. Ezra iv. 6. *Heb.* The name Satan, *an adversary*, is derived from the same root.

22 And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it \*Rehoboth; and he said, For now <sup>b</sup>the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

23 And he went up from thence to <sup>c</sup>Beer-sheba.

24 And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, <sup>d</sup>I am the God of Abraham thy father: \*fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed, for my servant Abraham's sake.

25 And he <sup>e</sup>builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well.

26 ¶ Then <sup>f</sup>Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army.

27 And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, <sup>h</sup>seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?

28 And they said, <sup>†</sup>We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee; and we said, <sup>g</sup>Let there be now an oath betwixt

us, *even* betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee;

29 \*That thou wilt do us no hurt, as <sup>i</sup>we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now <sup>k</sup>the blessed of the LORD.

30 And he <sup>l</sup>made them a feast, and they did eat and drink.

31 And they rose up <sup>m</sup>betimes in the morning, and swore one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.

32 And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water.

33 And he called it <sup>n</sup>'Shebah: there-fore the name of the city is <sup>o</sup>'Beer-sheba unto this day.

34 ¶ And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith, <sup>p</sup>the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite:

35 \*Which were a <sup>q</sup>\*grief of mind unto Isaac and Rebekah.

\* That is, Room.

b Ps. iv. 1. xviii. 9. cxviii. 5.

c xxx. 31. xli.

d xv. 1. xvii. 7.

xvii. 12. xxviii. 13. Ex. iii. 6.

Matt. xxii. 32.

Acts vii. 32.

e Ps. xxviii. 1. xli.

1. 2. Is. xli. 2.

xli. 10. 14. II. 7.

12. Luke xii. 32.

Heb. xiii. 6.

f viii. 20. xii. 7.

xxv. 1. Ex.

xvii. 15.

g xxi. 22—32

h Judg. xi. 7. Acts

vii. 9. 14. 35.

Rev. iii. 9.

† Heb. Seeing we

are.

xxxi. 49—53.

k xxiv. 31. Ps. cxv.

15.

l xxxi. 54. Rom.

xii. 18. Heb. xii.

14. 1 Pet. iv. 9.

m xxii. 3.

n That is, an oath.

o That is, the well

of the oath.

p xxiv. 3. Ex.

xxxiv. 16.

q vi. 2. xxvii. 46.

xxviii. 2. 8.

\* Heb. bitterness

of spirit.

V. 22. The piety of the language, here used in the ordinary concerns of life, is worth noticing and imitating.

V. 24. *Fear not.*] 'Be not afraid of the envy or enmity of the Philistines.' (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 26. *Phichol.*] This seems to have been the name of some dignity among the Philistines; for probably Phichol, who came with Abimelech to Abraham on a similar occasion, was dead before this time. (xxi. 22. 32.)

V. 29—31. The Philistines attempted to justify their conduct, though indeed they had acted deceitfully and unjustly, and in a manner wholly inexcusable; but Isaac, loving peace, admitted their plea without altercation.

V. 35. 'And they were quarrelling with Isaac and Rebekah.' *Sept.*

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—11.

Repeated famines in "the land of promise" taught the patriarchs, and uneasiness in the most eligible situations should teach us, to look to the heavenly inheritance for unalloyed felicity. Yet they are happy, even on earth, who are guided by JEHOVAH's counsel, upheld and protected by his power, encouraged by his presence, and assured of an interest in his everlasting love. If he engage to be with us, and if we abide in our proper place, nothing but unbelief and distrust can prevent our comfort.—The blessing which descends upon posterity in answer to prayer, as the effect of wholesome instructions and a good

example, and as a gracious recompence of the obedience of faith, is unspeakably preferable to any other riches which can be left them. "The righteous LORD loveth righteousness," and will shew his love of it by abundantly rewarding the good works of his believing people.—But alas! it is far more natural and easy to imitate the faults of eminent characters, than their faith and holiness; and too many conclude, that they may venture on improper conduct, because pious persons have been betrayed into it. How careful therefore should we be, not to sanction transgression, or give force to temptation, by our example! 'The falls of them who have gone before us are as so many rocks, on which others have split; and the recording of them, is like placing buoys over them, for the security of future mariners.' *Fuller*. Such examples also shew, that righteousness cometh not by the law, but by the faith of Christ.—Let us, however, imitate the conduct of Abimelech, in seriously reproving Isaac, and in returning good for evil. It may also be proper to enquire whether his abhorrence of adultery will not rise up in judgment "against such a nation as this," or at least against very many of its inhabitants, its nobles, and princes.

##### V. 12—35.

The Lord detects and reproves his offending servants, but he also pardons and blesses them. His blessing maketh rich, and the increase of the earth is his gift: but riches generally excite envy, suspicion, and jealousy; and we may very often call our worldly acquisitions, (as Isaac

## CHAP. XXVII.

Isaac when old sends Esau to take venison, intending to bless him, 1—4. Rebekah instructs Jacob how to secure the blessing, and over-rules his objections, 5—13. The stratagem succeeds, and Isaac blesses Jacob, supposing him to be Esau, 14—29. Esau afterwards arrives, complains bitterly, and by importunity obtains a blessing, 30—40. Esau purposes to murder Jacob, who is sent away to Mesopotamia, 41—46.

AND it came to pass that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were <sup>a</sup>dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold *here* am I.

2 And he said, Behold now, I am old, <sup>b</sup>I know not the day of my death.

3 Now therefore <sup>c</sup>take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver, and thy bow, and go out to the field, and <sup>d</sup>take me some venison;

<sup>a</sup> xlviii. 10. Sam. iii. 2. Ec. xii. 3.

<sup>b</sup> xlviii. 21. Prov. xxvii. 1. Ec. ix. 10. Ia. xxxviii. 1. Jam. iv. 14. c x. 9. xxv. 27, 28.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. *hust*.

did his wells,) *contention* and *enmity*.—"The spirit that is "in us lusteth to envy;" and, while we watch and pray against it in ourselves, we shall avoid whatever may needlessly excite it in others; for when once it is kindled, none can tell, what malice and mischief it may occasion.—As Isaac constantly chose to reside near a well, so we should give up many other advantages, in order to be near the ordinances of God. Many will try to deprive us of these "wells of salvation:" but we must contend for them earnestly, yet meekly; and endeavour to preserve for our children, the religious privileges which we have received from our fathers.—In other things, "the wisdom which is "from above" will teach us to recede from our right, and retire from the contentious; and if we are injuriously driven from one place, the Lord will make room for us in another, and recompense us with the assurance and consolations of his love. Yea, he will "make our enemies "to be at peace with us," and to court our friendship, acknowledging that he loveth us: and we should always shew ourselves disposed to reconciliation and hospitality.—We must, however, have some trial to counterbalance each comfort: yet children are highly culpable, who by their sins grieve the hearts of their pious and affectionate parents: nor has any thing been more generally the bane of domestick happiness, as well as of piety, than unhal- lowed marriages, and the practice of polygamy.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXVII. V. 1. The subsequent narrative shews, that Joseph was born about fourteen years after the events recorded in this chapter. (xxix. 20. 30. xxx. 24—26.) Joseph was thirty years of age when he stood before Pharaoh; (xli. 46;) and after the seven years of plenty, and two or three years of famine, Jacob told Pharaoh that he was a hundred and thirty. (xlvii. 9.) Jacob must have been about ninety when Joseph was born, and about

4 And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring *it* to me, that I may eat; <sup>d</sup>that my soul may bless thee before I die.

5 And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son: and Esau went to the field to hunt *for* venison, *and* to bring *it*.

6 ¶ And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying,

7 Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee <sup>e</sup>before the LORD before my death.

8 Now therefore, my son, <sup>f</sup>obey my voice, according to that which I command thee.

9 Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence <sup>g</sup>two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth.

<sup>d</sup> 7. xlviii. 9. 13 —20. xlix. 28. Deut. xxxiii. 1. &c. Luke xxiv. 51. Heb. xi. 20.

<sup>e</sup> Josh. vi. 26. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. <sup>f</sup> 13. Acts iv. 19. v. 29. Eph. vi. 1.

<sup>g</sup> Judg. xiii. 15. 1 Sam. xvi. 20.

seventy-five at this time; and as Isaac was sixty when Esau and Jacob were born, he must have been about a hundred and thirty-five or six years of age. Since Esau married his two wives, thirty-five or six years had elapsed, concerning which nothing is recorded.

V. 2. Isaac deemed it best to settle his domestick concerns, that he might not have encumbrances of that kind to discompose him at the solemn season of death, which his infirmities led him continually to expect. Yet he lived almost forty-four years longer.

V. 3, 4. As this preparation was not intended for a publick feast, but merely for a private, self-indulgent meal, it must be considered as, in some degree, a *carnal* introduction to the *spiritual* blessing, which Isaac purposed to pronounce: a solemn sacrifice would have been much more consistent with his character, and more suitable to the occasion. (7.)—Isaac's partiality for Esau, and the custom of regarding the elder brother as the heir, led him to forget, misunderstand, or disregard, the answer which the Lord had formerly given Rebekah on this subject. (xxv. 23.)

V. 6—10. Rebekah was sensible that Isaac was about to act improperly; for she knew that the blessing was intended for Jacob, and expected that he would have it. But she ought either calmly to have argued the case and expostulated with Isaac; or, if that appeared inexpedient, to have committed the matter to the Lord by prayer, and by no means to have used any artifice on such an occasion. She indeed did no wrong to Esau *in regard to the birth-right*; as both the purpose of God, and his own agreement, ratified with an oath, deprived him of all claim to it: (Notes, xxv. 22, 33. 31—34;) but she injured Isaac, by practising an imposition upon him; and Jacob, by using her authority and persuasions to tempt him to sin. She also dishonoured the power and faithfulness of God, by supposing that he needed such means of effecting his

10 And thou shalt bring *it* to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death.

11 And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a <sup>b</sup> hairy man, and I *am* a smooth man.

12 My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as <sup>a</sup> a deceiver; <sup>k</sup> and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing.

13 And his mother said unto him, <sup>l</sup> Upon me *be* thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me *them*.

14 And he went, and fetched, and brought *them* to his mother: and his mother <sup>m</sup> made savoury meat, such as his father loved.

15 And Rebekah took <sup>\*</sup> goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which *were* with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son.

16 And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck.

17 And she gave the savoury meat, and the bread which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

18 ¶ And he came unto his father, and said, My father: And he said, Here *am* I: who *art* thou, my son?

19 And Jacob said unto his father, <sup>n</sup> I *am* Esau thy first-born; I have done

according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.

20 And Isaac said unto his son, How *is it* that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, <sup>o</sup> Because the LORD thy God brought it <sup>†</sup> to me.

21 And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou *be* my very son Esau, or not.

22 And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice *is* Jacob's voice, but the hands *are* the hands of Esau.

23 And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands. So he blessed him.

24 And he said, *Art* thou my very son Esau? And he said, <sup>p</sup> I *am*.

25 And he said, Bring *it* near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee. And he brought *it* near to him, and he did eat: and he brought him wine, and he drank.

26 And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now, and kiss me, my son.

27 And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See,

<sup>q</sup> the smell of my son *is* as the smell of a field, <sup>r</sup> which the LORD hath blessed.

<sup>h</sup> xxv. 25

<sup>i</sup> 36. xxv. 27.  
<sup>1</sup> Thes. v. 22.  
<sup>k</sup> ix. 25. Deut.  
xxvii. 18. Mal. i.  
14.

<sup>l</sup> xxv. 23, 33. 1 Sam.  
xiv. 24—26. 36—  
45. 2 Sam. xiv.  
9. Matt. xxvii.  
26.

<sup>m</sup> 4. 7. 9. 17. 31.  
xxv. 28. Ps. cxli.  
4. Prov. xxiii. 2.  
3.  
<sup>\*</sup> Heb. desirable.  
27

<sup>n</sup> 21. 24. xxix. 23  
—26. 1 Kings xiii.  
18. xiv. 2. Zech.  
xiii. 3, 4. Matt.  
xxvi. 70—74.

<sup>o</sup> Ex. xx. 7.

<sup>†</sup> Heb. before me.

<sup>p</sup> 1 Sam. xxi. 2, 13.  
xxvii. 10. 2 Sam.  
xiv. 5. Job xlii.  
7, 8. xv. 5. Prov.  
xii. 19. 22. xxx.  
8. Rom. iii. 7.  
8. Eph iv. 26.

<sup>q</sup> Cant. ii. 13. iv.  
11—14. vii. 12.  
13. Hos. xiv. 6.  
<sup>r</sup> xxvi. 12. Heb.  
vi. 7.

purpose and fulfilling his promise. Nay, by exciting Jacob to act so treacherous a part, she even threw a stumbling block in Esau's way; and furnished him with a plausible pretext for his enmity, not only against his brother, but also against religion.

V. 11—14. Jacob objected to the proposed measure as *impolitick*; and feared that he should be detected, and put to shame, for trying to impose on his father by means of his infirmities; and that he should thus provoke him to pronounce a curse on him instead of a blessing: but he does not seem to have been in any degree properly impressed with the sense of the exceedingly great *criminality* of the attempt. And Rebekah, (who, from her confidence that Jacob would obtain the blessing, was encouraged to urge him to commit evident sin,) in engaging to take the consequences on herself, acted too much like those persons who are bold in transgression, because "God *is* rich in mercy." Thus they both contracted deep guilt, for which they were afterwards sharply chastised; yet the purposes of God were accomplished, even by means of their misconduct.

V. 16. The animals, in those hot climates, are not covered with so thick a coat of hair, as they are in more northerly regions.

V. 19, 20. Jacob not only told the most palpable falsehoods on this occasion, but directly profaned the name of the Lord in his answer to Isaac's enquiry; and thus made religion the cloke of his dissimulation!

V. 21—23. Isaac no doubt would have rejoiced to hear Esau use the language of piety, as Jacob had affected to do: yet this circumstance seems to have concurred in exciting his suspicions. But as his eyes failed him, he trusted his ears also; and thus the plan of Rebekah succeeded.—How wonderful is that difference, which there is betwixt the faces and the voices of the several individuals of the human species! Scarcely any two of the innumerable millions are exactly alike in either, and yet the difference cannot be defined or described! The power, wisdom, and kindness of our Creator should be admired and adored in this remarkable circumstance; for they are very visible.—This description of Jacob is not unaptly accommodated to the character of a hypocrite: his *voice*, his language, is that of a Christian; his *hands*, or conduct, that of an ungodly man: but the judgment will proceed from God the Judge of all, at the last day, as in the present case, not by the *voice*, but by the *hands*.

V. 27—29. The hand of God is manifest in this transaction; and the blessing pronounced on Jacob was an evi-

a Deut. xi. 11, 12.  
xxxii. 2. xxiii.  
13. 28. 2 Sam.  
i. 21. 1 Kings  
xvii. 1. Ps. lxxv.  
9—13. cxxxiii.  
8. Hos. xiv. 5.  
7. Mic. v. 7.

c 30. xiv. 18. Pa.  
xxxvi. 8. Rom.  
xi. 17.

u Deut. vii. 13.  
viii. 8. xxxiii. 28.  
ix. 25. xlix. 8—

x ix. 25. xlix. 8—  
10. 2 Sam. viii.  
x. 1 Kings iv. 21.  
Pa. ii. 6—9.

lxvii. 8. Is. ix.  
7. Dan. ii. 44.  
45. Rev. xix. 16.

37. xxv. 22, 23.  
2 Sam. viii. 14.  
1 Kings i. 15.

16. xxii. 47.  
2 Chr. xxv. 11—  
14. Pa. ix. title.

Is. lxiii. 1—6.  
Mal. i. 2—5.  
Rom. ix. 12.

xix. 3. Num. xxiv.  
9. Zech. ii. 8, 9.  
Matt. xxv. 40.

43.

• Heb. trembled  
with a great  
trembling great-  
ly. Job xxi. 6.  
xxxvii. 1. Pa.  
iv. 5.

† Heb. hunted.

28 Therefore God give thee \*of the dew of heaven, and \*the fatness of the earth, and \*plenty of corn and wine.

29 \*Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee; \*be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: \*Cursed *be* every one that curseth thee, and blessed *be* he that blesseth thee.

30 ¶ And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

31 And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father; and said unto his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me.

32 And Isaac his father said unto him, Who *art* thou? And he said, I *am* thy son, thy first-born Esau.

33 And Isaac \*trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who, where *is* he that hath \*taken venison, and brought *it* me, and I have eaten of all before *thou*

camest, and have blessed him? \*yea, *and* he shall be blessed.

34 And when Esau heard the words of his father, <sup>b</sup> he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father.

35 And he said, \*Thy brother came with subtlety, and hath taken away thy blessing.

36 And he said, Is not he rightly named \*Jacob? for he hath supplanted <sup>c</sup> me these two times: he took away my birth-right; and behold now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?

37 And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, <sup>d</sup> I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I \*sustained him: and what <sup>e</sup> shall I do now unto thee, my son?

38 And Esau said unto his father, \*Hast thou but one blessing, my father: <sup>e</sup> bless me, *even* me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.

dent prophecy, which was fulfilled in the history of the two nations descended from Jacob and Esau: and indeed the language of the original implies this; being literally, "God *shall* give thee, . . . the people shall serve thee, " &c." It is likewise observable, that no explicit mention is made here, as elsewhere, of the promised Seed and of the promised land. Perhaps Isaac was conscious, that these were intended for Jacob, and confined his interpretation of the answer given Rebekah to these particulars; or he deemed that matter determined by the sale of the birth-right; or he knew that Esau did not set much value on the spiritual meaning of the blessing, and therefore couched it in general terms. Indeed, he seems to have spoken with hesitation; yet he was led to use such expressions, as assigned the dominion to Jacob, and conferred on him the substance of the blessings first promised to Abraham. (Note, xii. 1—3.)—*Deut.*, &c. (28.) *Marg. Ref. s.*—*Thy mother's sons.* (29.) The sons not only of the same father, as Ishmael was brother to Isaac; but of the same mother also, as Jacob was brother to Esau. Jacob, with his posterity, was especially intended, whom Isaac desired and hoped would be subject to Esau and his posterity; though their mother Rebekah, as he well knew, favoured Jacob.

V. 33. By the unexpected entrance of Esau, and his address and answer, Isaac was exceedingly agitated and alarmed. Various reflections now rushed at once into his mind; and he was convinced that he had been rashly attempting to counteract the appointment of God. The language of this verse most emphatically expresses the

confusion into which he was thrown, on perceiving in what manner his intention had been counteracted: but he acquiesced in what had been done, as manifestly the will of God: and indeed he seems to have been directed by the Spirit of prophecy, in thus confirming the blessing to Jacob.

V. 34. Esau was exceedingly grieved and vexed at being thus circumvented and disappointed; and at finding that the providence of God had ratified his former foolish bargain. Perhaps he dreaded some immediate temporal calamity in consequence: yet it is plain that he expressed no proper value for the spiritual blessings of the covenant, made with Abraham and Isaac, which were thus transferred to Jacob.

V. 36. *Is not he? &c.* [יְהִי כְּעֵשָׂא] Or, "Is it because 'one called his name Jacob?'"—Does he act in this manner, because the name Jacob was given him?—See 2 Sam. xxiii. 19. Heb. Esau spoke, as if Jacob had taken away the birth-right by force or fraud; being more disposed to blame his brother than himself.—*Jacob.* Note, xxv. 25, 26.

V. 38. If Esau might not have that very blessing, which was promised to Abraham, and then limited to Isaac, and now given to Jacob, and which implied and typified the everlasting blessings which believers have in and by Christ, as descended from Jacob; he earnestly intreated, that he might have an assurance of some blessing, though not exactly of the same kind.

*And Esau lifted up, &c.* [And Isaac being pierced in *his heart*, (κατασχεδόντος, Acts ii. 37. Gr.) Esau cried out 'with his voice and wept.' Sept.

<sup>f</sup> xxxvi. 9—9. Josh. xxiv. 4.  
<sup>a</sup> Or, of the fatness, 28.  
 39 And Isaac his father answered, and said unto him, 'Behold, thy dwelling shall be <sup>a</sup>the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above.

<sup>g</sup> xxxii. 6.  
<sup>h</sup> 2 Sam. viii. 14.  
 1 Kings xi. 15—17.  
 2 Kings xiv. 7.  
 10. 1 Chr. xviii. 11—13.  
 2 Chr. xxv. 11.  
 12. Ps. lx. 8.  
 Obad. 17—21.  
 2 Kings viii. 20—22.  
 2 Chr. xxi. 8.  
 14. 1 John iii. 12.  
 40 And by <sup>a</sup>thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt <sup>b</sup>serve thy brother: and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that <sup>c</sup>'thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.

<sup>i</sup> 2 Kings viii. 20—22.  
 2 Chr. xxi. 8.  
<sup>k</sup> iv. 8—8. Esau. xxv. 12—14.  
 xxxv. 8. Amos i. 11, 12. Ob. 10—14.  
 1 John iii. 12.  
 41 ¶ And Esau <sup>k</sup>hated Jacob, because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, <sup>l</sup>'The days of mourning for my father are at hand, <sup>m</sup>then will I slay my brother Jacob.

<sup>m</sup> 2 Sam. xiii. 28.  
 29. Ec. vii. 9.  
 Eph. iv. 26, 27.  
 1 John iii. 12—15.  
 42 And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah: And she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother

Esau, as touching thee, doth <sup>n</sup>a comfort himself, <sup>o</sup>purposing to kill thee.

43 Now therefore, my son, <sup>o</sup>obey my voice: and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to <sup>p</sup>Haran.

44 And tarry with him <sup>q</sup>a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away;

45 Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget <sup>r</sup>that which thou hast done to him: <sup>s</sup>'then I will send and fetch thee from thence.

<sup>t</sup>'Why should I be deprived also of you both in one day?

46 And Rebekah said to Isaac, <sup>u</sup>'I am weary of my life, <sup>v</sup>'because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these <sup>w</sup>which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?

V. 39, 40. This blessing was very well suited to Esau's character, and probably would not have been disagreeable to him, had it not been for the clause, "Thou shalt serve thy brother." Yet it was intimated that Esau's posterity would break the yoke, and not serve submissively, but indignantly; and that at some times they would be so powerful as to revolt successfully, though never so as to acquire dominion over the descendants of Jacob. (*Marg. Ref.*) Probably, the country, in which Esau dwelt, was fertile in his days; but it afterwards became barren. (*Note, Mal. i. 2—5.*)

V. 41, 42. Jacob had given Esau a plausible pretext for his enmity; yet it *originated* from the same source, and was of the same nature, as the hatred of Cain to Abel; namely, the piety of Jacob's character, and the evident preference which the Lord had manifested for him.—Esau seems to have retained no regard for Rebekah, whom probably he disliked for her love to Jacob, and for assisting him in procuring the blessing: and therefore, when Isaac should be removed, (which he erroneously supposed would soon take place, *Note, 2.*) he purposed to slay his brother, whatever anguish his mother might endure. And, it seems, he could not keep his purpose to himself; but told it to others, and thus it came to the ears of Rebekah.

V. 45. *Both in one day.*] Either by the death of the murderer, by some judgment from God, if human justice reached him not; or by her son Esau's thus becoming so vile, as to be only a trouble and a grief of heart to her.

V. 46. Rebekah, being reluctant to render Isaac's mind more uneasy, did not mention the principal reason of her proposal; but adduced one, which was perfectly consistent with truth, and which gives us a melancholy idea of Esau's two wives, and the effect of this part of his conduct on his father's domestick felicity: for her words imply, that they were still living; though she likewise referred to the general character of the daughters of the land.—*What good?* "&c."] Or, "For what do I live?"

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—29.

What is long life, of which we are naturally so desirous, but surviving our dearest friends and choicest comforts, our capacities of enjoyment, and our very faculties and senses? and what can life then be, but "labour and sorrow?"—We should indeed be willing to live as long as, either by active service or patient suffering, we can glorify God and "serve our generation:" but we should never postpone the necessary preparation for death; and, if ready, we need not be unwilling to quit this vale of tears, whenever the Lord shall call. Nor will the constant expectation of that uncertain hour, or habitual preparation for it, in the least hasten its approach.—The same impartiality, which influenced the inspired writer, requires us to note, that we must not follow the best of men further than they act in conformity to the law of God; and that we meet with many things in this chapter decidedly to condemn and shun: such as, Isaac's partiality for profane Esau, and the unworthy grounds of that preference; his disregard of the divine revelation, and his heedless attempt to disannul the purposes of God; Rebekah's rash project to deceive Isaac, her putting into Jacob's mouth many falsehoods, and urging him to venture on them with her absurd engagement, "Upon me be thy curse, my son;" and Jacob's undertaking and going through with this most fraudulent and disgraceful design. Nor could their faith, or desire of the blessing, justify or excuse, (much less sanctify,) such unlawful means; for "we must not do evil that good may come." We may likewise observe, that the arts of falsehood are soon learned; that one sin makes way for many; and that "a lying lip is but for a moment." Nor can they expect to be treated with candour and truth by others, who do not strictly adhere to veracity themselves. (*Notes, xxix. 22, 23. xxxvii. 32.*)

##### V. 30—46.

They, who profanely despise spiritual blessings, may one day bewail their folly, with unavailing lamentations: nay,

## CHAP. XXVIII.

Isaac blesses Jacob, and sends him to Padan-aram to take a wife from thence, 1—5. Esau marries Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, 6—9. Jacob journeys, has a vision of a ladder, sets up a stone as a pillar, calls the place Beth-el, and makes a solemn vow, 10—22.

**AND** Isaac called Jacob, and <sup>a</sup> blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, <sup>b</sup> Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

<sup>2</sup> Arise, go to <sup>c</sup> Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of <sup>d</sup> Laban thy mother's brother.

<sup>3</sup> And <sup>e</sup> God Almighty bless thee, <sup>f</sup> and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be <sup>g</sup> a multitude of people:

<sup>4</sup> And give thee <sup>h</sup> the blessing of Abraham, to thee and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, <sup>i</sup> which God gave unto Abraham.

<sup>5</sup> And Isaac sent away Jacob, and he

went to Padan-aram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

<sup>6</sup> ¶ When <sup>j</sup> Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take him a wife from thence: and that as he blessed him, he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan:

<sup>7</sup> And <sup>k</sup> that Jacob obeyed his father, and his mother, and was gone to Padan-aram:

<sup>8</sup> And Esau seeing that <sup>l</sup> the daughters of Canaan <sup>m</sup> pleased not Isaac his father:

<sup>9</sup> Then went Esau <sup>n</sup> unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had, <sup>o</sup> Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife.

<sup>10</sup> ¶ And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and <sup>p</sup> went toward <sup>q</sup> Haran.

<sup>11</sup> And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set: and he took

even in this world, there are seasons when the most ungodly perceive and envy, though they will not seek for, the superior felicity of believers.—Impenitent sinners blame any rather than themselves: and, in the abundance of worldly enjoyments, they soon forget the folly and misery of forfeiting spiritual blessings.—A pious man, when reminded and convinced of the will of God, will submit his inclination to it, though before he were otherwise minded.—The wicked indeed, being the seed of the old serpent, implacably and without cause hate the righteous: but sometimes the misconduct of the latter furnishes them with a pretext, and draws forth their enmity into more immediate malice and murder; and it behoves us to be very circumspect, that we may not thus become their tempters.—There is much wickedness in the world; but far more in the heart of man. It is however restrained by fear, natural affection, shame, conscience, or human laws; without which the earth would be a mere field of blood: for that heart must be truly diabolical, which can seek comfort in a brother's murder.—Though the Lord over-ruled the conduct of the parties concerned, in the transactions here recorded, to the accomplishment of his own purposes; yet we may learn his judgment respecting it, from Isaac's trembling and consternation, and the subsequent discord in his family; from the anguish of Rebekah, when she heard of Esau's murderous intentions, and when she parted with her beloved Jacob, probably no more to meet with him on earth; from Jacob's tedious exile, and great and many hardships; and from his fear, long after, that enraged Esau would smite the mother with the children. (xxxii. 11.)—We would commend Rebekah for her pru-

dent care to prevent the fatal effects of her son's anger, for her tenderness to Isaac, and for her dislike to the ill behaviour of Esau's wives: yet it is hard to express abhorrence of evil, without some mixture of impatience; for life may be valuable and useful, though the world, and even our near relatives, be wicked and ungrateful.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXVIII. V. 2. *Bethuel.*] Bethuel had been long dead, but Jacob was directed to go to his family and descendants.

V. 3, 4. Isaac at this time deliberately confirmed the blessing before pronounced on Jacob; lest it should not be deemed valid, seeing it had been obtained by fraud.—And it is remarkable, that he more explicitly, than before, mentions the blessings which God gave to Abraham and his seed, as thus pledged to Jacob.—The original is, “God almighty shall bless thee;” being the language of prophecy, rather than of prayer. (*Note*, xxvii. 27—29.)

V. 9. Ishmael had been dead some time, but Esau went to his family. It is doubtful whether he would have done right, had he married Ishmael's daughter, first and singly. Probably, some regard to Abraham's God remained in Ishmael's family; yet it did not look well in Esau to unite himself with those who were cast out from the inheritance by God himself: and to marry a descendant of Ishmael, when he had two other wives, was certainly wrong, and wholly contrary to the original institution of marriage.

V. 10, 11. We should not resolve the solitary journey of Jacob, on this occasion, merely into the simplicity of the times: for the servant of Abraham, when he took the

of the stones of that place, and put *them* for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep.

12 And <sup>1</sup>he dreamed, and behold, a <sup>2</sup>Ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

13 And behold, <sup>1</sup>the LORD stood above it, and said, <sup>2</sup>*I am* the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: <sup>3</sup>the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed.

14 And <sup>1</sup>thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth: and thou shalt <sup>2</sup>spread abroad <sup>3</sup>to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: <sup>4</sup>and in thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

15 And behold, <sup>1</sup>*I am* with thee,

and will keep thee in all *places* whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land: for I will not leave thee <sup>1</sup>until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of.

16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; <sup>1</sup>and I knew *it* not.

17 And <sup>1</sup>he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! *this is* none other but <sup>2</sup>the house of God, and *this is* the gate of heaven.

18 ¶ And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put *for* his pillows, and <sup>1</sup>set it up *for* a pillar, and <sup>2</sup>poured oil upon the top of it.

19 And he called <sup>1</sup>the name of that place <sup>2</sup>Beth-el: but the name of that city *was called* Luz at the first.

same journey on a similar occasion, had a suitable retinue; and probably Isaac was much more wealthy than his father. We may therefore suppose, that the plan was concerted by Rebekah, in order that Jacob might set out, unobserved by Esau, lest he should embrace that opportunity of murdering him; and that Esau's envy and jealousy might not be inflamed, as they would have been, had Jacob been sent away with a suitable attendance; but rather he abated by the consideration of the hardships to which he was exposed: and to shew that he did not, in consequence of the birth-right and blessing, advance any claim to the temporal riches of his father.—Jacob, as a plain man, would have no objection to go unattended and obscure. Yet we must not conclude from the meanness of this night's lodging, that he had not wherewithal to purchase a better: but as night came on, and there was no publick inn nor hospitable person at hand; and as the climate was mild, and the spot pleasant (*Note*, 19); having taken such refreshment as he had with him, and being weary and of a hardy disposition, he soon composed him to sleep; though in circumstances which we should think neither comfortable nor secure.

V. 12. This ladder seems to have been an emblem of the gracious care, which the God of heaven takes of the inhabitants of the earth, especially of such as fear and trust in him. This is, in many things, carried on by the ministry of holy angels, executing his mandates and reporting their services. (*Note*, xxiv. 2—9.) But it is vouchsafed to us, only through Jesus Christ, as “God manifest in the flesh,” the Mediator and Advocate for sinners. He is the true Ladder; and Jacob, as well as Abraham, “saw his day and was glad.” (*Note*, John i. 47—51.)—“It was giving the patriarch a glimpse of that glory, ‘which should be accomplished in his Seed.’ Fuller.

V. 13—15. The Lord seems to have appeared to Jacob above the ladder, in some visible form; and, as the God of Abraham and Isaac, he ratified to him in the fullest manner the blessings originally covenanted to them; ac-

companying this transaction with most encouraging promises, suited to his present circumstances.—He was at this time about seventy-five years of age, and unmarried.

V. 16, 17. Jacob was not ignorant of God's omnipresence, or of his gracious nearness to those who fear him. But, having left his father's house under the rebukes of Providence, probably uneasy in his conscience, and fleeing from the face of enraged Esau; being removed, not only from the company of endeared friends, (of whom he had taken a sorrowful farewell,) but from the ordinances of divine worship; and having nothing before him but a long journey into a strange country; his heart was disquieted within him, and he was ready to say, “I am banished from ‘the sight of thine eyes.’” Little expecting the ordinary comforts of religion, he was surprised with this extraordinary visit, and these gracious assurances, which in fact formed a prophetic revelation of the Lord's will to him: and, in a deep sense of his own unworthiness, ashamed of his unbelieving despondency, and in a thankful, reverential acknowledgment of the divine condescension, he thus expressed his mingled affections.—The vision of angels and the display of the divine glory, with the gracious promises which he had received, induced the conviction, that JEHOVAH was present in a special manner in that place, which thus might be considered as “the house of God, ‘and the gate of heaven;’” for there He appeared, attended by his angelick retinue.

V. 18. Jacob thus expressed, as well as he was able in his present situation, his willing mind to offer “the sacrifice of praise,” and his desire to keep in remembrance the goodness of the Lord; and to leave a sort of monument, by which the place of this gracious vision might be readily known, when he should return to perform his vows. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 19. It seems that there was even then a city near the place, though Jacob did not go to it.—*Luz* w. This word is rendered *hazel*, xxx. 37, where alone it occurs in the Hebrew.—Probably the spot was remarkable for the

xxv. 1. 12. xx. 6.  
xxviii. 5—11.  
xl. xli. Num. xii.  
6. Job iv. 12—  
21. xxxiii. 15, 16.  
Dan. ii. iv. vii.  
1. Matt. i. 20.  
ii. 12, 13, 19.  
xxxi. 1. 2. 2Chr.  
xvi. 9. Is. xli. 10.  
John i. 51. 2Tim.  
iv. 16, 17. Heb.  
i. 14.  
xxxv. i. 6, 7.  
xlviii. 8.  
xv. 1. xxxi. 42.  
xxii. 9. xlv. 3.  
Ec. iii. 6. 15. 16.  
Matt. xxii. 32.  
1. See on 4.  
u. xiii. 16. xxxv.  
11, 12. Num.  
xxiii. 10.  
\* Heb. break forth.  
x. Deut. xli. 20.  
Matt. viii. 11.  
y. xii. 3. xviii. 18.  
xxii. 18. xxvi. 4.  
Gal. iii. 16.  
z. 20, 21. xxvi. 24.  
xxxi. 8. xxxix.  
2. 21. xlv. 4. Ex.  
iii. 12. Josh. i. 5.  
Judg. vi. 16. Ps.  
xlv. 7. 11. Is.  
vii. 14. viii. 10.  
xliii. 2. Jer. i. 19.  
Matt. xviii. 20.  
xxviii. 20. Rom.  
viii. 31. Heb. xiii.  
6, 6.

a Num. xxiii. 19.  
Josh. xxiii. 14—  
16. Matt. xxiv.  
24.

b Ex. iii. 5. Josh.  
v. 15. Job ix. 11.  
c Ex. iii. 6. Judg.  
xiii. 22. Matt.  
xvii. 9. Rev. i.  
17.  
d 22. 2 Chr. v. 14.  
Ec. v. 1. Heb.  
x. 21. 1 Pet. iv.  
17.

e xxvi. 13. 45.  
xxxv. 14. 20.  
Josh. xxiv. 26, 27.  
1 Sam. vii. 12.  
2 Sam. xviii. 18.  
Is. xix. 19.  
f Lev. viii. 10—12.  
Num. vii. 1.

g xii. 8. xxxv. 1.  
xlviii. 3. Judg. i.  
22—26. Hos. xii.  
4, 5.  
† That is, The  
house of God.

<sup>h</sup> Lev. xxvii. Num. vi. 1—20. xxi. 2, 3. Judg. xi. 30, 31. 1 Sam. i. 11. xiv. 24. 2 Sam. xv. 8. Neh. ix. x. Ps. lxxvi. 11. cxix. 106. Ec. v. 1—7. Is. xix. 21. Jon. i. 16 Acts xviii. 18 xxiii. 12—15.

20 And Jacob <sup>h</sup>vowed a vow, saying, <sup>i</sup>If God will be with me, and will keep <sup>me</sup> in this way that I go, and <sup>k</sup>will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on :

21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace: <sup>l</sup>then shall the LORD be my God;

22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be <sup>m</sup>God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me, <sup>n</sup>I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

number of *hazel* trees which it produced. The meaning generally given it, as denoting an *almond* tree, is taken from the Arabick. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 20—22. Jacob solemnly bound himself unto God by a voluntary engagement, in the particulars here stated. His language does not imply any unbelieving distrust of the divine promise, or disposition to dictate to the Lord: but he merely took his words, put the most moderate sense upon them, and intimated, that having food and raiment, he desired no more; and that, when he returned in peace, as it had been promised, he would publicly set up the worship of the Lord his God, as his father and grandfather had done; build an altar in that very spot; and offer the tenth of all the substance which he brought back with him, to the immediate service of God, and the support of his worship, or to pious and charitable uses in general. All that he engaged for was lawful and practicable; and the circumstances, the place of this solemn worship, and the proportion of his goods to be thus dedicated, were in themselves things discretionary, and thus the proper matter for a religious vow. This is the first instance of the kind which we meet with in Scripture. Yet Abraham had given the same proportion of the spoils to Melchizedek, and it was afterwards appropriated by the law to the priests: so that we may reasonably suppose, the patriarchs had some traditional or immediate intimations of the will of God in this particular.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—11.

It is incumbent on parents to unite their influence and authority with wisdom and experience, in warning and advising their children, and in charging things of consequence upon their consciences: and when such instructions are joined with fervent, affectionate prayers, they are likely to make a deep impression. It is also well, when former miscarriages render us more watchful and attentive; and when we have humility enough, openly and explicitly to retract, what we have erroneously attempted.—Good examples of obedience to God and pious parents, cannot but make some impressions, even upon the profane and malicious: but a few external acts of partial or imaginary amendment, which only spring from a desire of pleasing men, too often serve as a fatal quietus to the conscience.—We know not to what hardships we may in Providence be called: it is therefore prudent to inure ourselves to labour and self-denial; as the mean accommodations, which are intolerable to the delicate and luxurious, are scarcely in-

#### CHAP. XXIX.

Jacob arrives at Haran, and confers with some shepherds, 1—8. He meets with Rachel, is entertained by Laban, and serves seven years for Rachel, 9—20. He is cheated by Laban with Leah; he remonstrates, and Laban excuses himself; Jacob marries both sisters, and serves other seven years, 21—30. Rachel is barren; but Leah bears Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, 31—35.

THEN <sup>a</sup>Jacob <sup>b</sup>went on his journey, and <sup>c</sup>came into the land of the <sup>d</sup>people of the east.

a Ps. cxix. 82. Ec. ix. 7.  
\* Heb. *lifted up his feet.*  
b xxviii. 5—7. Num. xxiii. 7. Judg. vi. 3. 33. vii. 12. viii. 10. 1 Kings iv. 30.  
† Heb. *children*

convenient to those, who have been accustomed to labour and fare hardly.

##### V. 12—22.

When the Lord hath made his offending children humbly sensible of their misconduct, he will again encourage them, lest they should “be swallowed up of over-much sorrow:” and generally the sweetest comforts are afforded in the sharpest trials, and surprise us when ready to faint under deserved rebukes.—When the soul by faith can see Christ, the true Ladder, opening the way of communication betwixt heaven and earth, and securing to us acceptance with God, the protection of his providence, the ministrations of his angels, and the consolations of his Spirit; every place becomes pleasant, and every prospect joyful. With the Lord for our Guide, Companion, and Comforter, we may defy all enemies, out-brave all dangers, and despise all difficulties: every thing must succeed, and end well; and he will never leave us, till his last promise is accomplished in our everlasting felicity.—The places and ordinances, in which God is more especially present, ought to be regarded with solemn reverence; and peculiar consolations should leave us filled with holy awe, prepared for self-denying services, and disposed to adopt every means of keeping the Lord's goodness in remembrance.—Many “an Israelite indeed,” who had been for a time burdened with guilt, oppressed with desponding fears, and conflicting with difficulties and temptations; has at length unexpectedly been surprised with sweet peace, and a sense of pardoning mercy, through “the love of God shed abroad “in his heart by the Holy Spirit;” and, in adoring gratitude, has surnamed the scene of such a deliverance, *Beth-el*; has deemed it the “very house of God, and the gate of “heaven;” and perhaps has been afraid to quit it, lest he should lose the sweet consolations which he there had tasted, or forget the loving-kindness of the Lord. At such times, how ready are we to enquire, “What shall we render “unto the Lord for his goodness!” How willing are we to forego all worldly considerations, and to be contented with food and raiment, however mean and hardly earned! How do we stand prepared for any service or suffering; and, by solemn vows, to yield ourselves unto the Lord, to take him for our God, and to devote all we have and are to his glory! All this is well, and as it should be: but oh, that there were at all times such a heart in us! Let us remember our Beth-els, be ashamed of our forgetfulness, and “pay the vows which we vowed, when the Lord answered us in the day of our distress.” (*Notes*, xxxv. 1—5.)

c xxiv. 11. Ex. ii. 15. d Ps. xxiii. 2. <sup>Chas. b. 7. Rev. vii. 17.</sup> 2 And he looked, and behold, <sup>a</sup> a well in the field, and lo, <sup>d</sup> there *were* three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks: and a great stone *was* upon the well's mouth.

3 And thither were all the flocks gathered: and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in his place.

4 And Jacob said unto them, My brethren, whence *be* ye? and they said, <sup>e</sup> Of Haran *are* we.

5 And he said unto them, Know ye Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know *him*.

f xlii. 27. <sup>\* Heb. *pace* to *come* / xxviii. 14. Ex. xviii. 2. 1 Sam. xviii. 22. Marg.</sup> 6 And he said unto them, <sup>g</sup> *Is* <sup>h</sup> he well? And they said, *He is* well: and behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep.

7 And he said, <sup>g</sup> Lo, <sup>h</sup> *it is* yet high day, neither *is it* time that the cattle should be gathered together: water ye the sheep, and go *and* feed *them*.

h 3. 8 And they said, We cannot, <sup>h</sup> until all the flocks be gathered together, and *till* they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we water the sheep.

9 And while he yet spake with them, <sup>i</sup> Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them.

10 And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother; that Jacob went near, <sup>k</sup> and rolled the stone from

the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother.

11 And Jacob <sup>l</sup> kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept.

12 And Jacob told Rachel that he *was* her father's <sup>m</sup> brother, and that he *was* Rebekah's son: <sup>n</sup> and she ran and told her father.

13 And it came to pass, when Laban heard the <sup>o</sup> tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he <sup>p</sup> ran to meet him, and embraced him, and <sup>q</sup> kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things.

14 And Laban said to him, Surely thou <sup>r</sup> *art* my bone and my flesh; and he abode with him <sup>s</sup> the space of a month.

15 ¶ And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou *art* my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? <sup>t</sup> tell me what *shall* thy wages *be*?

16 And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder *was* Leah, and the name of the younger *was* Rachel.

17 Leah *was* tender-eyed, but <sup>u</sup> Rachel *was* <sup>v</sup> beautiful and well-favoured.

18 And Jacob <sup>w</sup> loved Rachel; and said, <sup>x</sup> I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.

19 And Laban said, <sup>y</sup> *It is* better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me.

20 And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him *but* a few days, <sup>z</sup> for the love he had to her.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXIX. V. 3. This verse describes what was usually done, by some mutual compact among the shepherds; and shews the purpose for which the flocks lay by the well: for the stone was not removed till all the flocks had been collected (8).

V. 5. Laban seems to have been grandson to Nahor, who, as the head of the family, is mentioned rather than Bethuel. (Notes, xxiv. 28. 53.)

V. 8. It is probable that there was some regulation agreed on, to prevent the waste or the unequal use of the water, where it was so scarce and valuable.

V. 12—14. Jacob informed Rachel, that he was "her father's brother" (12). Accordingly Laban calls Jacob "my bone and my flesh." He owns him as a very near relation; being his sister's son.—The word brother is often used in scripture with this or greater latitude. (xiii. 8.)

V. 18, 19. When Abraham's servant came, with great appearance of wealth, to take a wife for Isaac, Laban readily consented that Rebekah should accompany him. But Jacob came in a great measure destitute; and it might be supposed that, notwithstanding the transactions of the birth-right and the blessing, Esau, being on the spot, would inherit Isaac's wealth. Therefore, though Jacob had told him the circumstances and motives of his journey; and had doubtless informed him, that he came to seek a wife from among his mother's kindred, as well as to escape from Esau; Laban did not see, that "the matter proceeded from the LORD;" (xxiv. 50;) or offer to give Jacob one of his daughters, till he had witnessed his ability and industry; and then Jacob's proposal addressed his selfishness with success. Yet he would not, it seems, let him have his daughter, till he had performed his seven years' service! (Notes, xxiv. 29—60.)

21 ¶ And Jacob said unto Laban, Give me my wife, (for my days are fulfilled,) that I may go in unto her.

22 And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast.

23 And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him: and he went in unto her.

24 And Laban gave unto his daughter Leah, Zilpah his maid for an handmaid.

25 And it came to pass that in the morning, behold it was Leah: and he said to Laban, What is this thou hast done unto me? did not I serve with thee for Rachel? Wherefore then hast thou beguiled me?

26 And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the first-born.

27 Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also, for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years.

28 And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week: and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also.

29 And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter <sup>b</sup>Bilhah his handmaid, to be her maid.

30 And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years.

31 And when the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren.

32 And Leah conceived and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben: for she said, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction: now therefore my husband will love me.

33 And she conceived again, and bare a son: and said, Because the LORD hath heard that I was hated, he hath therefore given me this son also: and she called his name Simeon.

34 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and said, Now this time will my husband be joined unto me, because I have born him three sons: therefore was his name called Levi.

35 And she conceived again, and bare a son; and she said, Now will I praise the LORD: therefore she called his name Judah, and left bearing.

b Judg. xiv. 10—18. Ruth iv. 10—13. Matt. xxi. 2—10. xxv. 1—10. John ii. 1—10. Rev. xix. 9.

c xxv. 65. xxxviii. 14, 15.

d xvi. 1. xxiv. 59. xxx. 9—12. xlv. 18.

e xxvii. 35, 36. Prov. xi. 31. Matt. vii. 2. John xxi. 17. Rev. iii. 19.

\* Heb. place.

f ii. 2, 3. vii. 10—12. Lev. xviii. 18. Judg. xiv. 12. Mal. ii. 15. Matt. xix. 5. g 20.

h See on 24.—xxx. 3—8. xxxv. 22. 25. xxxvii. 2.

i 20. 81. xlv. 20. 27. 4. 18. xxx. 26, 26. xxxi. 15. 1 Sam. xviii. 17—27. Hos. xii. 12.

j 30. xxvii. 41. Deut. xxi. 15. Mal. i. 8. Matt. vi. 24. x. 37. Luke xiv. 26. John xii. 25. m xxi. 1, 2. xxv. 21. xxx. 2. 22. Judg. xii. 2, 3. 1 Sam. i. 5. 20. 27. ii. 21. Ps. cxviii. 3. n xxxv. 22. xlix. 8, 4. 1 Chr. v. 1. † That is, See a son.

o Ex. iii. 7. iv. 31. 1 Sam. i. 11. 20. 2 Sam. xvi. 12. Ps. xcv. 18. Luke i. 25. p xxx. 6, 8. 18. 20.

q xxxiv. 30. xlii. 24.

r That is, Hear- ing. B. C. 1750.

s xlix. 5—7. Ex. ii. 1. xxxii. 26—29. Deut. xxxiii. 8—10.

t That is, Joined. Num. xviii. 2. 4. xlv. 18—34. xlix. 8—12. Deut. xxxiii. 7. 1 Chr. v. 2. Matt. i. 2. † That is, Praise. ‡ Heb. stood from bearing.

V. 21. The language of the narration evidently determines, that Jacob waited till the seven years were expired before his marriage. This interpretation has indeed been objected to, both on account of Jacob's age, and also as not allowing time enough before he went to Egypt, for the several events which intervened: but the objection does not seem well grounded, nor the difficulty insurmountable.—The promise of an innumerable posterity was first given to Abraham; yet he was very old before he had any child, and a hundred years of age before Isaac was born. It was again made to Isaac, who was childless till the age of sixty; and then it was ratified to Jacob, who did not marry till he was about eighty-three or four years old. These circumstances were suitable evidences or exercises of their faith: but it might be expected, that the descendants of these patriarchs, as the progenitors of so numerous a posterity, would marry and have children as soon as possible; which was accordingly the case.

V. 22, 23. The publick feast, made on this occasion, formed the regular method of recognizing the marriage; and in the evening it was customary to convey the bride, veiled; to her husband's house. Thus Jacob, who had deceived Isaac by personating Esau, was imposed on by Laban and Leah, in a most important concern, by a similar deception! In this the Lord was righteous, but the parties concerned were highly criminal.—If Rachel had been led to expect, that she was to be given to Jacob at that

time; probably she was not undeceived, till it was too late to undeceive Jacob: though, if it had been otherwise, it might not have been practicable or expedient to do so.

V. 26. This seems to have been a mere pretence; but, if it was the custom of the country, Laban ought previously to have informed Jacob of it.

V. 27, 28. The week, here mentioned, was that of the marriage-feast; and did not relate to the years Jacob afterwards served.—There existed no express and positive law against polygamy; Jacob considered Rachel as his wife, and yet he could not desert Leah; and so he seems to have thought himself obliged to retain both.—The division of time by weeks, intimates that some regard was paid to the sabbath.

V. 30, 31. Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah, not only as most beautiful and amiable, and the object of his first and most endeared affection; but likewise, because he considered Leah as having concurred in the imposition put on him by Laban. Thus his preference of Rachel led him, in some respects, to treat Leah with an indifference and neglect, which resembled hatred.

V. 32—35. From the names which Leah gave her sons, and the reasons which she assigned for them, it seems probable that she was piously disposed; though criminal in imposing on Jacob, and faulty in some other respects. (Marg. Ref.)

## CHAP. XXX.

Rachel envies Leah, and complains impatiently to Jacob, who sharply rebukes her; yet at her instance takes Bilhah to wife, who bears Dan and Naphtali, 1—8. Leah gives Zilpah to Jacob, and she bears Gad and Asher, 9—13. Leah purchases Jacob's company, of Rachel, by her son's mandrakes; and bears Issachar, Zebulun, and Dinah, 14—21. Rachel bears Joseph, 22—24. Jacob desires to leave Laban, who agrees with him for his future services, 25—36. The means by which Jacob grew rich, 37—43.

**AND** when <sup>a</sup>Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, <sup>b</sup>Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, <sup>c</sup>or else I die.

2 And Jacob's <sup>d</sup>anger was kindled against Rachel; and he said, <sup>e</sup>Am I in God's stead, who hath <sup>f</sup>withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?

3 And she said, <sup>g</sup>Behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her: and <sup>h</sup>she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also <sup>i</sup>have children by her.

4 And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid <sup>j</sup>to wife: and Jacob went in unto her.

5 And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son.

6 And Rachel said, <sup>k</sup>God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice, and hath given me a son: therefore called she his name <sup>l</sup>Dan.

7 And Bilhah Rachel's maid conceived again, and bare Jacob a second son.

8 And Rachel said, With <sup>m</sup>great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed: <sup>n</sup>and she called his name <sup>o</sup>Naphtali.

\* Heb. be built up by her. xvi. 2. <sup>†</sup>Marg. Ruth iv. 11.  
xvi. 3. xxi. 10  
xxv. 1. 6. xxxiii. 2. xxxv. 22.  
2 Sam. xii. 11.

k xxxix. 32—35 Ps xxxv. 24. Lam. iii. 59.

† That is, Judging. xlix. 16, 17. Deut. xxxiii. 22. Judg. xiii. 2. 24. xv. 14—20.

‡ Heb. wrestlings of God. Ex. ix. 28. 1 Sam. xiv 15. Marg.

§ That is, My wrestling. xxxii. 24. 25.—Matt. iv. 13. Nephtholim.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

## V. 1—15.

Gracious consolations are intended as cordials, to animate and strengthen us, that we may proceed without weariness or fainting, in the arduous and self-denying paths of obedience: and in so doing, we shall speedily experience the faithfulness of God to his promises; even as he accompanied and kept Jacob, in all the places to which he went.—We cannot but approve the simplicity, courteousness, and benevolence, which mark this first interview between Jacob and the shepherds; the frank manner in which he makes his observations, offers his advice, and affords his assistance; and the mild and candid reception that he meets with from them: for the proud are offended when intimations are given, that they are mistaken or to blame.—He, who has all hearts in his hands, disposes all things for the good of those who trust in him, and works upon the natural affection even of selfish hearts, to procure them kind entertainment. And they who are skilful and active in business, being capable of rendering themselves useful, will generally, when known, be made welcome.—Relations, however, should not be less rewarded for their services than others, but meet with greater encouragement.

## V. 16—35.

Love, whatever be its object, is a most active and powerful principle; and not only engages a man in hard and difficult services, but even renders them delightful. If then the Lord possess our supreme love, we shall greatly delight in his commandments, and all other affections will be regulated and subordinated by it, and rendered lawful and useful: yet times may come, when we must, in the superiority of our love to him, be called to disregard our dearest friends, as if we hated them. But, on the other hand, if they have our *supreme regard*, we shall for their sakes despise and neglect the Lord.—How often in Providence are men reminded of their sin in their punishment, and corrected by others much worse than themselves! One cannot but lament to see Jacob cheated into polygamy, in so

extraordinary a manner; and indeed the malice and artifice of Satan are clearly discernible in the transaction.—The Lord, however, so sets one thing against another, that there is less difference in the comparative happiness of mankind, than superficial observers imagine: and in the most ordinary circumstances of private life, his hand should be acknowledged; especially, when he relieves our distresses, and answers our prayers.—And let us always remember, that “children and the fruit of the womb are a *“heritage and gift that cometh of the LORD,”* and should be received as from his hand, and trained up for his service.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXX. V. 1, 2. Under the influence of selfish and malignant passions, Rachel impatiently murmured against God, and expressed her fretfulness in very absurd language, which Jacob justly, though sharply, reproveth.—Instead of humbly intreating the Lord, as Isaac and no doubt Rebekah had done, and waiting his time of granting her requests; she declared that her heart would break with grief and vexation, if she continued any longer childless!—She who said, “Give me children, or else I die,” afterwards died in child-birth. (*Marg. Ref.*) Hannah, whose trial resembled Rachel's, but was much heavier, acted far more properly, and had several children with comfort and a blessing. (1 Sam. i. 2—28. ii. 1—11. 20, 21.)

V. 3. Rachel intended to adopt and nurse Bilhah's children as her own, and thus solace herself under the trial and reproach of barrenness. But had not her sister been her rival, and had she not been influenced by envy and resentment, she would have thought Leah's children nearer to her, and more entitled to her care, than Bilhah's could be.

V. 4. Rachel might, in some measure, be induced to this conduct by the same motives which influenced Sarah in a similar case; and Jacob doubtless supposed that he was merely imitating his illustrious progenitor: but the circumstances were, in all respects, so different, as to render their conduct far less excusable. (*Notes*, xvi. 1—3.)

V. 8. The literal marginal translation, *wrestlings of God*,

9 ¶ When Leah saw that she had left bearing, she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife.

10 And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a son.

11 And Leah said, A troop cometh: and <sup>m</sup> she called his name <sup>\*</sup> Gad.

12 And Zilpah Leah's maid bare Jacob a second son.

13 And Leah said, <sup>†</sup> Happy am I, for the daughters <sup>"</sup> will call me blessed: <sup>o</sup> and she called his name <sup>\*</sup> Asher.

14 And Reuben went in the days of wheat-harvest, and found <sup>p</sup> mandrakes in the field, and brought them unto his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes.

15 And she said unto her, <sup>q</sup> Is it a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with thee to-night for thy son's mandrakes.

16 And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in unto me, for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night.

17 And <sup>r</sup> God hearkened unto Leah, and she conceived and bare Jacob the fifth son.

18 And Leah said, God hath given me mine hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband: <sup>\*</sup> and she called his name <sup>\*</sup> Issachar.

19 And Leah conceived again, and bare Jacob the sixth son.

20 And Leah said, God hath endued me *with* a good dowry: <sup>\*</sup> now will my husband dwell with me, because I have born him six sons: <sup>"</sup> and she called his name <sup>\*</sup> Zebulun.

21 And afterwards she bare a daughter, <sup>\*</sup> and called her name <sup>\*</sup> Dinah.

22 ¶ And God <sup>r</sup> remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, <sup>\*</sup> and opened her womb.

23 And she conceived and bare a son: and said, God hath <sup>\*</sup> taken away my reproach.

24 And <sup>b</sup> she called his name <sup>†</sup> Joseph; and said, The LORD shall add to me another son.

25 ¶ And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Joseph, that Jacob said unto Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and <sup>e</sup> to my country.

26 Give me <sup>4</sup> my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go: for <sup>o</sup> thou knowest my service which I have done thee.

27 And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found <sup>†</sup> favour in thine eyes, *tarry*: <sup>for</sup> I have learned by experience, that <sup>5</sup> the LORD hath blessed me for thy sake.

28 And he said, <sup>h</sup> Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it.

29 And he said unto him, <sup>†</sup> Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy cattle was with me.

prolifick, and the reproach of being barren, may be supposed to have had considerable influence in these contests; though combined with jealousy and other selfish passions.

V. 18. Leah was so far from considering herself culpable, in giving her handmaid to her husband, that she deemed it meritorious, and erroneously interpreted the Lord's kindness as the reward of it!

V. 21, 22. *Dinah* means the same as *Dan*, the name of Jacob's first son by Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid; and this name seems to have been given by Leah to her daughter, in a kind of triumph over her sister. It therefore follows that "God remembered Rachel."

V. 23. All these children were born to Jacob, within the second seventh year of his serving Laban (25). Reuben, therefore, was not much above six years older than Joseph; and Judah not more than four.

V. 25, 26. The fourteen years being expired, Jacob, depending on the promise of God, was willing to depart,

m xlix. 19. Deut. xxxiii. 20, 21.  
• That is, A troop, or company. 1a. lxx. 11.  
B. C. 1748.

† Heb. *In my happiness.*

n Prov. xxxi. 28. Cant. vi. 9. Luke i. 15.

o Gen. xlix. 20. Deut. xxxiii. 24, 25.

† That is, *Happy* p Cant. vii. 13.

q Num. xvi. 9, 10. 13. 1a. vii. 13. Ex. xvi. 47. 1 Cor. iv. 3.

r 22 Ex. iii. 7. 1 Sam. i. 20, 26. 27 Luke i. 13.

• xlix. 14, 15. Deut. xxxiii. 18.  
† That is, *An hire.*

u xlix. 18. Judg. iv. 10. v. 14. Ps. lxxviii. 27.

† That is, *Dwelling.* Matt. iv. 13. *Zabulon.*

x xxxiv. 1-3. 26. xlii. 15.

• That is, *Judg.* ment.

y viii. 1. 1 Sam. i. 19, 20. Ps. cv. 42.

B. C. 1744.

z 2. xxi. 1, 2. xxxv. 21. xxxix. 31. Ps. cxlii. 9. cxxvii. 3.

a xxxix. 31. 1 Sam. i. 6. 1a. iv. 1. Luke i. 25.

b xxxvii. 2, 4. xlii. 6. xlviii. 1. &c. xlix. 22-26.

Deut. xxxiii. 13 -17. Ez. xxxvii. 16. Acts vii. 9-15. Heb. xii. 21, 22. Rev. vii. 8.

† That is, *Adding* xxxv. 17. 18.

c xxxiv. 6, 7. xxxv. 3. xxxvii. 44, 45. xxxviii. 13. 15.

xxxix. 13. Acts vii. 4, 5. Heb. xi. 15, 16.

d xxxix. 19. 30. xxxxi. 26. 31. 41. Hos. xii. 12.

e 29, 30. xxxxi. 6 38-40.

f Ex. iii. 21. Neh. i. 11. ii. 5. Dan. i. 9. Acts vii. 10.

g 30. xii. 3. xxxix. 2-5, 21-23. Ps. i. 3. 1a. lxi. 9.

h xxxix. 15.

i See on 5.-Eph. vi. 5-8. Col. iii. 22-23. Tit. ii. 10. 1 Pet. ii. 18.

in this connexion, seems to imply, that Rachel thought there was some *excellency*, as well as *earnestness*, in her contest; and that her success was a token of God's favour, if not an answer to her prayers. Yet she seems to have been mistaken; her motive might in part be good, but her measures cannot be justified.

V. 11. *A troop cometh.*] The word in the Hebrew text (בָּרָא) more obviously means, "*In a troop*:" and so answers to the marginal reading, verse 13, "*In my happiness*" (בְּאַשְׁמִרָה).

V. 14. *Mandrakes.*] These were either fruit or flowers, pleasing to the eye, the smell, or the taste; probably the latter. It is generally thought that the word is not properly translated; but it is uncertain what they were, though very much has been written on the subject.

V. 15, 16. The desire, good in itself, but often inordinate and irregular, of being the mother or ancestor of the promised Seed; together with the honour of being

30 For *it was* little which thou hadst before I *came*, and it is *now* \*increased unto a multitude, <sup>k</sup> and the LORD hath blessed thee <sup>†</sup>since my coming: and now <sup>12</sup>when shall I provide for mine own house also?

31 And he said, What shall I give thee? And Jacob said, <sup>m</sup>Thou shalt not give me any thing: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed *and* keep thy flock:

32 I will pass through all thy flock to day, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats: and <sup>n</sup>of *such* shall be my hire.

33 So shall my <sup>o</sup>righteousness answer for me <sup>2</sup>in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy face: every one that *is* not speckled and spotted amongst the goats, and brown amongst the sheep, that shall be accounted stolen with me.

34 And Laban said, Behold, <sup>p</sup>I would it might be according to thy word.

35 And he removed that day the he-goats, that were ring-streaked and spotted, and all the she-goats that were speckled and spotted, *and* every one that had *some* white in it, and all the brown among the sheep, and gave *them* into <sup>q</sup>the hand of his sons.

36 And he set three days' journey betwixt himself and Jacob: and Jacob fed the rest of Laban's flocks.

37 ¶ And <sup>r</sup>Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the hazel and chesnut-tree; and piled white streaks in them, and made the white appear which *was* in the rods.

38 And he set the rods which he had piled before the flocks in the gutters in the watering-troughs, when the flocks came to drink; that they should conceive when they came to drink.

39 And the flocks conceived before the rods, and <sup>s</sup>brought forth cattle ring-streaked, speckled, and spotted.

40 And Jacob did separate the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ring-streaked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban: and he put his own flocks by themselves; and put them not unto Laban's cattle.

41 And it came to pass whensoever the stronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods.

42 But when the cattle were feeble, he put *them* not in: so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's.

43 And the man <sup>t</sup>increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maid-servants, and men-servants, and camels, and asses.

without any other recompence from Laban for his hard service, than his large family; though he could appeal to Laban himself, that he had served him with diligence, fidelity, and success! He was also very desirous of returning to Isaac and Rebekah, and the land of his pilgrimage. But he had, in many ways, an equitable claim on Laban's large substance, and it was the will of God that he should be amply provided for out of it.

V. 30. Laban had acknowledged, that "the LORD *blessed him for Jacob's sake*" (27); but Jacob, with observable modesty, alters the term for one of a more general application. (*Marg.*)

V. 31—34. Jacob chose to refer his cause to God, in the way here proposed, rather than to enter into an agreement for *stated wages* with Laban, whose selfishness was excessive. He would have no such cattle left under his care, as were coloured in any unusual way; and then he required that the spotted and speckled, &c. which they bred, should be given to him. Thus it would appear, whenever the question concerning his hire should be started, that he had acted honestly; provided none, but those of the stipulated colours, were found in his possession. And La-

ban, judging from common observation, that his cattle would breed but few colours different from their own, eagerly acceded to his proposal.

V. 37—42. Jacob's conduct in this transaction has commonly been considered, as an instance of his policy and management; and it has by many been objected to, by others vindicated and commended. But, as the means which he used would not in general produce similar effects; nay, probably the experiment was never in any other instance tried with success; it is more reasonable to suppose, that he was directed by some divine intimation; and rendered successful, if not by a direct miracle, yet at least by the Lord's giving a new and uncommon bias to the tendency of natural causes. (*Note*, xxxi. 10—13.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—24.

When eminent persons sanction any thing evil by their example, the consequences are often durably pernicious; because it is far more easy to imitate the misconduct of those whom we esteem, than to copy their faith and obedience. And when we tread their devious footsteps, it is

## CHAP. XXXI.

Jacob is envied by Laban and his sons, 1, 2. Being commanded by God to return to his kindred, he proposes it to his wives; explains the Lord's dealings with him; and, with their consent, privately departs, taking his family and substance, 3—21. Laban pursues him, but is warned in a dream not to injure him: he overtakes Jacob and expostulates with him, 22—32. Laban searches in vain for his images, which Rachel had stolen and concealed, 33—35. Jacob vindicates himself, and complains of Laban, 36—42; they enter into a covenant, and Laban returns home, 43—55.

a 8, 3. Job xxxi.  
31 Ps. cxc. 3—5.

b Esth. v. 11. Job xxxii. 24, 25. Ps. xxvii. 14. xlii. 16, 17. Is. v. 14. Jer. ix. 23. Matt. iv. 8, 1 Pet. i. 24.  
c iv. 5. 1 Sam. xxi. 9—11. Dan. iii. 19.

d xxx. 27.  
\* Heb. as yesterday and the day before. Ex. iv. 10. Deut. xix. 4. 1 Sam. xix. 7. *Marginal.*

e xxviii. 15, 20, 21. xxxiii. 9. xxv. 1. xlv. 2, 3, 1. 24.

f xxvi. 3—5. xxviii. 4, 13. xxx. 25.

AND he heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, "Jacob hath taken away all that *was* our father's; and of *that* which *was* our father's hath he gotten all this <sup>b</sup> glory.

2 And Jacob beheld the <sup>c</sup>countenance of Laban, and behold, <sup>d</sup>it *was* not toward him <sup>e</sup>as before.

3 And the LORD said unto Jacob, <sup>f</sup>Return unto 'the land of thy fathers,

and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee.

4 ¶ And Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock;

5 And said unto them, "I see your <sup>g</sup>2, a father's countenance, that it *is* not toward me as before: but <sup>h</sup>the God of my father hath been with me.

6 And ye know that <sup>i</sup>with all my power I have served your father.

7 And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages <sup>k</sup>ten times: but <sup>l</sup>God suffered him not to hurt me.

8 If he said thus, <sup>m</sup>The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ring-streaked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ring-streaked.

9 Thus <sup>n</sup>God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given *them* to me.

h 42, 53. xxxii. 9. xlviii. 15. 1. 17.

i 38—42. xxx. 29. Tit. ii. 9, 10.

k 41. Lev. xxv. 26. Num. xiv. 22. Neh. iv. 12. Job xix. 3. Is. iv. 1. Zech. viii. 23.  
l 29. xx. 6. Ps. cv. 14. Is. liv. 17. m xxx. 32.

n 1. 16. Esth. viii. 1, 2. Ps. l. 10. Prov. xiii. 22. Matt. xx. 15.

natural for us to go further than they did: nay, we are apt to think ourselves authorized, or at least excused, in so doing. What an unhappy precedent was Sarah to Rachel and Leah, and Abraham to Jacob! We are grieved to see this plain man, in his old age, yielding to one suggestion after another to multiply wives; though by that means he multiplied bitter envying and contention in his family. This "his way was his folly;" though many of his posterity approved and imitated his example.—To carry matters even between two wives, who have an equal claim to affection, is almost, if not utterly, impossible; and to fail of it ensures emulation and strife, and may even perpetuate discord to posterity. How much more comfortably did Isaac live with Rebekah, according to God's primary institution, than Jacob with his two wives and their handmaids!—Envy and jealousy are most tormenting passions to the breast which harbours them, vexatious to all around, and introductory to much impatience and ungodliness: observing therefore, how absurd and odious they appear in Rachel, we should watch and pray against them in ourselves; and turn aside from all such objects and pursuits as tend to excite them.—Too frequently they, who possess the most beautiful countenances, are lamentably deficient in "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit; which is in "the sight of God" and of all wise men, of much greater value; and *partial* affections are often corrected by the persons on whom they are misplaced.—They who are angry only at sin, and express that anger by reasonable, though sharp, rebukes, and with zeal for the honour of God, are not sinfully angry: nor must those whom we love best be connived at in wickedness.—Our natural conscience is a partial and erroneous judge, and, if left to itself, will often *excuse*, nay *commend*, our very faults: we ought, therefore, to seek to the word, and pray for the Spirit, of God, to illuminate our understandings, and deliver our consciences from mistake and self-flattery.

## V. 25—43.

The Lord is ever ready to hear the prayer of faith, and to forgive the transgression of his people; and he graciously recompenses and honours their integrity and faithful industry. He convinces all, with whom they are connected, that he hath loved them, and that he blesses others on their account; so that it is not uncommon for those, who love neither them nor their religion, to value them from interested motives; and to desire to employ them in preference to others: and "all who name the name of "Christ" should, for the honour of his Gospel, be ambitious of this distinction.—The Lord will also, in one way or other, plead the cause of the injured and oppressed; and honour those who simply trust his providence, avoid evil and the appearance of it, and walk so wisely, as to give no occasion of reproach to those who manifestly are seeking it. And, as "the earth is the LORD's, and the "fulness thereof," he hath an indisputable right to dispose of every one's property as he pleases; and who shall dare to find fault with his appointments?

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXXI. V. 1—3. Laban's sons were probably younger than his daughters; but were now grown up, and resembled him in selfishness. Instigated by them, Laban appeared so dissatisfied, and expressed in his looks so much envy and resentment, that Jacob deemed it dangerous to continue longer with him. But, though he had overheard the words of Laban's sons, and evidently perceived the effect which they had produced; yet he did not attempt to remove, till the Lord expressly commanded him: perhaps thinking it still more dangerous to come within the reach of his brother Esau.

V. 7. *Ten times.*] As the history of these six years is very compendious, we cannot determine, whether Laban changed Jacob's wages exactly ten times, or whether the

10 And it came to pass at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in °a dream, and behold, the \*rams which leaped upon the cattle *were* ring-streaked, speckled, and grizzled.

11 And the °Angel of God spake unto me in a dream, *saying*, Jacob: And I said, °Here *am* I.

12 And he said, °Lift up now thine eyes and see all the rams which leap upon the cattle *are* ring-streaked, speckled; and grizzled: for °I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.

13 I *am* °the God of Beth-el, where thou anointedst the pillar, *and* where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and °return unto the land of thy kindred.

14 And Rachel and Leah answered, and said unto him, *Is there* °yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house?

15 Are we not counted of him strangers? for he hath °sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money.

16 For all the riches which °God hath taken from our father, that *is* our's, and our children's: now then whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do.

17 ¶ Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives °upon camels.

18 And he carried away all his cattle, and all his goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padan-aram, °for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan.

19 And Laban went to shear his sheep: and Rachel had stolen the °images that *were* her father's.

20 And Jacob stole away °unawares to Laban the Syrian, in that he told him not that he fled.

21 So he fled with all that he had, and he rose up, and °passed over the

expression only meant in general, many times. It is plain, however, that Laban tried all methods of circumventing and defrauding him, but in vain. (*Marg. Ref. k.*)

V. 10—13. It has before been supposed, that Jacob had some previous divine intimation, suggesting the plan which he adopted respecting the cattle; (*Note, xxx. 37—42*;) but the dream, which he here relates to Rachel and Leah, seems to have taken place towards the close of his service. Thus he accounted to them for the rapid increase of his flocks, and introduced the subsequent proposal, in which he made known to them the will of God, and the justice of his cause; that by thus appealing to them, and consulting with them, he might obtain their willing acquiescence. The Lord himself pointed out the circumstance concerning the colour of the rams, that Jacob might ascribe his success to the divine blessing, and possess his substance with a thankful heart and a quiet conscience, regardless of the unmerited anger of Laban and his sons. —The language of the passage is worthy of peculiar attention. “The Angel of God spake: . . . I am the God of “Bethel.” The supposition of some learned men, that the angel spake as an ambassador, in the name of God, is extremely unreasonable: for what ambassador, when representing his principal, ever said, “I am the king?” Would not such language be a claim to the honour due only to his Sovereign?—The Jewish expositors, and some others, *imagine*, that on such occasions there was a glorious appearance of ЯЕНОВАИ, distinct from the angel: but were there two speakers in this instance? Nothing can be plainer, than that he, who is called “The Angel,” said “I am the God of Beth-el.”—Repeated instances of this kind continually augment the evidence, that the Speaker was no other than the Word and Son of God, who “was “God, and with God,” but now condescended to be the Angel or Messenger of the Father to men; as he after-

wards did in human nature to “take upon him the form of “a servant.” Yet in both manifestations of himself he could say: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; “for I and the Father are One.”—The title, “the God of “Beth-el,” would be peculiarly encouraging to Jacob.

V. 15, 16. Laban, instead of providing for his daughters, had sold them as strangers and slaves to increase his wealth, which he spent entirely on himself and his sons. But God had provided for them, by giving Laban's substance to Jacob; and they acknowledged his hand in it, and were well satisfied. The conduct of Leah and Rachel, in this particular, does not appear reprehensible: they could not have concurred with Laban, without neglecting their duty to a still nearer relation; and preferring the cause of an idolater, and an unjust man, to that of Jacob, the approved servant of God. What they said was private, and in conjugal confidence: and so did not dishonour Laban.

V. 17. Reuben, Jacob's eldest son, could not be much above twelve years of age, at this time.

V. 19. Rachel and Leah no doubt returned to their tents, and to the house of Laban, to take what belonged to them; which gave Rachel the opportunity of stealing these *images*, or *teraphim*. (*Marg. Ref.*) It is evident, that they had been made for idolatrous or superstitious purposes: but it is not clear what Rachel's motive was in taking them away; whether she intended to use them, or to prevent her father from so doing. She however acted very improperly; she exposed herself and the rest of the company to great danger; and the images afterwards seem to have been a snare to Jacob's family. (*Note, xxxv. 2. 4.*)

V. 20, 21. Had Laban known of Jacob's intentions, he would doubtless have attempted forcibly to defeat them; but Jacob *eluded his vigilance*, and was actually got to a great distance before Laban heard of it—The Hebrew

d xlii. 28. Luke river, and <sup>a</sup>set his face *toward* the  
xx. 51—53. mount <sup>a</sup>Gilead.

e 23. Num. xxxii. 22 ¶ And it was told Laban on the  
1. Judg. x. 18. third day, that Jacob was fled.  
1 Kings xvii. 1

f xxx. 36. 23 And he took his <sup>a</sup>brethren with  
g xlii. 8. xxiv. 27 him, and pursued after him seven days'  
Ex. ii. 11. journey; and they overtook him in the  
mount Gilead.

h xxxviii. 5. Deut. 24 And God came to Laban <sup>a</sup>the  
xxv. 5. Hos. Syrian in a <sup>a</sup>dream by night, and said  
xii. 12. unto him, <sup>a</sup>Take heed that thou speak  
i 10. 29. xx. 3. xl. not to Jacob <sup>a</sup>either good or bad.  
5 xli. 1. Num. xxxii. 20. Job  
xxviii. 15—17. Matt. xxvii. 19.

k 42. xxiv. 50. 25 Then Laban overtook Jacob.  
Num. xxiv. 13. Now Jacob had <sup>a</sup>pitched his tent in  
2 Sam. xiii. 22. the mount: and Laban with his bre-  
\* Heb. from good thren pitched in the mount of Gilead.  
l xii. 8. xxxiii. 18. to bad.  
Heb. xi. 9.

m 36. iv. 10. 1 Sam. 26 And Laban said to Jacob, <sup>a</sup>What  
xvii. 29. John hast thou done, that thou hast stolen  
xviii. 35. away unawares to me, and <sup>a</sup>carried

n 16. ii. 24. xxxiv. away my daughters, as captives *taken*  
29. 1 Sam. xxx. with the sword?

o 2—5 20. 21. 31 27 Wherefore <sup>a</sup>didst thou flee away  
Judg. vi. 27. secretly, and <sup>a</sup>steal away from me?  
\* Heb. hast stolen and didst not tell me, <sup>a</sup>that I might  
me. 20. Marg. have sent thee away <sup>a</sup>with mirth and  
p Prov. xxvi. 24— with songs, with tabret and with harp?

q xxiv. 59. 60. Job 28 And hast not suffered me to <sup>a</sup>kiss  
xxi. 11—14. my sons and my daughters? thou hast  
r 55. xxxix. 13. Ex. now done <sup>a</sup>foolishly in *so* doing.

s 3. 13. 24. 1 Sam. 29 It is in <sup>a</sup>the power of my hand to  
xiii. 13. 2 Chr. do you hurt: but <sup>a</sup>the God of your fa-  
xvi. 9. 1 Cor. ii. ther spake unto me yesternight, saying,  
14. <sup>a</sup>Take thou heed that thou speak not to  
t Ph. iii. 1. John Jacob either good or bad.

u 42. 33. Josh. 30 And now *though* thou wouldest  
xxiv. 2. 3. needs be gone, because thou sore long-

edst after thy father's house; *yet*  
wherefore hast thou stolen <sup>a</sup>my  
gods?

31 And Jacob answered and said to  
Laban, <sup>a</sup>Because I was afraid: for I said,  
Peradventure thou wouldest take by  
force thy daughters from me.

32 With <sup>a</sup>whomsoever thou findest  
thy gods, let him not live: <sup>a</sup>before our  
brethren discern thou what *is* thine  
with me, and take *it* to thee: <sup>a</sup>for Ja-  
cob knew not that Rachel had stolen  
them.

33 And Laban went into Jacob's tent,  
and into <sup>a</sup>Leah's tent, and into the two  
maid-servants' tents; but he found *them*  
not. Then went he out of Leah's tent,  
and entered into Rachel's tent.

34 Now Rachel <sup>a</sup>had taken the  
images, and put them in the camel's  
furniture, and sat upon them; and  
Laban <sup>a</sup>searched all the tent, but found  
*them* not.

35 And she said to her father, Let  
it not displease <sup>a</sup>my lord that I cannot  
<sup>a</sup>rise up before thee: for the <sup>a</sup>custom  
of women *is* upon me: and he searched,  
but found not the images.

36 ¶ And Jacob <sup>a</sup>was wroth, and  
chode with Laban: and Jacob answered,  
and said to Laban, What *is* my trespass?  
what *is* my sin, that thou hast so hotly  
pursued after me?

37 Whereas thou hast searched all  
my stuff, what hast thou found of all  
thy household-stuff? <sup>a</sup>set *it* here before

phrase translated, *unawares to Laban*, seems to mean, that  
Jacob rendered his sagacity and vigilance as useless, as if  
he had deprived him of his understanding. (Marg.)

V. 23, 24. Without doubt, Laban intended at least to  
plunder Jacob's property; if he could not induce him by  
promises or threats to return, or compel him to do so.  
But the Lord, in a dream, at this critical time, effectually  
deterred Laban from all such attempts. Jacob had passed  
the Euphrates, and crossed the spacious desert, which in-  
tervened between that river and mount Gilead, before  
Laban overtook him. This was a very long journey, con-  
sidering the largeness of his company, and all his en-  
cumbrances.

V. 26. *Captives.*] This was very false and injurious.  
Jacob had a nearer interest in Leah and Rachel than Laban  
had; they had voluntarily agreed to go with their husband,  
rather than abide with their father; and indeed it was their  
duty so to do. (Marg. Ref. u.)

V. 27—29. Laban pretended to a very amicable dispo-

sition towards Jacob, now that he was overawed and durst  
not hurt him and his company: perhaps he thought that  
he acted from religious motives, in regarding the divine  
admonition.

V. 30. Laban thus insinuated that Jacob had no cause  
of dissatisfaction with him; and that he went away, merely  
because he exceedingly longed to see his parents and friends.

V. 31. Jacob answered Laban's former question in the  
first place, without mentioning it; "Wherefore didst thou  
flee away secretly, and steal away from me?" (27.)  
"Because," says Jacob, "I was afraid." This implied a  
strong charge of injustice and oppression against Laban.

V. 32. *Not live.*] This was rash, and might have pro-  
duced fatal effects: but Jacob was partial to Rachel, and  
did not suspect her; and he was indignant at being ac-  
cused of a crime, which he deeply abhorred.

V. 34. Probably the furniture of the camels formed a  
kind of a couch, for the convenience of women in long  
journeys.

my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both.

141. 38 This <sup>1</sup>twenty years *have I been* with thee; thy <sup>m</sup>ewes and thy she-goats have not cast their young, and <sup>n</sup>the rams of thy flock have I not eaten.

39 That which was <sup>o</sup>torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; <sup>p</sup>I bare the loss of it: of my hand didst thou require it, *whether* stolen by day, <sup>q</sup>or stolen by night.

40 Thus I was; <sup>r</sup>in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes.

41 Thus have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee <sup>s</sup>fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages <sup>t</sup>ten times.

42 <sup>u</sup>Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the <sup>x</sup>Fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty: God <sup>y</sup>hath seen mine affliction, and the labour of my hands, and rebuked *thee* yesternight.

43 And Laban answered, and said unto Jacob, *These daughters are* my daughters, and *these children are* my children, and *these cattle are* my cattle, and all that thou seest *is* mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have born?

44 Now therefore come thou, <sup>z</sup>let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for <sup>a</sup>a witness between me and thee.

45 And Jacob took a <sup>b</sup>stone, and set it up *for* a pillar.

46 And Jacob said unto his brethren, <sup>c</sup>Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap.

47 And Laban called it <sup>d</sup>Jegar-sahadutha: but Jacob called it <sup>e</sup>Galeed.

48 And Laban said, This heap *is* a witness between me and thee this day. Therefore was the name of it called Galeed:

49 And <sup>f</sup>Mizpah; for he said, The LORD watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.

50 If thou shalt <sup>g</sup>afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take *other* wives besides my daughters, no man *is* with us; see, <sup>h</sup>God *is* witness betwixt me and thee.

51 And Laban said to Jacob, Behold this heap, and behold *this* pillar, which I have cast betwixt me and thee;

52 This <sup>i</sup>heap *be* witness, and *this* pillar *be* witness, that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm.

53 The <sup>j</sup>God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, <sup>k</sup>judge betwixt us. And Jacob sware by the <sup>l</sup>Fear of his father Isaac.

54 Then Jacob <sup>m</sup>offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread: and they <sup>n</sup>did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount.

55 And early in the morning Laban rose up, <sup>o</sup>and kissed his sons and his daughters, and <sup>p</sup>blessed them: and Laban departed, <sup>q</sup>and returned unto his place.

V. 39. Note, Ex. xxii. 7—15.

V. 40. The transition from great heat in the day, to chilling cold in the night, is often known in those regions.

V. 42. The fear of Isaac.] The God, whom Isaac (who was still living) worshipped with "reverence and godly fear."—Jacob's language, though keen, was too obviously true to admit of any answer; and it is too plain to need any comment. (Marg. Ref.) Laban's silence proves Jacob's innocence.

V. 45, 46. Thus a large heap of stones was formed to be an abiding memorial of this compact, and a reproach to him who should pass over this heap to injure the other.

V. 47. Jegar-sahadutha—Galeed.] The former word in the Chaldee or Syriac, the latter in Hebrew, signifies *the heap of witness*. These were indeed distinct dialects of the

same general language, which marked the inhabitants of the different regions; though they had no difficulty in understanding each other.

V. 53. There seems to be some ambiguity in Laban's language, respecting the God by whom he sware: for Abraham and Nahor, and *their father* Terah, had worshipped other Gods in Mesopotamia: (Josh. xxiv. 2:) and Laban's expressions in this discourse imply that he was an idolater, and did not worship the true God *alone*. (29, 30.) Jacob therefore appealed to the God of his father Isaac, who had never been an idolater, that he might not leave it in doubt, to whom he rendered this act of solemn worship.

V. 54, 55. Laban had spoken of a common feast (27); but Jacob offered a solemn sacrifice, and feasted the com-

## CHAP. XXXII.

Jacob has a vision of angels, 1, 2. He sends a message to Esau; and, alarmed by the report of his coming with four hundred men, prays for deliverance, 3—12. He prepares a present for Esau; instructs his servants, and passes the brook Jabbok, 13—23. He wrestles at Peniel; prevails, is blessed, and called Israel; yet goes away halting, 24—32.

**AND** Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. xci. 11. Heb. i. 14.

2 And when Jacob saw them, he

pany in a religious manner. In this we read the different characters of the two men; and hence we may form some estimate of the low state of religion in Laban's family.—This parting proved final; and we hear no more of Laban, or any other of that branch of Abraham's family; who seem after this to have sunk into idolatry, and to have been lost among the other Gentiles.—Some indeed think that Balaam descended from Laban; but this is quite uncertain.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—21.

How particularly are the affairs of these families related, while the great events of states and kingdoms are passed over in silence, and buried in obscurity! Indeed the Bible is intended to teach people the duties of common life; and how to serve God, enjoy comfort, and do good, in their several stations and relations: and but very few are concerned in the government of empires, compared with the numbers who support the characters of parents and children, husbands and wives, masters and servants.—The selfish think themselves robbed of all which others obtain from them, however justly; and covetousness destroys even natural affection. Yet those objects, which the men of the world count "all their glory," are so scanty, that, in the pursuit or possession of them, they stand in each other's way, and every one seems to be taking from the rest: hence discontent, and envy, and discord. But there are possessions of such extent, as amply to suffice for all: happy they who seek them in the *first* place!—We may however thankfully receive, and cheerfully use, the portion which Providence allots us, as far as we obtain it with a clear conscience, and a testimony in the consciences of others to our fidelity and integrity: and even if men should hate and criminate us without reason, yet, when "our ways please the LORD," he will plead our cause, and "make our very enemies to be at peace with us;" he will vindicate our characters, do us justice, and over-rule every event for our good.—In all our removals we should have respect to the command, promise, and providence of God; and if he be with us, we need not fear in the most dangerous circumstances. Indeed, so many are the perils with which we are surrounded, that nothing else can reasonably ensure our safety, or encourage our hearts.—The remembrance of favoured seasons of communion with God is very refreshing to us, when embarrassed in difficulties; and the recollection of our vows should be frequent, that we may not fail to fulfil them.

V. 22—55.

God can put a bridle into the mouth of wicked men, to

said, This is <sup>b</sup> God's host: and he called <sup>c</sup> the name of that place \*Mahanaim.

3 And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother, unto the land of <sup>d</sup> Seir, the <sup>e</sup> country of <sup>f</sup> Edom.

4 And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto <sup>g</sup> my lord Esau: Thy <sup>h</sup> servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now.

<sup>xxxiii.</sup> 8. <sup>Ex.</sup> xxxii. 22. <sup>1 Sam.</sup> xxvi. 17. <sup>Prov.</sup> xv. 1.

<sup>b</sup> Josh. v. 14.  
<sup>2 Kings</sup> vi. 17.  
<sup>Ps.</sup> xxxiv. 7.  
<sup>c</sup> ciii. 21. cxlviii  
<sup>2 Luke</sup> ii. 13.  
<sup>d</sup> Josh. xxi. 88.  
<sup>2 Sam.</sup> ii. 8.  
<sup>xvii.</sup> 24. 27.  
<sup>1 Kings</sup> ii. 8. iv. 14.  
<sup>e</sup> That is, two hosts, or camps.  
<sup>Can.</sup> vi. 13.  
<sup>d</sup> xiv. 6. xxxvi. 6  
<sup>8.</sup> Deut. ii. 5.  
<sup>22.</sup> Josh. xxiv. 4.  
<sup>f</sup> Heb. field.  
<sup>g</sup> See on xxv. 30.  
<sup>f</sup> 5. 18. iv. 7 xxiii  
<sup>6.</sup> xxv. 1. 29. 37.  
<sup>g</sup> 1 Kings xx. 32. Ec.

restrain their malice, even without changing their hearts; and then, though they have no love for his people, they will pretend to it, and try to make a merit of necessity. But great watchfulness is necessary to keep out evil, and the appearance of evil, even from those undertakings which are in themselves according to the will of God; yet nothing less than this can stop the mouths of our enemies, and make those ashamed who would speak evil of us.—There are seasons, when a sharp reproof may consist with meekness, and reminding others of our services, with humility: but great wisdom and grace are necessary on such occasions, that the reproofs may be well timed, well conducted, and unanswerably convincing; and they should always be accompanied with a disposition to forgiveness, to accept of even a partial apology, and to overlook injurious insinuations.—Those who mean honestly and kindly, need not scruple assurances; but these should be solemnly entered into, in the fear of God, who is both the Witness and the Avenger of fraud and injustice.—And finally, an amicable conclusion of differences, though upon disadvantageous terms, is generally preferable, in respect of our innocence, peace, and interest, to the most successful litigation.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXXII. V. 1, 2. A company of angels met Jacob, in some visible and glorious appearance, to encourage him with the assurance of the divine protection, especially from the power and anger of Esau. This he called, "God's host," or army; by which we learn that the angels were numerous, and appeared very formidable and powerful, to protect or to destroy. *Mahanaim* signifies two armies: the one, as some suppose, having conveyed him safe from Mesopotamia, the other was ready to welcome him to Canaan, and receive him under their protection. Or perhaps one encamped before, and the other behind him and his company, as his guard on every side, both against Laban and Esau.

V. 3. The word rendered "angel" signifies a messenger: so that the same term is used for the messengers whom Jacob sent to Esau, and for those whom the Lord sent to protect him.—While Jacob, to whom the promise and blessing belonged, had been a hired servant to a hard master; Esau was become a prince, and had established his authority in mount Seir, which was afterwards called Edom from him. (xxv. 30.)

V. 4, 5. *My lord.*] Esau's success in obtaining authority, probably by conquest, in mount Seir, had no doubt procured him from others the title of honour which Jacob

h xxx. 43. xxxiii.  
11. Job vi. 22

5 And <sup>a</sup>I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and men-servants, and women-servants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I <sup>1</sup>may find grace in thy sight.

i xxxiii. 8. 13.  
xiv. 25. Ruth  
ii. 2. 1 Sam. i.  
18. 2 Sam. xvi.  
4

6 And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, <sup>k</sup>and four hundred men with him.

k 11. xxvii. 40. 4.  
xxviii. 1. Amos  
v. 19.  
l Ex. xiv. 10. Ps.  
lv. 4. 5. lxi. 2.  
Matt. viii. 26.  
2 Cor. i. 8—10.

7 Then Jacob was <sup>1</sup>greatly afraid, and distressed: and he divided the people that *was* with him, and the flocks and herds, and the camels, into two bands;

m xxxiii. 1—3  
Matt. x. 16.

8 And said, <sup>n</sup>If Esau come to the one company and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.

o 1 Sam. xxx. 8.  
2 Chr. xix. 6. 12.  
xxxii. 20. Ps.  
xxxviii. 4—6. 1.  
15. xci. 15. Phil.  
iv. 6. 7.  
p xviii. 7. xxxviii.  
18. xxxi. 29. 42.  
Ex. iii. 6.  
q xxxi. 3. 18.  
r Heb. less than  
all.

9 ¶ And <sup>a</sup>Jacob said, <sup>o</sup>O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the LORD <sup>p</sup>which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:

q xviii. 27. z Sam.  
viii. 18. Job xlii.  
6. 6. 1a. vi. 4.  
Ezra. 7. Dan. ix.  
8. 9. Luke v. 8.  
2 Cor. xii. 11.  
1 Tim. i. 12—15.  
1 Pet. v. 5.  
1 John i. 8—10.  
r xxix. 27. xxxviii.  
15. Mic. vii. 20.  
s xxxviii. 10. 11.  
Job viii. 7.  
t 7.

10 I am <sup>q</sup>not <sup>a</sup>worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the <sup>r</sup>truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with <sup>s</sup>my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become <sup>t</sup>two bands.

u 1 Sam. xii. 10.  
xxiv. 15. Pa. xxv.  
20. xxxi. 2. cxxx.  
184. cxlii. 6. Dan.  
iii. 17. Matt. vi.  
13.

11 <sup>u</sup>Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, <sup>v</sup>and <sup>w</sup>the mother <sup>x</sup>with the children.

x Hos. x. 14.  
y Heb. upon.  
z Ex. xxxii. 13.  
Num. xxiii. 19.  
Matt. xxiv. 35.  
Tit. i. 2. Heb. vi.  
17.  
s xxxviii. 13—15.  
xvi. 3. 4.

12 And <sup>y</sup>thou saidst, <sup>z</sup>I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as

the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

13 ¶ And he lodged there that same night; and took of that <sup>a</sup>which came to his hand, <sup>b</sup>a present for Esau his brother;

a 1 Sam. xxv. 8.

14 Two <sup>c</sup>hundred she-goats and twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams.

b 20. 21. xxxiii.  
10. 1 Sam. xxv.  
27. Prov. xxi.  
8. xviii. 16. xix.  
6. xxi. 14.  
c xxx. 43. xxxi. 9.  
16. Deut. viii.  
18. 1 Sam. xxv.  
2. Job i. 3. xlii.  
12.

15 Thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine and ten bulls, twenty she-asses and ten foals.

16 And he delivered *them* into the hand of his servants, every drove by themselves; and said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove.

17 And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, <sup>d</sup>Whose *art* thou? and whither goest thou? and whose *are* these before thee?

d xxxiii. 3.

18 Then thou shalt say: They <sup>e</sup>be thy servant Jacob's; it is a present sent unto my lord Esau: and behold also he is behind us.

e See on 4, 5.

19 And so commanded he the second, and the third, and all that followed the droves, saying, On this manner shall ye speak unto Esau, when ye find him.

20 And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob is behind us: for he said, 'I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and after-

f xliii. 11. 1 Sam.  
xxv. 17—35.  
Prov. xv. 18. xvi.  
14. xxi. 14.

gave him. By this humble message Jacob intimated, that he was well satisfied with his present possessions, the fruit of his labour; and was ready to give up all pretensions to Isaac's substance, and to render his brother all suitable respect.

V. 6—8. Jacob doubtless understood from the messengers, that Esau came towards him in a hostile manner. This appears from the narrative itself, and from Jacob's precautions, and from the language of his prayer: and to suppose the contrary, is to assume, without the least proof, that both Jacob and the messengers were mistaken. Indeed, the consciousness of having deeply offended his brother might render him suspicious; yet Esau's resentment seems actually to have revived on this occasion. And though the Lord did not restrain him by force, or in a dream prohibit him from injuring Jacob, as he had prohibited Laban; yet he influenced his heart to kindness, and blessed the means of conciliation which Jacob employed. (Prov. xvi. 7.)

V. 9—12. There can scarcely be a finer model of genuine prayer than this. Jacob's thankful acknowledg-

ment of former unmerited favours; the humble confession of his entire unworthiness; his simple description of his fears and distress; his unreserved reference of the whole matter to God, renouncing all other dependence, and resting all his hopes on him; his explicit mention of the very words both of the Lord's promises and commands, as engaging his own glory to protect him; and his anxiety for the preservation of his family, but especially of his children, in whose lives the promises seemed chiefly concerned;—these are points peculiarly worthy of notice and of imitation.—Thus he made “the name of the LORD his strong tower,” and could not but be safe.

V. 13. *Came to his hand.*] Or, that which Providence had put into his possession.

V. 14, 15. The present was noble; and not intended as a restitution for injuries done to Esau.—The blessing belonged to Jacob, by God's own appointment; and Esau was only *affronted*, and disappointed in his object, not injured in his property, by Jacob's misconduct.

V. 16—20. Jacob had purchased the birth-right, and the dominion had been expressly promised him in the

ward I will see his face: <sup>o</sup> peradventure he will accept <sup>o</sup> of me.

21 So went the present over before him: and himself lodged that night in the company.

22 And he rose up that night, and took <sup>h</sup> his two wives, and his two women-servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford <sup>i</sup> Jabbok.

23 And he took them, and <sup>†</sup> sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had.

24 ¶ And Jacob was left alone: and there <sup>k</sup> wrestled a <sup>l</sup> man with him, until the <sup>‡</sup> breaking of the day.

25 And when he saw <sup>m</sup> that he prevailed not against him, he <sup>n</sup> touched the hollow of his thigh: and the hollow of

Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

26 And he said, <sup>o</sup> Let me go, for the day breaketh: And he said, <sup>p</sup> I will not let thee go, except <sup>q</sup> thou bless me.

27 And he said unto him, <sup>r</sup> What is thy name? And he said Jacob.

28 And he said, <sup>s</sup> Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but <sup>t</sup> Israel: for as a prince hast thou <sup>u</sup> power with God and <sup>v</sup> with men, and hast prevailed.

29 And Jacob asked <sup>w</sup> him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name: And he said, <sup>x</sup> Wherefore is it, <sup>y</sup> that thou dost ask after my name? and he <sup>z</sup> blessed him there.

30 And <sup>1</sup> Jacob called the name of

blessing: yet, understanding that the temporal advantages were principally intended for his posterity, and satisfied with the spiritual benefits for himself, he paid homage to Esau, as an acknowledged superior.—His liberal present being thus divided, and the persons attending each drove thus repeating the same expressions of respect to Esau, would have a powerful tendency to soften his resentment and conciliate his favour.

V. 21—23. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 24. Having taken every needful precaution, Jacob retired into some solitary place, to renew his earnest supplications; and while he was thus employed, one “in fashion as a man” appeared to him, and engaged in wrestling with him. Nothing requires more vigour, activity, attention, and unintermitting exertion, than wrestling; which seems on this account to have been selected as an emblem of the fervent prayer of faith, persisted in amidst delays, alarms, discouragements, and opposition from every side; and which at length will surely be crowned with success. (*Marg. Ref. k.*)

V. 25. *Prevailed not.*] This circumstance significantly marked out that frame of mind, which refuses, as it were, to yield, or take a denial. (*Notes, Matt. xv. 21—28.*) He with whom Jacob wrestled, by touching the hollow of his thigh, and dislocating the bone, evidently shewed, that when he suffered himself to be prevailed over, it was the effect of mercy, and the gracious acceptance of Jacob's importunity in prayer. The dislocation seems to have been momentary, though the effect in some measure continued afterwards.

V. 26. The morning now called Jacob to the care of his family, which was here intimated to him. But Jacob, in the person who contended with him, recognized a friend; yea, that Friend, from whom all blessings flow; and therefore he refused to let him go, till he had blessed him.

V. 27, 28. This change of name, from *Jacob* to *Israel*, signified, that he was no longer to be regarded as one who got the blessing, yet with some discredit, by twice supplanting his elder brother; but, as a *prince of God*, (*marg.*) who had wrestled with him for it, and prevailed to his everlasting honour. Having power with God, he would

surely also prevail with man. Thus he was, so to speak, knighted in the field. His posterity inherited his *new name*, but were never called after his *original name*; and the nation of Israel was a type of “the Israel of God,” in every age and country, who wrestle and prevail with him by faith and prayer. (*Note, John i. 47—51.*)

V. 29. *Wherefore?* &c.] After what had passed, there could be no ground of doubt or uncertainty, in respect of Him with whom Jacob had wrestled: and it was therefore wholly needless to enquire his name. But Jacob's other request was granted, “and he blessed him there;” probably ratifying to him the blessings covenanted to Abraham, and Isaac, and afterwards to him. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 30. He who appeared to Jacob was before called a *Man*; yet here he is called *God*. The prophet Hosea calls him “the Angel, even *JEHOVAH* the God of hosts, *JEHOVAH* is his memorial;” and says, that “Jacob wept and made supplication to him.” (*Note, Hos. xii. 3—6.*) We cannot, therefore, reasonably doubt the sentiments of Jacob, of Moses, and of Hosea, concerning him who now wrestled with Jacob, and surnamed him *Israel*. And the Scriptures referred to in the margin, if carefully examined and compared, will have a powerful tendency to convince the impartial enquirer, that he could be no other than the eternal Son of God, by these appearances anticipating his incarnation.—It is indeed asserted by the Rabbinical expositors, and from them adopted by some learned men, that the *SHECHINAH*, or visible glory of God, of which the attendant angels constituted a part, was displayed on this occasion, as well as on all others of a similar kind; and that these expressions, and the language often used by the angel who appeared, are to be thus accounted for.—But there seems no scriptural ground for this sentiment; and it was probably first devised, to answer the arguments taken from such passages by the ancient Christian writers, for the Deity of the predicted Messiah, and the doctrine of the Trinity; though it has been since espoused by many who profess those doctrines. The word *SHECHINAH* is not found in Scripture, but only in the Rabbinical Hebrew. It signifies merely a *habitation*: but it is used to denote all those appearances, by which the special presence of *JE-*

\* That is, The face of God. <sup>a</sup> xvi. 13. Ex. xxi. 10, 11. xxxiii. 14. 19—23. Num. xii. 8. Judg. vi. 22, 23. xiii. 21, 22. 1s. vi. 5. John i. 18. 2 Tim. i. 10. b 25.

the place \* Peniel: for \* I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.

31 And as he passed over Penuel, the sun rose upon him, and <sup>b</sup> he halted upon his thigh.

32 Therefore the children of Israel <sup>c</sup> eat not of the sinew which shrank, <sup>1 Sam. v. 8.</sup> which is upon the hollow of the thigh, unto this day: because he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh, in the sinew that shrank.

HOVAH was announced. It is readily allowed, that a visible glory of this kind afterwards appeared to Moses and to Israel; and perhaps in the holy of holies, both of the tabernacle and temple, above the Mercy-Seat. (Ex. xiii. 21, 22. xiv. 19—24. xvi. 10. xxxiii. 7—11. 18—23. xl. 34—38. Num. xii. 4, 5. xiv. 10. xvi. 19. 42. 1 Kings viii. 10, 11.) But it must strike every attentive reader, that these displays of the glory of the Lord differed exceedingly from such appearances, as we have repeatedly considered; in which an Angel spake in the name of God, and as JEHOVAH; or one in human form was addressed by the patriarchs as JEHOVAH, and spoken of by them and by the historian in that character. No doubt, the tabernacle and temple were intended as types of Him, in “whom *dwelleth* all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” He in fact is the true SHECHINAH: “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him:” and I cannot doubt, after the most deliberate examination, that the exposition, which has been given in the notes, on this and many preceding passages, is the only true, scriptural, and consistent interpretation.—Jacob, beholding the Lord in human form, was not overwhelmed by the appearance; as it was generally supposed they must be who beheld the divine glory. He had also received an assurance of deliverance from the dreaded resentment of Esau; and in both respects his life was preserved. (Note, Ex. xxxiii. 20—23.)

V. 31. *Halted.*] Israel carried this token away with him, that it was a *reality*, and not a *dream*, or *vision*, or *delusive imagination*.

V. 32. Probably this was done by some divine appointment, before the giving of the law: and the meaning was clear to them, though obscure to us.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—12.

Though we cannot behold the angels meeting us, and, as “the host of God,” encamping round us; yet, possessing that “faith which is the evidence of things not seen,” we may have a full and comfortable assurance that they actually do so. And we need to be encouraged, not only by expecting the guardianship of angels, but by a firm reliance on the protection of the God of angels, to render us secure and happy in such a world as this; where victory in one conflict only reminds us to arm for another; and deliverance from one trouble or danger, to prepare for further suffering. Yet our severest trials frequently result from former transgressions, and call them to our remembrance for our deeper humiliation.—Prudent precautions may and ought to be employed, by those who simply trust in God; and to neglect them is to *tempt* him: nor are any means more proper to disarm resentment, especially that

of proud and worldly men, than humble, respectful language, and cheerfully relinquishing the objects of contention. Yet these are but *means*; and unless God arrest and influence the heart, they cannot subdue the power of jealousy and revenge.—In times of urgent danger, even strong faith and repeated assurances will not entirely exclude terror and distress: but they will put life and vigour into humble, fervent prayer; and enable us to plead the promises, to remember former mercies and deliverances; and, in the path of unreserved obedience, so to leave ourselves in the Lord's hands, as shall ensure protection, and restore peace to our souls.

##### V. 13—32.

Every duty has its season; and the care of our families, according to present emergencies, may properly succeed, though it must not exclude our devotions: and again, when we have used every prudent means for our own and others' good, we must retire, and pray for the blessing. If we are in a proper frame of mind, we shall rather abridge ourselves of wonted refreshments than neglect communion with God: nay, there may be urgent cases, when even the night itself does not seem too long to pour out our hearts before him; and if our faith do not fail, our spirits flag, and we grow formal, our devotions should not be counted too long. When “the Spirit of God helpeth our infirmities,” and our intense, earnest, and vast desires can scarcely find words large and emphatic enough to utter them, but we still mean more than we can express; then prayer is indeed *wrestling* with God: and, however we be tried or discouraged, we shall certainly prevail. He will approve our importunity, and largely communicate his blessings; and, prevailing with him in prayer, we shall succeed against all our enemies who persist in striving with us, and prevail on many to be at peace with us. Indeed, in every case in which we desire to prevail with man, fervent prayer to God is our most efficacious means. (Notes, Neh. i. 5—11. ii. 4.)—But it is only in human nature that sinners can see God, and live. “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” God as reconciled in and through him, is the Object of a sinner's acceptable worship; with him we may be as importunate as we please; and if, in humble faith, we determine “not to let him go except he bless us,” he will take it well: nor should we ever leave off wrestling, in the nights of trouble or temptation, till the day break, nay, till “the Sun of righteousness arise,” upon our souls. Thus shall we be acknowledged as true Israelites, and crowned as princes with God: and while we carry away the memorials of our victories, we must record his goodness, for his glory and the benefit of others. But we must not wonder, if even our sweetest consolations carry with them evidences of our infirmity; and if we have afterwards a thorn in the flesh and buffetings of Satan, to preserve us from being exalted above measure.

## CHAP. XXXIII.

Esau and Jacob meet, and after an amicable conference, Esau departs, 1—16. Jacob abides at Succoth; and buys a field, and builds an altar at Shechem, 17—20.

AND Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, <sup>a</sup>Esau came, and with him four hundred men. <sup>b</sup>And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two hand-maids.

2 And he put the hand-maids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, <sup>c</sup>and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.

3 And he <sup>d</sup>passed over before them, and <sup>e</sup>bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

4 And Esau ran to meet him, and <sup>f</sup>embraced him, and <sup>g</sup>fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.

5 And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the women and the children; and said, Who <sup>h</sup>are those <sup>i</sup>with thee? And he said, The <sup>j</sup>children which God hath graciously given thy servant.

6 Then the hand-maidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves.

7 And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near, and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIII. V. 2. *Rachel.*] Rachel and Joseph being dearest to Jacob, he provided most carefully for their security.

V. 3. Jacob still prosecuted his plan of satisfying Esau, that he made no claim to secular pre-eminence, but readily yielded him all due respect, as his superior.

V. 4. In answer to Jacob's prayer, and in accomplishment of the promise made to him, the Lord thus influenced Esau's heart, to the exercise of natural affection towards his brother. The reconciliation from this time seems to have been cordial; though there is no proof or token that Esau was become truly religious.

V. 5. *The children, &c.*] The piety and simplicity of this answer is well worthy of admiration and imitation. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7. It is remarkable that, on this affecting occasion, we find no intimation of Esau's expressing any good will to his brother Jacob's numerous family, thus respectfully bowing before him, one after another. No good wish towards them is recorded, such as even irreligious men often make in similar circumstances. Much less was any prayer offered in their behalf, for the blessing of God upon them.

8 And he said, <sup>k</sup>What meanest thou by <sup>l</sup>'all this drove, which I met? And he said, *These are to find grace in the sight of my lord.*

9 And Esau said, I have enough; <sup>m</sup>my brother, <sup>n</sup>keep that thou hast unto thyself.

10 And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, <sup>o</sup>if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore <sup>p</sup>I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me.

11 Take, I pray thee, <sup>q</sup>my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, <sup>r</sup>and because I have <sup>s</sup>enough; and he <sup>t</sup>urged him, and he took it.

12 And he said, Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee.

13 And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that <sup>u</sup>the children *are* tender, and the flocks and herds with young *are* with me; and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die.

14 Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, <sup>v</sup>according as the cattle that goeth before me, and the children <sup>w</sup>be able to endure; until I come unto my lord <sup>x</sup>unto Seir.

<sup>k</sup> Heb. *What is all this band to thee?*  
<sup>l</sup> xxxiii. 13—20.

<sup>m</sup> iv. 9 xxvii. 41.  
<sup>n</sup> Judg. xx. 23.  
<sup>o</sup> Acts ix. 17. xxi. 20. Philem. 7. 16.

<sup>p</sup> Heb. *be that to thee that is thine.*  
<sup>q</sup> xix. 19. xlvii. 29. 1. 4. Ex. xxxiii. 12, 13. Ruth ii. 10. 1 Sam. xx. 3. Jer. xxxi. 2.

<sup>r</sup> m xxxii. 30. Job xxxiii. 28. Matt. xviii. 10. Rev. xxi. 4.

<sup>s</sup> n Josh. xv. 19. 1 Sam. xxv. 27. xxx. 26. 2 Kings v. 15. 2 Cor. ix. 5, 6.

<sup>t</sup> o 9. Phil. iv. 11, 12, 18.  
<sup>u</sup> Heb. *all things.*

<sup>v</sup> Rom. viii. 32. 1 Cor. iii. 21. 2 Cor. vi. 10. Phil. iv. 18.

<sup>w</sup> p 2 Kings ii. 17. v. 16. 23. Luke xiv. 23.

<sup>x</sup> q xl. 11. Ex. xxxiv. 28. John xxi 15—17.

<sup>y</sup> Heb. *according to the foot of the work, &c.; and according to the foot of the children.*

<sup>z</sup> Mark iv. 33. Rom. xv. 1. 1 Cor. iii. 2. ix. 19—22.

<sup>aa</sup> See on xxxii. 3. —Deut. ii. 1. Judg. v. 4. 2 Chr. xx. 10. Ez. xxv. 8. xxxv. 2, 3.

This should be carefully noticed in estimating Esau's character.

V. 10. Jacob expressed the great satisfaction, which he took in this friendly interview; as if it resembled even the pleasure of intimate communion with God. We may suppose him to have used a *proverbial* expression: yet we cannot so cordially approve of this answer, as of the preceding; unless in Esau's conduct, he recognized the special presence and favour of God, who was thus granting the prayers which he had presented, when he saw his face and wrestled with him. (xxxii. 30.)—To accept a present from an inferior, was a customary pledge of friendship, but refusing it implied disaffection: and the case in the eastern world is the same at this day.

V. 12. Esau thus offered to escort Jacob into the land of Seir.

V. 14. It is not likely that Jacob intended to settle in Seir with his family; nor do we know that he ever paid Esau a visit there, though he probably at this time intended it: there is no proof, however, that he did not. But, perhaps, on more mature consideration, or by divine monition, or because of some change in his circumstances, he might afterwards alter his intention, or fail of performing it.

15 And Esau said, Let me now <sup>\* Heb. *am*, or *place*.</sup> leave with thee *some* of the folk that <sup>† Heb. *Wherefore* *are* *is this?*</sup> are with me: And he said, <sup>‡ xxxiv. 11. xlvii. 25. Ruth ii. 13. 1 Sam. xxv. 8 2 Sam. xvi. 4</sup> What needeth it? Let me find grace in the sight of my lord.

16 So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir.

17 ¶ And Jacob journeyed to <sup>a Josh. xiii. 27. Judg. viii. 6. 8 16. 1 Kings vii. 46 Ps. lx. 6</sup> Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called <sup>‡ That is, *Booths*.</sup> Succoth.

18 And Jacob came to <sup>x John iii. 23.</sup> Shalem a city of <sup>v Josh. xxiv. 1. Judg. ix. 1. Acts vii. 16. Sychem.</sup> Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from <sup>2 xxv. 20. xxviii. 6, 7 xxxv. 9. xvi. 15.</sup> Padan-aram; and pitched his tent before the city.

19 And he <sup>a xxiii. 17—20. xlix. 20—32. Josh. xxiv. 32. John iv. 5.</sup> bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of <sup>b xxiv. 2, &c Acts vii. 16 Emmer.</sup> Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred <sup>† Or, *lambs*.</sup> pieces of money.

20 And he erected there an <sup>c xii. 7, & xiii. 18. † That is, *God, the God of Israel.* xxxii. 28. xxxv. 7.</sup> altar, and called it <sup>‡ Heb. *to the heart of the damsel.* 2 Sam. xix. 7. 2 Chr. xxx. 22. Is. xl. 2. Hos. ii. 14. marg.</sup> El-Elohe-Israel.

V. 15. *What needeth it?*] Guarded thus far by the angels of God, Jacob neither required, nor wished for a guard of soldiers. The friendship of Esau was all that he asked. (Note, *Exra* viii. 21—23.)

V. 17. Succoth was on the east side of Jordan, being the last station at which Jacob rested before he passed that river. After a very long journey, he staid here awhile, in some temporary habitation which he had hastily built, to rest and refresh his family and his flocks.

V. 18. *Shalem.*] This place was situated on the west side of Jordan, on which Jacob was after he had crossed that river. Some translate it, *He came in peace to the city of Shechem*; and it is probable that this is the true meaning of the clause.

V. 20. *El-Elohe-Israel.*] The altar was erected and inscribed to Him, with whom Jacob had before wrestled and prevailed, and by whom he had been surnamed *Israel*, as the very name indisputably proves; and this is an additional discovery, who that *Man* was; and an indication, what value Jacob put on the new name which he had thus received. (Notes, xxxii. 24—30.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When we have poured out our souls before the Lord in fervent prayer, we are prepared to meet dangers and difficulties with confidence and comfort, and shall soon experience the mercy and faithfulness of God. He hath various methods of "making our enemies to be at peace with us:" he can either bind their hands, awe their spirits, excite natural affection, or plant supernatural grace in their hearts. Yet in all this the Lord works by suitable means; and "yielding" often forms the wisest method of "pacifying great offences." This is done by waving points in contest, paying all due respect, and receding from our temporal interest; and by manifesting to the consciences of

#### CHAP. XXXIV.

Dinah visits the daughters of the land, and is defiled by Shechem; who loves her and proposes to marry her, 1—12. Jacob's sons insidiously consent, on condition that all the Shechemites be circumcised; to which at Shechem's instance they submit, 13—24. Simeon and Levi murder all the men of Shechem, plunder the city, make captives of the women and children, and recover Dinah, 25—29. Jacob bitterly complains, and his sons excuse their conduct, 30, 31.

AND <sup>a xxx. 21. xvi. 15.</sup> Dinah the daughter of Leah, <sup>b xxvi. 34. xxviii. 46. xxviii. 6. c xxxiii. 19.</sup> which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see <sup>d vi. 2. xxxix. 6. 7. 2 Sam. xi. 2. Job xxxi. 1. 9. Matt. v. 28.</sup> the daughters of the land.

2 And when <sup>\* Heb. *humbled* *her.* Deut. xxi. 14. xxii. 24. 29. Judg. xix. 24. 25. Ez. xxii. 10, 11.</sup> Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, <sup>† Heb. *to the heart of the damsel.* 2 Sam. xix. 7. 2 Chr. xxx. 22. Is. xl. 2. Hos. ii. 14. marg.</sup> saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and defiled her.

3 And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel.

4 And Shechem spake unto his fa-

our opponents, that we are satisfied with a portion earned by our labour, and neither envy nor covet their abundance; that we count it "more blessed to give than to receive;" that we consider ourselves happy in the Lord's favour, and under his protection; and that we want nothing more than to live in peace and amity, which we much desire and greatly value. Yet, in such circumstances, we must be careful that we do not carry too far our desire of pleasing, or our fear of offending, or profess more than consists with piety or sincerity: nor may we conceal or be ashamed of our religion, when in the company of those who fear not God. It is not therefore desirable to be too intimate with superior ungodly relations, who will expect us to join in their vanities, or at least to connive at them, though they disapprove and perhaps deride our religion; and thus they will either be a snare to us, or offended with our conduct. It is more prudent to keep at a distance, and live among such as have less ascendancy over us, and where we can be more at liberty.—Let us also observe, that we shall be least willing to expose to hazard that which we value most and love best: we shall therefore venture the loss of all things, rather than endanger the loss of our souls, if we know their value; or than renounce Christ, if we truly love him. And while we admire Jacob's tender care of his family and flocks, the good Shepherd of our souls, who "gathers the lambs in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young," should not be forgotten; whose example we should all imitate, whether as parents, teachers, or pastors. Blessed be his name, he is still "The mighty God, the God of Israel:" may he who writes these reflections, and may all who read them, be numbered among the true Israel of God; that we may record his name, and rejoice in his love, through our pilgrimage here on earth, and for ever in the Canaan above! Amen.

\* xxi. 21. Judg. xiv. 2. 2 Sam. xiii. 13. ther Hamor, saying, \* Get me this damsel to wife.

5 And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter: 'now his sons were with his cattle in the field; and Jacob held his peace until they were come.

6 And Hamor the father of Shechem went out unto Jacob to commune with him.

7 ¶ And the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard it, and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth: because he had wrought folly in Israel, in lying with Jacob's daughter; which thing ought not to be done.

8 And Hamor communed with them, saying, 'The soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter: I pray you give her him to wife.

9 And make ye marriages with us, and give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you.

10 And ye shall dwell with us: \* and the land shall be before you; dwell and trade ye therein, and get you possessions therein.

11 And Shechem said unto her father, and unto her brethren, Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me I will give.

12 Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife.

13 And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor his father deceitfully, and said, because he had defiled Dinah their sister:

14 And they said unto them, We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised: for that were a reproach unto us.

15 But in this will we consent unto you: If ye will be as we be, that every male of you be circumcised;

16 Then will we give our daughters

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIV. V. 1. Jacob must have continued several years near Shechem, before the events recorded in this chapter took place; and this made way for too free an intercourse between his family and the Shechemites. Dinah seems to have been about the age of Joseph, or rather younger. As, some time after Jacob's departure from Shechem, Joseph was seventeen years of age, and went to his brethren and was sold by them; so Dinah could not at this time be more than fifteen years old. She was an only daughter, doubtless much beloved, and probably too much indulged; and having got acquainted with the daughters of their heathen neighbours, she went to visit them, and to look about with them, as the original implies, probably on some publick occasion of mirth and festivity: but it does not appear, whether it was with or without the consent of her parents.

V. 2. There is nothing, in the narrative, which implies that Shechem committed a rape on Dinah; nay, the contrary is denoted in the words, "Should he deal with our sister, as with an harlot" (31)? for force is not used with harlots. The Jewish expositors, however, assert that he ravished her. Perhaps they devised this, in order to palliate the cruelty and injustice of Jacob's sons, by the greatness of the provocation. But Shechem rather seems to have used the common arts of seduction; and to have detained Dinah with the promise of marrying her, till she was afterwards taken away by her brethren.

V. 5. Jacob kept silence till his sons returned home; as scarcely knowing what to say, or as afraid, either of exasperating the men of Shechem, or of taking some improper step. Probably, he would have acted more wisely, if he had taken the management of the business wholly upon himself: instead of entrusting it with his sons, who were

young, rash, and violent, and had too-much influence with him.

V. 7. Jacob's sons were extremely grieved and enraged; more, probably, on account of the disgrace of their family, than for the sin committed against God.—What follows seems to be the sentiment of the historian, who spake according to the language of the times in which he wrote, to intimate to the children of Israel, the inconsistency of such practices with their name and profession: for it is not probable, that at this early period the name of Israel was so well known, and so much regarded in its genuine import, by the sons of Jacob.

V. 8—12. Hamor seems to have made his proposal to Jacob alone, in the first instance, who deferred him till his sons came home, when it was more fully stated to them. Shechem appears to have been sincerely desirous of conciliating their favour, and obtaining their consent to his marriage with Dinah, on any terms. Nothing, as matters then stood, could have been spoken more fairly: and it may be questioned whether, in such a case, it would have been wrong in Jacob to consent to Dinah's marriage; though the proposal, of forming further connexions of that kind, ought perhaps to have been declined. But Shechem's conduct in detaining Dinah did not well accord to his language.

V. 13. *Because, &c.*] Jacob's sons made Shechem's sin the excuse for their own deceitful project. Perhaps at first most of them only intended to procure an opportunity of rescuing their sister, in case Shechem should refuse to restore her peaceably: but Simeon and Levi formed and executed a far deeper scheme of revenge and plunder. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 14—17. Neither Abraham nor Isaac had daughters: both Isaac and Jacob had married the daughters of uncir-

unto you, and we will take your daughters to us, and we will dwell with you, and we will become one people.

17 But if ye will not hearken unto us to be circumcised, then will we take our daughter, and we will be gone.

18 And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son.

19 And the young man deferred not to do the thing, <sup>v</sup> because he had delight in Jacob's daughter: and he *was* more <sup>a</sup> honourable than all the house of his father.

20 And Hamor and Shechem his son came unto <sup>r</sup> the gate of their city, and communed with the men of their city, saying,

21 These men *are* peaceable with us, therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein; for the land, behold, *it is* large enough for them; let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters.

22 Only herein <sup>a</sup> will the men consent unto us, for to dwell with us, to be one people, if every male among us be circumcised, as they *are* circumcised.

23 *Shall* <sup>r</sup> not their cattle, and their substance, and every beast of their's *be* ours? Only let us consent unto them, and they will dwell with us.

24 And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city: and <sup>a</sup> every

male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city.

25 ¶ And it came to pass on the third day, when they were <sup>r</sup> sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, <sup>v</sup> Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males.

26 And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the <sup>r</sup> edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out.

27 The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and <sup>a</sup> spoiled the city; because they had defiled their sister.

28 They took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and that which *was* in the city, and that which *was* in the field.

29 And all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and spoiled even all that *was* in the house.

30 ¶ And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, <sup>r</sup> Ye have troubled me to make me <sup>a</sup> to stink among the inhabitants of the land, amongst the Canaanites, and the Perizzites; <sup>a</sup> and I *being* few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me, <sup>a</sup> and I shall be destroyed, I and my house.

31 And they said, 'Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?

p xxix. 20. Cant. viii. 6. Is. lxiii. 4.

q Num. xxiii. 15. 2 Kings v. 1. Is. iii. 3-5. v. 13. xxxiii. 8, 9. Acts xiii. 50. xvii. 12.

r xxii. 17. xxiii. 10. Ruth iv. 1. Job xxix. 7. Prov. xxxi. 23. Am. v. 10. 12. 15. Zech. viii. 16.

a 16, 17.

r John ii. 16. vi. 26, 27. Acts xix. 24-26. 1 Tim. vi. 6-10.

u xvii. 23. Is. i. 10. —16. Matt. vii. 6. Rom. ii. 25. 29. 1 Cor. vii. 19.

x Josh. v. 8.

v xxix. 33. 34. xlix. 5-7. Num. xxxi. 7. 17.

Heb. mouth. Deut. xxxii. 42. 2 Sam. ii. 26. Is. xxxi. 8.

s Est. ix. 10. 16.

a 2. 31. See on 18.

b Josh. vii. 23. 1 Kings xviii. 18. 1 Chr. ii. 7. c Ex. v. 21. 1 Sam. xiii. 4. xxvii. 12. 1 Chr. xix. 6. d Deut. iv. 27. vii. 7. Ps. cv. 12.

e xii. 2. 12. xxviii. 13, 14. 1 Sam. xvi. 2. xxvii. 1. Rom. iv. 18-20. See on 13. xlix. 7.

cumcised persons; and we have reason to conclude, that most of Jacob's sons, if not all, did the same. (Ex. vi. 15.) As far as we know, there was no law nor custom against intermarriages with uncircumcised persons, at that time existing; though the intermarriages of Abraham's family, with idolaters in general, and with the inhabitants of the land, in particular, were in many ways discountenanced. Indeed, this seems to have been merely a *pretence*, as used by Jacob's sons; though it might have become a general opinion in his family, grounded on the covenant ratified with Abraham by circumcision, and perhaps on tradition: but religion was by no means their object in this transaction.—Some doubt may exist, concerning the propriety of admitting into the church by circumcision, the Shechemites, who belonged to the devoted race of Canaan, even if they had made an intelligent and suitable profession of religion: but the very proposing the performance of this religious ordinance, as a condition of secular advantages, was as inconsistent with true piety, as the deceitful intention and subsequent conduct of Jacob's sons were with truth, justice, and humanity. Yet alas! practices of the same nature are still shamefully common in the visible church!

V. 18—24. The Shechemites acted upon the most selfish principles, and submitted to circumcision without the least regard to its nature, meaning, or divine institution, avowedly to obtain their own secular ends: yet they were much more excusable in this profanation, than the sons of Jacob, who proposed it to them, and who might have been expected to know better.

V. 25—28. Simeon and Levi, sons of Leah, were Dinah's brethren by the whole blood.—It has not improbably been conjectured, that they were at that time hospitably entertained in Shechem's house; which gave them a fairer opportunity of coming upon the Shechemites, when sore and unprepared, and of effecting this dreadful execution. Though no more of Jacob's sons were concerned in the massacre, perhaps some servants might assist; and it seems that all the rest, without hesitation, concurred in the plunder.

V. 29. We are not informed what became of these captives afterwards, any more than of the servants of Jacob's household; whether they were otherwise previously disposed of, or whether they went down with Jacob's family into Egypt. Some think that Jacob restored both the per-

## CHAP. XXXV.

God commands Jacob to go to Bethel, and pay his vows; and he obeys, 1—7. The death of Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, 8. The Lord appears to Jacob, and encourages him, and Jacob worships, 9—15. Benjamin is born, and Rachel dies, 16—20. Reuben com-

mits incest with Bilhah, 22. The names of Jacob's sons, 23—26. Jacob visits Isaac; Isaac's age, death, and burial, 27—29.

AND God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to <sup>a</sup> Beth-el, and dwell there: and

a 7. xli. 8. xlii. 8.  
4. xxviii. 10—22.  
xxxi. 13. Ec. v.  
4—6. Hos. xii.  
4. Nah. i. 15.

sons and the property, to their surviving relatives and countrymen; and indeed this is highly probable.

V. 30. *To make me to stink.*] Abraham and Isaac had been respected, though strangers; and their religion honoured, through their good behaviour and that of their families: but, by this infamous conduct, Jacob apprehended, that his sons would cause him and his religion to be even execrated among the heathen, whose crimes they had surpassed.

V. 31. Thus the criminals attempted to vindicate themselves, and wickedly insinuated that Jacob was willing to permit his daughter to be treated as a harlot.—Though he said nothing more for the present, their conduct made a deep and durable impression on his mind.—After this, we read nothing more of Dinah, than her name; and it may be concluded that she lived and died unmarried, but we hope not impenitent.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

## V. 1—12.

Young persons, especially females, are never so safe as under the inspection of prudent and pious parents: for their own inexperience and credulity, and the intoxicating nature of flattery, together with the artifice of those who are continually laying snares for them, expose them to imminent danger. They are therefore their own enemies, if they desire to go from home alone, especially among those who are strangers to God and true religion: but those parents are much more inexcusable, who allow or encourage their children in acting so imprudently; nay, who do not interpose their authority to prevent them from heedlessly exposing themselves to unseen and unsuspected danger.—Children who are indulged, because beloved, too often, like Dinah, become the shame and grief of their relations. And indeed, large families, even when trained up in the fear of God, will frequently occasion many trials, anxieties, and sorrows to their parents; and the grief of losing them in infancy is transient and tolerable, compared with that of seeing them grow up and live in wickedness. Let parents then rejoice as though they rejoiced not, and submit with resignation if the Lord bereave them of their beloved offspring; and if their children be spared, let them bring them up for the Lord, and commend them to his gracious protection.—When young women listen to the vile proposals or flattering promises of seducers, they not unfrequently seclude themselves from every prospect of forming honourable connexions; and voluntarily consign themselves to a single life, if still worse consequences do not ensue: and this consideration, combined with nobler motives, should induce them to reject, with determined indignation and disdain, every dishonourable proposal.—No sin is made lighter of by multitudes than lewdness: yet no crime is more injurious to the bodies and souls of individuals, to the peace and comfort of families, and to the welfare of society; and no sin makes way for more

horrible consequences, as introductory to all other wickedness. But, how will these heathens rise up in judgment against thousands, falsely called Christians, and condemn them; who, having seduced and defiled the objects of their pretended affection, afterwards treat them with contempt and hatred; leave them to the infamy and misery of prostitution, disease, and death; and, without the least compassion for them or their broken-hearted parents, proceed to add new trophies of their infamous success, and to multiply the victims of their unbridled lusts! Surely Shechem was in this more honourable, not only than all the house of his father, but than all the rest of his brethren, the whole tribe of seducers; who are in honour and conscience bound to make this *only*, but *inadequate* reparation, though very few of them are willing to do it!

## V. 13—31.

How lamentable is it, that children, who have profited little by the example and instructions of their godly parents, should so often gain an undue ascendancy over them! and that they, who express great indignation at the crimes of others, and the “folly wrought in Israel,” should prove themselves so unacquainted with the character of a true Israelite, as far to exceed in their own conduct those crimes which they punish in others! They, who under the pretext of religion, and by profaning its sacred institutions, can conceal their designs, that they may, without being suspected, execute atrocious wickedness, are the most dangerous enemies of religion: for they cause both it and its professors, to be hated and execrated, expose them to inward anguish and outward persecution, and open the mouths and harden the hearts of multitudes to their destruction.—But they who are wicked enough to perpetrate enormous crimes, will never fail to vindicate them; nor can any thing, but the grace of God, or the discoveries which will be made at the day of judgment, effectually stop men's mouths and silence their excuses. Then, however, the impenitent sinner will awfully learn, at length, that the crimes of others form no excuse for his own: and though God may justly punish those who profane his ordinances, or transgress his laws, even by the hands of their very tempters; yet the latter shall be punished with still greater severity.—The good Lord preserve our families from such crimes and miseries, and his church from such scandals, as are recorded in this chapter!

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXXV. V. 1. Jacob had hitherto deferred to perform his vow at Beth-el, and to dedicate the tenth part of his substance to the Lord; but on what account we are not informed.—Perhaps his afflictions, recorded in the former chapter, were intended to chastise that delay; and indeed they might arise, as natural consequences, from his continuing so long near Shechem. But, being now reminded by an immediate revelation of the will of the Lord,

make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee <sup>b</sup> when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother.

2 Then Jacob said <sup>c</sup> unto his household, and to all that *were* with him, Put away the <sup>d</sup> strange gods that *are* among you, and be <sup>e</sup> clean, and change your garments:

3 And let us arise, and go up to Beth-el; and I will make there an altar unto God, <sup>f</sup> who answered me in the day of my distress, and <sup>g</sup> was with me in the way which I went.

4 And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which *were* in their hand, and *all their* <sup>h</sup> ear-rings which *were* in their ears; and Jacob <sup>i</sup> hid them under the oak which *was* by Shechem.

5 And they journeyed: and <sup>k</sup> the terror of God was upon the cities that *were* round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.

6 So Jacob came to <sup>m</sup> Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, (that is Beth-el,) he and all the people that *were* with him.

7 And he <sup>n</sup> built there an altar, and called the place <sup>o</sup> El-beth-el: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother.

8 But Deborah <sup>p</sup> Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Beth-el, <sup>q</sup> under an oak: and the name of it was called <sup>r</sup> Allon-bachuth.

9 And <sup>s</sup> God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram; and blessed him.

10 And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: <sup>t</sup> thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name; and he called his name Israel.

11 And God said unto him, *I am* <sup>u</sup> God Almighty; be fruitful and multiply: <sup>v</sup> a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee: and kings shall come out of thy loins.

12 And <sup>w</sup> the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.

b xxvii. 41—46.

c xviii. 19. Josh.

xxv. 15. Pa. ci.

2—7.

d xxxi. 19. 34.

Josh. xxiv. 2.

23. Judg. x. 16.

1 Sam. vii. 3.

2 Cor. vi. 16—

17.

e 22. xxiv. 2. 24.

25. Ex. xix. 10.

14. Job i. 5. Pa.

E. 2. 7. Ec. v. 1.

Ex. xviii. 31.

xxvii. 25. 2 Cor.

vii. 1. Heb. x.

22. Jam. iv. 8.

1 Pet. ii. 1, 2.

f xxviii. 12, 13. Pa.

xvi. 1. 1. 15.

lxvi. 13. 14. xci.

15. ciii. 1—5.

cvi. 8. cxvi. 1.

2. 16—18. cxviii.

19—22.

g xxviii. 20. xxxi.

3. Prov. iii. 6.

Is. xliii. 2.

h Ex. xxxii. 2—4.

Judg. viii. 24.

27. Hos. ii. 13.

i Ex. xxxii. 20.

Deut. vii. 5. 25.

Is. ii. 20. xxx.

22.

k Josh. xxiv. 25.

26. Judg. ix. 6.

xxiv. 30. Ex.

xx. 15, 16. xxi.

27. xxxiv. 24.

Deut. xi. 26.

Josh. ii. 9—11.

v. i. 1 Sam. xi.

7. xiv. 5. 2 Chr.

xiv. 14. xvii. 10.

Pa. xiv. 5.

m xii. 8. xxviii.

19. Judg. i. 23—

26.

n 1. 3. Ec. v. 4, 5.

o That is, The

God of Beth-el.

Ex. xvii. 15.

Judg. vi. 24. Ez.

xviii. 25.

p xxiv. 59.

q 1 Sam. xxxi. 13.

† That is, The oak

of weeping. Judg.

ii. 5.

r xxviii. 13. xxxi.

3. 11—13. xxxii.

24—30. xlv. 2.

3. xlviii. 3, 4.

s xvi. 5. 15. xxxii.

27. 28. 1 Kings

xxiii. 81. 2 Kings

xvii. 34.

t xvi. 1. xliii. 14.

xviii. 3, 4. Ex.

vi. 3. 2 Cor. vi.

18.

u See on xvii. 6, 7.

16. xxviii. 3.

vii. 7. xiii. 14—

17. xv. 18. xxvi.

3, 4. xxviii. 3, 4.

13. xlviii. 4.

he doubtless accomplished the whole of his vow, though we are not particularly informed about it.

V. 2. The "strange gods" were idols, worshipped by those who were *strangers* to the true God and his covenant. Probably the *images*, which Rachel had stolen, were of that number, and some might have been found among the spoils of the Shechemites. It seems, that some of Jacob's household worshipped them, and that he had been aware of this; yet had timidly or indolently connived at it.—It is evident, that there existed rules for external purification, before the promulgation of the Mosaic law, probably from traditional revelation. The means of purifying, thus appointed, were designed to represent the sanctification of the Spirit, as the sacrifices prefigured the atonement of Christ's death. The abominations recorded in the foregoing chapter, as well as the other evils which prevailed in Jacob's family, rendered such reformation and purification very needful, as a preparation to the solemn sacrifices and services, which Jacob was about to perform.

V. 4. Jacob's family seem to have parted with their idols, less reluctantly than he expected. The ear-rings were probably worn as an amulet or charm, in token of some dependence on the strange gods; and rather from superstition than for ornament. Jacob buried them in the ground secretly, that his family might not know what he had done with them. He would not convert the metal to other uses; and perhaps he did not know how more entirely to destroy it. (Note, Ex. xxxii. 20.)

V. 5. *Terror of God.* Though the inhabitants of the land could not approve the conduct of Shechem; yet the revenge taken by the sons of Jacob was so complicated an act of treachery, cruelty, and rapine, that it is scarcely

conceivable, how they were restrained from combining together and making war against them, or at least from pursuing them as they fled. But perhaps they respected the character of Jacob, as a worshipper of JEHOVAH, and were afraid to make any assault on his family.—Probably Jacob had made what reparation he could to the survivors; yet the preservation of him and his family is expressly ascribed to a divine influence.

V. 8. As Jacob was a hundred and thirty years old when Joseph was about forty; (compare xli. 46. xlv. 6. with xlvii. 9;) he was about ninety when Joseph was born, who at this time was fifteen or sixteen. (Note, xxxiv. 1.) Jacob was then about a hundred and six; Isaac had been married twenty years when Jacob was born; so that at least a hundred and twenty-five years had passed since Isaac's marriage. Probably after Rebekah's death, (which is not recorded,) this aged servant was taken into Jacob's house, by the desire of Leah and Rachel, as peculiarly dear to them: thus her death was recorded in Jacob's history, rather than in Isaac's; and from this it is inferred, that Jacob had before this visited his father Isaac. "Allon-bachuth" signifies *the oak of weeping*. Deborah was not a relation, but a servant in extreme old age; and probably, not only incapable of being useful to others, but occasioning much trouble: yet her good behaviour had so engaged the affections of the whole family, that her death was greatly lamented.

V. 9. Several years had passed, since Jacob returned from Padan-aram; but this appearance is thus distinguished from the Lord's appearance to him, before he went to Padan-aram, and when in that country.

V. 10—13. *He called.* (10.) The Lord, appearing in

x xi. 5. xvii. 22.  
xviii. 33.

13 And <sup>a</sup> God went up from him, in the place where he talked with him.

† 20. xxviii. 18.  
19. 1 Sam. vii.  
12.

14 And Jacob <sup>b</sup> set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, *even* a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink-offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon.

15 And Jacob called the name of the place, where God spake with him, Beth-el.

\* Heb. a little  
piece of ground.  
xlviii. 7. Ruth i.  
2. Ps. cxxxii. 6.  
Mic. v. 2.  
† iii. 16. 1 Tim. ii.  
15.

16 ¶ And they journeyed from Beth-el: and there was but <sup>a</sup> a little way to come to <sup>b</sup> Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had <sup>a</sup> hard labour.

b 1 Sam. iv. 19—  
21.

17 And it came to pass when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, <sup>b</sup> Fear not; thou shalt have this son also.

c Ps. xvi. 10. Ec.  
xli. 7. Lam. ii.  
12. Luke xii. 20.  
xxiii. 46. Acts  
vii. 59.

18 And it came to pass as <sup>c</sup> her soul was in departing, (for she died,) that she called his name <sup>b</sup> Benoni: but his father called him <sup>b</sup> Benjamin.

† That is, The son  
of my sorrow.  
1 Chr. iv. 9

19 And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.

† That is, The son  
of the right hand.  
xli. 4. 38. xliii.  
14. xlv. 27—31.

20 And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is <sup>c</sup> the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.

c 14. 1 Sam. x. 2.  
2 Sam. xviii. 18.

21 ¶ And Israel journeyed, and

spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar.

22 And it came to pass when Israel dwelt in that land, that Reuben went and <sup>d</sup> lay with Bilhah his father's concubine: and Israel heard *it*. <sup>e</sup> Now the sons of Jacob were twelve.

xlix. 4. Lev.  
xviii. 8. 2 Sam.  
xvi. 21. 22. xx.  
8. 1 Chr. v. 1  
1 Cor. v. 1.  
g 18. xxix. 31—35.  
xxx. 5—24. xlv.  
8—27. xlix. 1—  
28. Ex. i. 1—5.  
Num. i. 5—15.  
20. &c. ii. 3—33.  
vii. 12. &c. xxxvi.  
5—51. 57—62.  
xxxiv. 14—28.  
Deut. xxxiii.  
Josh. xiii. —xxx.  
1 Chr. ii. 1. 2.  
Ez. xlviii. Rev.  
vii. 4—8.

23 The <sup>b</sup> sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob's first-born, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun.

24 The <sup>b</sup> sons of Rachel; Joseph and Benjamin.

25 And <sup>k</sup> the sons of Bilhah, Rachel's hand-maid; Dan and Naphtali.

h xxxix. 32—35.  
xxx. 18. 20.  
xxxiii. 2. xlv. 8  
—15.  
i 16—18. xxx. 22  
—24. xlv. 19—  
22.  
k xxx. 4—9.  
xxxvii. 2. xlv.  
26—28.  
l xxx. 9—13. xlv.  
16—18

26 And <sup>i</sup> the sons of Zilpah, Leah's hand-maid; Gad and Asher. These *are* the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padan-aram.

27 ¶ And <sup>m</sup> Jacob came unto Isaac his father unto <sup>n</sup> Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, (which is Hebron,) where Abraham and Isaac sojourned.

m xxvii. 43—45.  
xxviii. 5  
n xiii. 18. xlii. 2.  
19. Josh. xiv. 15.  
xv. 13

28 And the days of Isaac were <sup>o</sup> an hundred and fourscore years.

o xxxv. 7. xlv. 28  
1. 26.  
B. C. 1716.

29 And Isaac <sup>p</sup> gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people, *being* old and full of days: and <sup>q</sup> his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

p xv. 16. xxv. 7  
8. 17. xxvii. 1, 2  
xlix. 33. Job v.  
26.  
q xxiii. 19. xxv.  
9. xxvii. 41. xlix.  
31.

some visible and remarkable manner, thus confirmed to Jacob all the special favour and protection, which the name *Israel* implied.

V. 14, 15. Jacob seems to have renewed, with greater solemnity, the ceremony which he observed when God first met him at Bethel; and confirmed to the place more publicly that name by which he had privately called it; and which it ever after bore, till it became *Beth-aven*, a house of vanity and idolatry. (Notes, xxviii. 18—22. Josh. vii. 2.)

V. 17. The midwife, in saying, "Thou shalt have this <sup>b</sup> son also," seems to have alluded to the name of *Joseph*, and the occasion of that name. (xxx. 24.)

V. 18. The expression, "her soul was in departing," aptly describes the nature of death, which is the dissolution of the union betwixt soul and body.—Rachel had rashly said, "Give me children, or else I die:" God gave her children, and she died in child-birth.—Jacob, by changing the name which Rachel had given to her son, intimated that it was not proper so to indulge his sorrow, as to overlook the mercies still vouchsafed him, or neglect the duties of his station.—*The son of the right hand*, seems to mean, one valued as a right hand; or, 'a son, who shall be my defender in old age, as if he were my right hand.'

V. 21. *Tower of Edar*.] The same words (טור עדר) are rendered, "Tower of the flock," in Micah. (Mic. iv. 8. Heb.

V. 22. Reuben and Bilhah doubtless flattered themselves that their abominable crime would be concealed; yet Jacob

was made acquainted with their conduct, and most decidedly shewed his abhorrence of it. Their actual crime is indisputable, notwithstanding the palliating glosses of some Jewish writers. (Note, xlix. 3, 4.)

V. 27. It should not be concluded; from the silence of Scripture, that Jacob had not before this visited his father. Probably he came often to see him; but at length, as he evidently drew near death, he came to dwell with him, or in the neighbourhood.

V. 28. The age, death, and burial of Isaac, are here inserted by anticipation; for by computation we find that he did not die till about the time that Joseph stood before Pharaoh. Isaac was about a hundred and fifty years old when Joseph was born; Joseph therefore must have been thirty when Isaac was a hundred and eighty. (Note, xxvii. 1.)

V. 29. Esau, instead of taking this opportunity to murder Jacob, as he had purposed, found his heart so influenced, that he amicably assisted at Isaac's funeral.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—15.

Such is the imperfection of the best of men, that they are prone to defer those things which they know ought to be done, and which they really intend to do; and to forget the mercies which they have received, and the obligations under which they lie: nay, without great circumspection, gross abuses will find their way even into religious families, especially if numerous. We need therefore to be fre-

## CHAP. XXXVI.

Esau's wives and children; his removal to mount Seir, and his descendants in Seir, 1—19. The descendants of Seir the Horite, 20—30. Kings and dukes of Edom, 31—43.

**N**OW these *are* <sup>a</sup>the generations of Esau, who is Edom.

2 Esau <sup>b</sup>took his wives of the daughters of Canaan; Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite:

3 And <sup>c</sup>Bashemath Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebajoth.

4 And <sup>d</sup>Adah bare to Esau, Eliphaz: and Bashemath bare Reuel.

5 And Aholibamah bare Jeush, and

Jaalam, and Korah: these *are* the sons of Esau, which were born unto him in the land of Canaan.

6 And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the <sup>e</sup>persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance which he had got in the land of Canaan; and <sup>f</sup>went into the country, from the face of his brother Jacob.

7 For <sup>g</sup>their riches were more than that they might dwell together: and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them, because of their cattle.

8 Thus dwelt Esau in <sup>h</sup>mount Seir: Esau is Edom.

9 ¶ And these *are* the generations

<sup>a</sup> xxv. 24—34.  
xxvii. 35—41.  
xxviii. 8—7.  
Num. xx. 14—  
21. Deut. xxiii.  
7. 1a. lxxiii. 1.  
Es. xxv. 12.  
<sup>b</sup> xxvi. 34, 36  
xxvii. 46.

<sup>c</sup> xxv. 13. xxviii.  
9.

B. C. 1760.  
<sup>d</sup> 1 Chr. i. 35

<sup>e</sup> xiii. 6. 11. xvi.  
8. xxviii. 4.

<sup>f</sup> xiii. 6.

<sup>g</sup> xxviii. 3. Deut.  
ii. 5. Josh. xxiv.  
4. Mal. i. 3.

quently reminded of our duty, and even rebuked for neglecting it; and we should deem it a very great mercy to be stirred up to personal or family reformation, and cheerfully part with every thing, however valuable, which proves an occasion of sin.—Not only rebukes, however, but sharp chastisements, may be expected, if we neglect or postpone our solemn tribute of praise to God, when he hath “answered us in the day of our distress.”—A good example and serious admonitions will go a great way in promoting the good behaviour of those around us; and there is often less opposition made to our pious endeavours than we expected.—The Lord does not deal with his people and their families according to their deservings; nay, he is better to them than their fears: and when he overawes the spirit of their enemies, his servants cannot but be safe whithersoever they go, or wherever they are. When we have obediently hearkened to the Lord's reproofing voice, have rectified abuses, and paid our vows, we may expect to hear from him with comfort, and to enjoy the assurance and earnest of his covenanted blessings. But all our consolations in this world only prepare us for trials, and are intermingled with sorrows: and the continual ravages of death, bereaving us of our nearest and best beloved friends and relatives, will frequently excite our fears and lamentations, and remind us to be ready also, and to set our affections on things above.—It is very becoming when servants, by good behaviour, deservedly enjoy the endeared affection of the families in which they reside, so that they live beloved and die lamented: and when they, who have had the benefit of their faithful services, while in health and strength, provide comfortably for them in sickness and old age.—Such scenes of domestick life are far more beautiful and instructive, than the events which crowd the pages of history, with splendid evidences of the folly and madness of mankind.

V. 16—29.

We should be very cautious not to desire too earnestly any temporal object, nor impatiently to complain of the want of it; as the Lord may remember our unadvised expressions long after, and rebuke them even in granting our de-

sires, without giving his blessing with them.—Even the most favoured servants of the Lord are frequently tried with afflictions, which quickly succeed each other. Yet “all shall work together for their good.”—While we live in this world, we must witness so much sin around us, and mourn over so much in ourselves and our families, as well as experience so many bodily infirmities and outward disappointments; that we may well congratulate, and almost envy, those who have finished their measure of sufferings and services, and leave the world full of days, and ripe for glory: for if we are fit for heaven, “better is the day of our death, than the day of our birth.”—They, who live the most peaceably and comfortably, are least noticed in history: and it may be some consolation to reflect, that while we read of scarcely any thing else than the vices and miseries of mankind; very many, unnoticed by man, have “walked with God, and are not, for God hath taken them.”

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXXVI. V. 2, 3. Esau married “Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite.” (xxvi. 34.) And as these wives are mentioned many years after, in a manner which implies they were then living, (xxvii. 46. xxviii. 9.) we can hardly suppose that they both died childless, and that after their death Esau married the wives, by whom he had most of his children, and especially Eliphaz his eldest son.—Possibly his wives had different names. Bashemath might also be called Adah. And if Aholibamah were the same person as Judith, Beeri the Hittite might be her father, and Anah, the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite, her mother.—It is evident that Bashemath, the daughter of Ishmael, is also called Mahalath. (xxviii. 9.) And indeed such variations in names are very common in Scripture.

V. 6, 7. Probably, Esau came frequently to Isaac during his life-time, and had part of his family and property in Canaan, where his children were born: but after his father's death he took away all his possessions, and finally removed from Canaan the land of promise, the type of heaven; and left Jacob unmolested in the prospect of his rever-

\* Heb. Edom.

of Esau the father of the \*Edomites, in mount Seir.

10 These *are* the names of Esau's sons, Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau, Reuel the son of Bashemath the wife of Esau.

† 1 Chr. i. 36.  
Zephi.

11 And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, <sup>b</sup> Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz.

† xiv. 7. Ez. xvii.  
8-16. Num.  
xxiv. 18-20.  
Deut. xxxiii. 7.  
xxv. 17-19.

12 And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz Esau's son; and she bare to Eliphaz, 'Amalek: these *were* the sons of Adah Esau's wife.

13 And these *are* the sons of Reuel; Nahath, and Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah: these were the sons of Bashemath Esau's wife.

k 2. 18

14 And these were the sons of <sup>k</sup> Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon Esau's wife: and she bare to Esau, Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah.

15 These *were* dukes of the sons of Esau: the sons of Eliphaz the first-born son of Esau; <sup>l</sup> duke Teman, duke Omar, duke Zepho, duke Kenaz,

† 11, 12. 1 Chr. i.  
36. 45. 51-54.  
Job ii. 11. iv. 1.  
Jer. xlix. 7. 20.  
Ez. xxv. 13. Am.  
i. 12. Ob. 9.  
Hab. iii. 3.  
m Ex. xv. 15.

16 Duke Korah, duke Gatam, and duke Amalek: These *are* the <sup>m</sup> dukes that came of Eliphaz, in the land of Edom: these *were* the sons of Adah.

n 4. 13. 1 Chr. i.  
37.

17 And these *are* the sons of <sup>n</sup> Reuel Esau's son; duke Nahath, duke Zerah, duke Shammah, duke Mizzah. These *are* the dukes that came of Reuel, in the land of Edom: these *are* the sons of Bashemath Esau's wife.

o 5. 14. 1 Chr. i.  
37.

18 And these *are* the sons of <sup>o</sup> Aholibamah Esau's wife: duke Jeush, duke Jaalam, duke Korah: these *were* the

dukes that came of Aholibamah the daughter of Anah Esau's wife.

19 These *are* the sons of Esau, (<sup>p</sup> who p See on 1. is Edom,) and these *are* their dukes.

20 ¶ These *are* the sons of <sup>q</sup> Seir the Horite, who inhabited the land: Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah, B. C. 1810  
q xiv. 6. Deut. ii.  
12. 22. 1 Chr. i.  
38-42.

21 And Dishon, and Ezer, and Dishan: these *are* the dukes of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom.

22 And the children of Lotan were, Hori, and <sup>r</sup> Heman: and Lotan's sister <sup>†</sup> 1 Chr. i. 39.  
was Timna. Homam.

23 And the children of Shobal were these; <sup>r</sup> Alvan, and Manahath, and Ebal, Shepho, and Onam. † 1 Chr. i. 40. Alvan.—Shephi.

24 And these *are* the children of Zibeon: both Ajah, and Anah: this *was* that Anah that <sup>s</sup> found the mules in the wilderness, as he fed the asses of Zibeon his father. Lev. xix. 19.  
2 Sam. xiii. 29.  
xxviii. 9. 1 Kings  
i. 38. 44. iv. 28.  
Zech. xiv. 15.

25 And the children of Anah were these: Dishon, and Aholibamah, the daughter of <sup>t</sup> Anah. t 2. 5. 14. 18  
1 Chr. i. 41

26 And these *are* the children of Dishon; <sup>u</sup> Hemdan, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran. u 1 Chr. i. 41.  
Amram.

27 The children of <sup>v</sup> Ezer are these; Bilhan, and Zaavan, and <sup>x</sup> Achan. v 21. 1 Chr. i. 38.  
x 1 Chr. i. 42  
Jakan.

28 The children of Dishan are these; <sup>y</sup> Uz, and Aran. y Job i. 1. Jer.  
xxv. 20. Lam.  
iv. 21.  
B. C. 1780.

29 These *are* the dukes that came of the Horites; <sup>z</sup> duke Lotan, duke Shobal, duke Zibeon, duke Anah, z 20. 1 Chr. i. 38.

30 Duke Dishon, duke Ezer, duke Dishan: these *are* the dukes that came of Hori, among their dukes in the land of Seir. xvii. 6. 16. xxv.  
23. Num. xx. 14.  
xxiv. 17. 18.  
Deut. xvii. 14-  
20. xxxiii. 5.  
1 Chr. i. 43-50.

31 ¶ And these *are* <sup>a</sup> the kings that

sionary inheritance.—He seems, however, to have inherited a large portion of Isaac's riches.

V. 12. *Amalek.*] It has generally been taken for granted, that the Amalekites descended from this grandson of Esau: but, as they were a powerful people when the Israelites came out of Egypt, and able to contend with them in battle; as they are always spoken of as a distinct people from the Edomites; and as mention had before been made of their country; this opinion is not very probable. The marginal references may enable the reader to form a judgment on the subject. Timna was sister to Lotan, a descendant of Seir. (20—22.)

V. 15, 16. *Dukes.*] (Dukes.) Heads of families, princes, or military leaders, some of whom were contemporaries.—Korah is not mentioned before among the

sons of Eliphaz: probably he was one of his grandsons.

V. 20. *The sons of Seir the Horite.*] These were the former inhabitants of that country, with whom probably the descendants of Esau intermarried, and were in a great measure incorporated.

V. 24. *Found, &c.*] This passage is particularly difficult, as the word translated *mules* occurs in no other place: and many conjectures have been formed concerning what it was that Anah found; among which the more general has been, that in keeping asses he discovered the method of breeding mules, either by accident or contrivance.—Anah is the name both of a woman and a man, as Aholibamah likewise is. (2. 14. 18. 20. 25. 41.)

V. 31—39. It is not agreed whether these kings were

reigned in the land of Edom, before there reigned any king over the children of Israel.

32 And Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom, and the name of his city *was* Dinhabah.

33 And Bela died, and Jobab the son of Zerah of <sup>b</sup> Bozrah reigned in his stead.

34 And Jobab died, and Husham of the land of <sup>c</sup> Temani reigned in his stead.

35 And Husham died, and Hadad the son of Bedad; who smote Midian in the field of Moab, reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *was* Avith.

36 And Hadad died, and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead.

37 And Samlah died, and Saul of Rehoboth *by* the river reigned in his stead.

38 And Saul died, and Baal-hanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead.

39 And Baal-hanan the son of Achbor died, and <sup>e</sup> Hadar reigned in his stead: and the name of his city *was* Pau; and his wife's name *was* Meheta-bel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.

40 ¶ And these *are* the names of the

*dukes that came of Esau, according to their families, after their places, by their names; duke Timnah, duke <sup>1</sup> Alvah, duke Jetheth,*

41 Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon,

42 Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar,

43 Duke Magdiel, duke Iram: these *be* <sup>g</sup> the dukes of Edom according to their habitations, in the land of their possession: he *is* Esau the father of <sup>†</sup> the Edomites.

### CHAP. XXXVII.

Joseph is loved by Jacob, but hated by his brethren, 1—4. His dreams and the interpretation, 5—11. Jacob sends him to his brethren, who counsel to slay him, 12—20. At Reuben's desire they cast him into a pit, 21—24: and afterwards sell him to the Ishmaelites; while Reuben grieves at not finding him, 25—30. His coat, covered with blood, is sent to Jacob, who mourns inordinately, 31—35. Joseph is brought to Egypt and sold to Potiphar, 36.

AND Jacob dwelt in the land <sup>h</sup> where in his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan.

descendants of Esau, or of Seir.—They seem to have been elective, and to have reigned in succession over the whole country.

V. 40. *Dukes.*] These were either eminent leaders under the kings before mentioned; or, as some suppose, they succeeded them in authority, by a revolution in the form of government.—It has been thought, that some part of this chapter was written after the death of Moses, or added from the first chapter of Chronicles; and perhaps it was: but all these events might very well take place, while Israel was in Egypt and in the wilderness. (*Ex.* xv. 15.) Eight successions are mentioned; but it is uncertain when the period began, or how long it continued.—Moses had before recorded the prediction, that kings should descend from Jacob; but these kings reigned before that prophecy began to be fulfilled. (*Marg. Ref.* on 31.)

V. 43. *Their possession.*] The descendants of Esau were settled in possession of the land of Seir; while Israel had his inheritance only in reversion.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

This chapter seems intended to evince the faithfulness of God in performing his promise to Abraham, "Nations shall come of thee;" and to shew the accomplishment of his prophetic information to Rebekah, "Two nations are in thy womb;" and of the blessing pronounced on Esau, "By thy sword shalt thou live." It might also be in many ways useful to the children of Israel. Yet it contains mere registers, and is very different from the par-

ticular history of the heirs of promise; who have the best place and the highest character in the book of God, though not in many other books.—However men may struggle against the purpose of God, his counsel will stand; they will finally be compelled to give place to it, and he hath many ways of inducing them to do so. He often gives ungodly people a large portion of this world; and, satisfied with it, they leave others to possess and enjoy spiritual blessings unenvied and unmolested. This is *Esau*: still the profane despiser of heavenly things, as when he sold his birth-right; though not the same malicious persecutor, as when he vowed Jacob's destruction.—Yet persons of his character look great, become dukes and princes, and are envied and courted; while the "Israel of God" are poor, obscure, and despised! But soon the state of things will be reversed: the wicked shall be cut down, and wither as the grass; while "the righteous shall flourish as the cedar in Libanus;" and having *their* good things, when those of the sinner are spent and gone, they shall have them durably, yea eternally. Let us then seek an interest in these blessings; and not covet, envy, or glory in those fading distinctions, which are so often lavished upon the enemies of God, and "the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction."

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XXXVII. V. 1. Jacob continued to dwell in Canaan, "the land of his father's sojournings," (*marg.*) after Esau had got possessions and exercised lordship in Seir. (*Notes*, xxiv. 2—9. *Heb.* xi. 13—16.)

a xl. 4. v. l. vi. 9  
x. l.

2 These *are* <sup>a</sup> the generations of Jacob: Joseph *being* seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren, and the lad *was* with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's <sup>b</sup> wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their <sup>c</sup> evil report.

b xxx. 4. 9. xxxv  
22.

c 1 Sam. ii. 22—  
24. 1 Cor. i. 11  
v. l. xi. 18

3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he *was* the <sup>d</sup> son of his old age: and he made him <sup>e</sup> a coat of *many* <sup>f</sup> colours.

d xlv. 20.

e 23. 32. Judg. v.  
30. 2 Sam. xiii.  
18 Ps. xlv. 13.  
14 Ez. xvi. 16

f Or, pieces.

4 And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they <sup>g</sup> hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

g 11. 18—20. iv. 5.

xxvii. 41. xlv.

23 1 Sam. xvi.  
12. 13. xvii. 26.

John vii. 3—5.

8 9. xxvii. 12. xl.

5. xli. 1. xlii. 9.

Num. xii. 6.

1 Kings iii. 5.

5 And Joseph <sup>h</sup> dreamed a dream: and he told *it* his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.

h xlv. 18. Judg.  
ix. 7

6 And he said unto them, <sup>i</sup> Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed.

i xlv. 18. Judg.  
ix. 7

7 For behold, we *were* binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and behold, <sup>j</sup> your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

i xlii. 6. 9. xlii.  
26 xlv. 14.

8 And his brethren said unto him, <sup>k</sup> Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? and they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.

j 4. Ez. ii. 14.  
1 Sam. x. 27. Ps.  
ii. 9—10. cxviii.  
22. Luke xix. 14.  
xx. 17. Act. iv.  
27. 28. vii. 35

9 And he dreamed yet <sup>k</sup> another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and behold, <sup>l</sup> the sun and the moon, and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.

k xli. 25. 32.

10 And he told *it* to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What *is* this dream that thou hast dreamed?

l 10. xliii. 28. xlv.  
29 xlvii. 12. i.  
15—21. Act. vi.  
9—14.

<sup>m</sup> Shall I and thy mother and thy bre-

m xxvii. 29. Is. lx.  
14. Phil. ii. 10.  
11.

V. 2. By "the generations of Jacob," we may understand the history of him and of his family. (xxxv. 23—26.) The inspired writer had done with Esau, except as he came in his way when treating of the affairs of Israel: he had joined himself to the heathen; let him be numbered among them: but of Jacob and the chosen seed, Moses had much to record.—Joseph, though greatly beloved, was not trained up delicately and in sloth, but inured to labour. Though but a *lad*, he accompanied the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, particularly assisting them in their pastoral employments. Perhaps his father thought, that the sons of Bilhah, his mother's hand-maid, would favour him; and that those of Zilpah would be less disposed to emulation against him, than the sons of Leah. But he witnessed their ill behaviour, and brought to his father their evil report, in order that the crimes which he could not prevent, might be reprov'd and repressed by Jacob's authority.

V. 3. Jacob had no son by his beloved Rachel, till about seven years after his marriage, when he was far advanced in years. Benjamin was, in the more strict sense, "the son of his old age;" but he was at the same time very young.—His other sons had in many things grieved and disgraced him: but Joseph seems to have given early indications of that wisdom and piety, which adorned his maturer age. He was therefore the chief earthly comfort Jacob enjoyed after Rachel's death; and, in token of special affection, he clothed him in "a coat of colours," or "of pieces;" for there is nothing for *many* in the original.—However this may be understood, it is evident that the garment was deemed superior to the clothing worn by the others; but this distinction between him and his brothers seems to have been invidious and injudicious.

V. 4. The preference manifested to Joseph excited the envy of his brethren; and the ground of that preference, even his wisdom and piety, called forth their enmity. Conscience of his superior excellency, and hating him for it, they considered Jacob's approbation of *his* conduct as a reproach of *their's*; all which was augmented by his re-

porting their evil deeds.—In this Joseph was a type of Christ, the Beloved of the Father, who was on that account envied and hated by the Jews and by the world; not only *notwithstanding* his excellency, but *for it*, as it reproached and exposed their hypocrisy and wickedness; and because he also "testified of them, that their works *were* evil." (John vii. 7.) This was the effect of the old enmity, put between "the Seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent."

V. 5. God, by supernatural dreams, gave Joseph a pre-intimation of his future greatness, to prepare him for his previous trials, and to support him under them.—Mr. Henry observes, "that he dreamed of his preferment, but not of his imprisonment; as young people are apt to dream of prosperity, but think nothing of affliction."

V. 6—9. Some expositors consider Joseph as faulty in disclosing his dreams, but probably he was led by a divine impulse on his mind to do so. It was on many accounts proper they should be known, though otherwise it would have been impolitic for him to declare them. His brethren rightly interpreted the dream, though they abhorred the interpretation; and while in endeavouring to defeat it they spared no pains, and ventured upon the most atrocious crimes, they were themselves the instruments of its accomplishment.—Thus the Jews understood Christ's parables, and the intimations he gave of his kingdom; but, determining that he should not reign over *them*, they consulted to put him to death, and by his crucifixion they actually made way for that exaltation, which they intended to prevent.—"Their hatred" (that of Joseph's brethren towards him,) "had originated in religion: and the thought of God having determined to honour him, provoked them the more. Such were the operations of malice in Cain towards Abel, in Esau towards Jacob, in Saul towards David, and in the Scribes and Pharisees towards the Lord of glory." Fuller.

V. 10, 11. Perhaps Jacob meant to abate the indignation of his other sons by rebuking Joseph; yet it is evi-

thren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee, to the earth?

11 And his brethren <sup>a</sup> envied him: but his father <sup>a</sup> observed the saying.

12 ¶ And his brethren went to feed their father's flock <sup>b</sup> in Shechem.

13 And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed *the flock* in Shechem? <sup>a</sup> Come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said unto him, <sup>c</sup> Here am I.

14 And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, <sup>a</sup> see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of <sup>a</sup> Hebron, and he came to Shechem.

15 And a certain man found him, and behold, <sup>a</sup> he was wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, <sup>a</sup> What seekest thou?

16 And he said, I seek my brethren: <sup>a</sup> tell me, I pray thee, where they feed *their flocks*.

17 And the man said, They are departed hence: for I heard them say, Let us go to <sup>a</sup> Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan.

18 And when they saw him afar off,

even before he came near unto them, they <sup>a</sup> conspired against him, to slay him.

19 And they said one to another, Behold, this <sup>a</sup> dreamer cometh.

20 Come now therefore, <sup>a</sup> and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit: and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: <sup>b</sup> and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

21 And <sup>a</sup> Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him.

22 And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, *but* cast him into this pit that *is* in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again.

23 And it came to pass when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they <sup>a</sup> stript Joseph out of his coat, *his* coat of *many* <sup>a</sup> colours that *was* on him:

24 And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and <sup>a</sup> the pit *was* empty, *there was* no water in it.

25 And <sup>a</sup> they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and behold, a company of <sup>a</sup> Ishmaelites came from <sup>b</sup> Gilead, with their camels

n 1s. xxvi. 11.  
Matt. xxvii. 18.  
Mark xv. 10.  
Acts vii. 9.  
o Dan. vii. 28.  
Luke ii. 19. 51.  
p 1. xxxiii. 18.  
xxxiv. 25—31.

q 1 Sam. xvii. 17.  
—20. Matt. x. 16.  
Luke xx. 13.

r xxii. 1. xxvii. 1.  
18. 1 Sam. iii. 4.  
5, 6. 8. 16.

s Heb. see the  
peace of thy bre-  
thren, &c. 1 Sam.  
xvii. 17, 18. Jer.  
xxix. 7. Luke  
xix. 42.

s xxxiii. 2. xxxv. 27.  
Num. xiii. 22.  
Josh. xiv. 13. 15.

t xxi. 14.

u Judg. iv. 22.  
John i. 38. iv.  
27. xviii. 4. 7.  
xx. 15.

x Cant. i. 7.

y 2 Kings vi. 13.

z 1 Sam. xiv. 1.  
Ps. xxxi. 13.  
xxxvii. 12. 32.  
xciv. 21. Matt.  
xxi. 38. xxvii. 1.  
Mark xii. 7. xiv.  
1. Luke x. 14.  
15. John xi. 53.  
Acts xxiii. 12.

† Heb. master of  
dreams.  
a Ps. lxxv. 5. Prov.  
i. 11. 16. vi. 17.  
xxvii. 4.

b 1 Sam. xxiv. 20.  
xxvi. 2. Matt. ii.  
2—16. xxvii. 40  
—42. Mark xv.  
29—32. John xvi.  
10, 11. Acts iv.  
16—18  
c xxxv. 22. xlii.  
22

d 3. 32, 33. Matt.  
xxvii. 28.  
Or, pieces, &  
marg.

e Ps. xl. 2. lxxxviii.  
6. 8. cxxx. 1, 2.  
Jer. xxxviii. 6.  
Lam. ii. 52—55.  
Zech. ix. 11.

f Eath. iii. 15.  
Amos vi. 6.

g 28. 36. xvi. 11.  
12. xxv. 1—4.  
16—18. Ps.

h lxxxiii. 6.  
xliii. 11. Jer.  
viii. 22

dent that he thought, there was something supernatural in the dream.—Rachel, the mother of Joseph, was dead; but it is probable that Leah was still alive: the expression may, however, only mean the whole family, with peculiar reference to the number of his brethren.

V. 12—14. Shechem was at least forty miles northward from Hebron, where Jacob then resided. Dothan was about eight miles further (17).—Jacob had bought a piece of land there: but it is probable that his sons went thither, for the sake of better pasture for their numerous flocks, than could be found in the region about Hebron. After the wickedness which they had perpetrated on the Shechemites, it is more wonderful that they should venture thither, than that Jacob should be anxious for their safety. Had he suspected their malignant enmity against Joseph, he would not have thus exposed his favourite son; out the hand of the Lord was in it.

V. 15. *Wandering.*] Either having lost his way, or traversing the country in search of his brethren.

V. 19, 20. These unnatural children had no more compassion for their father than for Joseph; nay, perhaps they secretly enjoyed the pleasure of disappointing and grieving him. Their proposal shewed how desperate their enmity was; and the sarcasm concerning Joseph's dreams, intimated at least some misgivings, that they were divine pre-sages of his future pre-eminence.—'Let us kill him,' say they, 'and then he cannot rule over us.' (*Marg. Ref.*)—

Their diabolical malignity rendered them prompt to invent a subtle plan of concealment. None, I think, after consulting the marginal references, can doubt, that Joseph was, in the strictest sense, a type of Christ. And the conduct of his brethren, on this occasion, calls to our recollection those, of whom Christ said, "Now have they both seen <sup>a</sup> and hated both me and my Father." *John xv. 24.*

V. 21. Reuben had been guilty of "such fornication, <sup>a</sup> as is not so much as named among the Gentiles;" yet here he opposed the wickedness of his brethren, of another kind! Human depravity runs in different channels; some are more prone to one sin, some to another.

V. 22. Reuben spake as if he meant, that Joseph should be left to starve in the pit; but he purposed to restore him to his father, hoping probably by that service to recover his favour: and though his purpose was disappointed, yet God by his means preserved the life of Joseph, on which consequences infinitely important depended.—Thus Joseph, murdered in the intention of his brethren, and, as it were, buried in the pit, yet preserved in order to his exaltation, was a type of Christ crucified, buried, risen, and glorified.

V. 25. The descendants of Ishmael, Midian, Medan, and the other sons of Abraham by Keturah, (who were grown into a multitude, while the descendants of the promised Isaac were few in number,) uniting together, engaged in this traffick.

bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh, going to carry *it* down to Egypt.

26 And Judah said unto his brethren, 'What profit *is it* if we slay our brother, and <sup>k</sup>conceal his blood?

27 Come, and let us <sup>l</sup>sell him to the Ishmaelites, and <sup>m</sup>let not our hand be upon him; for he *is* <sup>n</sup>our brother, and our flesh: and his brethren <sup>\*</sup>were content.

28 Then there passed <sup>o</sup>by Midianites merchant-men; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and <sup>p</sup>sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty *pieces* of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.

29 And Reuben returned unto the pit: and behold Joseph *was* not in the pit: and <sup>q</sup>he rent his clothes.

30 And he returned unto his brethren, and said, 'The child *is* not; and I, whither shall I go?

31 ¶ And they took <sup>r</sup>Joseph's coat

and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood.

32 And they sent the coat of *many* colours, and they brought *it* to their father; and said, This have we found; know now whether it *be* <sup>s</sup>thy son's coat or no.

33 And he knew it, and said, *It is* my son's coat; an <sup>t</sup>evil beast hath devoured him: Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.

34 And Jacob <sup>u</sup>rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days.

35 And all his sons and all his daughters <sup>v</sup>rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, 'For I will go down into the grave unto my son, mourning. Thus his father wept for him.

36 And <sup>w</sup>the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an <sup>x</sup>officer of Pharaoh's, and <sup>y</sup>captain of the guard.

1 xxv. 32 Ps. xxc.  
9. Jer. xli. 8.  
Rom. vi. 21.  
a iv. 10. Job xvi.  
18. Ez. xxiv. 7.  
1 Ez. xxi. 16.  
Neh. v. 8. Matt.  
xxv. 15. 1 Tim.  
i. 10 Rev. xviii.  
13.  
m 1 Sam. xviii. 17.  
2 Sam. xi. 14—  
17. xii. 9.  
n xxix. 14. xlii.  
21.  
• Heb. *hearkened*.  
o 26. Num. xxv.  
15. 17. xxxi. 2.  
Judg. vi. 1—3.  
Ps. lxxviii. 9.

p xiv. 4. 5. Ps. cv.  
17. Zech. xi. 12.  
13. Matt. xxvii.  
9 Acts vii. 9.

q 34. xlii. 13. Num.  
xiv. 6. Judg. xi.  
25. Job i. 20. Joel  
ii. 13. Acts xiv.  
14.  
r xlii. 13. 32. 36.  
Jer. xxxi. 15.

• 3. 23

t 3. xliv. 20—23.  
Luke xv. 30.  
u xliv. 28.  
v 29. Josh. vi. 6.  
2 Sam. i. 11. iii.  
31. 1 Kings xx. 31.  
xxi. 27. 1 Chr.  
xxi. 16. Ezra ix.  
3—5. Neh. ix. 1.  
Esth. iv. 1—3.  
Job i. 20. ii. 12.  
Ps. lxxx. 11. 18.  
xxii. 12. 18.  
xxxvi. 22. xxxvii.  
1. 2. Jer. xxxix.  
24. Joel ii. 13.  
Jonah iii. 5—8.  
Matt. xi. 21.  
xxvi. 65. Acts  
xiv. 14. Rev. xi.  
3.  
x 2 Sam. xii. 17.  
Job ii. 11. Ps.  
lxxvii. 2. Jer.  
xxxii. 15.  
y xlii. 36. xlv. 29  
—31. xiv. 28.  
z 28. xxxix. 1.  
† Heb. *eunuch*,  
chamberlain, or  
courtier. Esth. i.  
10.  
‡ O; chief mar-  
shal. — Heb.  
chief of the  
slaughtermen, or  
executioners. xl.  
4. 2 Kings xxv.  
8. marg.

V. 26. *What profit?* &c.] Judah seems to have been naturally prone to covetousness, as Judas afterwards was; one great objection with him to killing Joseph was, that they should get nothing by it. The word rendered *profit* is almost always used in a bad sense.

V. 28. *Sold Joseph.*] Thus Christ was sold for thirty pieces of silver, and by a *Judas* or *Judah*; one of the same name as his who proposed the sale of Joseph.

V. 29, 30. Reuben seems to have been sincerely grieved when he missed his brother, no doubt suspecting that some violence had been done to him; and he might also dread his father's displeasure against himself, as his eldest son, who ought especially to have protected his beloved Joseph. But though he was absent when the plan of selling him had been proposed, agreed upon, and executed; yet he never disclosed this circumstance to his father; for fear, perhaps, of drawing down the resentment of the rest upon himself. Whether he was informed of the transaction, or not, he concurred in the plan of imposing on Jacob.

V. 32. *Thy son's coat.*] Not our brother's coat, nor Joseph's, but "thy son's;" as if, even in this cruel imposition, they would reproach their father for his partiality to Joseph, and almost insinuate that he alone was considered as a son!

V. 34. *Rent his clothes, &c.*] These were, in the earliest ages, the customary indications of great sorrow; and they seem also to have implied abhorrence of sin, and humiliation before God on account of it, as the cause of affliction.—This is the first instance recorded in Scripture of wearing sackcloth; as that of Reuben (29) is of rending the clothes. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 35. *Daughters.*] Not only Dinah, but his son's wives, (for many of them were at that time married,) joined in endeavouring to comfort Jacob.—His sons too seem to have rather relented, when they witnessed his excessive sorrow: yet not so far as to confess their evil deeds; though

Jacob's grief might have been thus abated, and probable measures taken for recovering Joseph.—The word translated *the grave*, is rendered elsewhere, *hell*; and means the *unseen state*, either of the body in the grave, or of the soul in the world of departed spirits. (*Notes*, Ps. xvi. 10. Acts ii. 25—32.)—Joseph was not supposed to be *buried in the grave*; but Jacob expected to meet him in *another world*. Yet he wept for him immoderately, and without proper resignation to the will of God.

V. 36. The word in this place signifies *Medanites*, rather than *Midianites*. (xxv. 2.)—Pharaoh was the common name of the kings of Egypt. (xii. 15—20.)—Potiphar seems to have been, according to our translation, captain of the guard to Pharaoh; and, in that capacity, to have had the charge of the state-prisoners, and to have superintended the execution of criminals. (*Marg.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—30.

They who hate to be reformed, hate also to be reproved, and are offended with those who expose them to reproof: and though it is often of important advantage, to disclose the secret crimes which men commit to such as are authorised to restrain them; yet nothing requires more prudence and candour. It should never be done out of resentment, or without urgent occasion; but always from hatred of the sin and love to the sinner, and with reluctance, as expecting nothing but unpleasant consequences to ourselves.—In the present state of things, there will frequently be contentions among brethren, especially those of opposite characters: and, while parents ought to manifest a preference of such, as behave with the greatest piety and prudence; even this will excite the enmity and envy of those who are proud and ungodly. Great care should therefore be taken not to inflame these malignant passions, by use-

## CHAP. XXXVIII.

Judah's marriage and children, 1—5. His son Er's marriage and death, 6, 7. Onan marries his brother's widow; is cut off for his sin; and Tamar his widow is reserved for Shelah, 8—11. Judah's wife dies; he is deceived by Tamar and commits incest with her;

his crime is detected, and Tamar bears to him Pharez and Zarah, 12—30

AND it came to pass at that time, that Judah went down from his brethren, and \* turned in to a cer-

a xix. 3. Judg. iv.  
18. 2 Kings iv.  
8. Prov. xiii. 20

less and invidious distinctions; and that wisdom which is from above is greatly wanted, to avoid sowing those seeds of discord, that will not speedily be eradicated. For when once malice and envy have got possession of the heart, every circumstance inflames them: love shewn to the person envied is considered as hatred to the envious man; and commendation and kindness bestowed on the one seem to be reproaching and injuring the other: yea, the very excellency of a person's character and conduct makes him appear the more odious, in the distempered judgment of his competitor. These passions, when matured, break through every tie of nature, every obligation of duty, and every restraint of conscience and compassion: and, if grafted upon that enmity, which is in the "seed of the serpent against the seed of the woman,"—upon religious enmity and the spirit of persecution,—they produce the most atrocious crimes, committed without remorse or reluctance.—But though the Lord knows, that his favours, and the honour which comes from him, will excite these diabolical dispositions, and inflame them more and more; yet he will not on that account, withhold the marks of his approbation: nay, he will rather confer them, purposely to evidence the force and tendency of these base passions, either for the sinner's future conviction and humiliation, or to manifest the justice of his condemnation. For he can make "the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of it he will restrain;" he can check and moderate the force of men's passions, work upon their humanity or natural affection; excite horror or terror in their minds, or even let loose selfishness, covetousness, or fear of man, to counteract the effects of malice and revenge: so that, in direct opposition to their own intentions, his enemies shall just go far enough to accomplish his purposes, and to defeat their own; and to promote the benefit and advancement of believers, which they meant to hinder.—In whatever way he may give his servants any previous intimations of future honour and usefulness, they may be considered as equivalent to assurances of many preparatory trials: for "before honour is humility;" and the human heart is seldom sufficiently humbled, for suitably filling up important stations, without a previous course of painful discipline.

## V. 31—36.

Scarcely any thing can be baser, than for children to insult and torture the heart of a parent, whose chief fault consists in having too much indulged them; yet, in this common case, though the conduct of the child is vile, the appointment of God is wise and righteous.—The more we love earthly objects, the greater affliction are we exposed to on their account; and impatient mourning, when they are taken away, too plainly proves the excess of our affection, and the need there was of the salutary stroke. Yet our sorrow would often cease, and be turned into joy, if we knew all the truth. We should therefore endeavour, in the exercise of faith, to rest satisfied, that, though we

know not now what the Lord is doing, we shall know and approve it hereafter; and thus to find comfort, instead of rashly, and in general *falsely*, determining, under severe trials, to go down mourning to the grave. (xlv. 28. xlviii. 11.)—As we know not what we may come to before we die, it is good to habituate ourselves to labour, self-denial, and submission.—When men are bent upon wickedness, they will never want some stratagem to effect it, and some pretext to conceal it; yet, however unanimous they may be in hiding their sins, they will at last be discovered to their confusion.—But let us in all this behold Jesus, hated, envied, persecuted, sold, and suffering *for us*: yea, in some sense *by us*; for we are like-minded by nature with those who crucified him; and our sins were the real causes of those sufferings, which made way for his mediatorial exaltation. Thus while we were enemies, provision was made for our extreme necessity, against the time when we should become sensible of our real character and condition: and then we find, that he was thus waiting his opportunity of overcoming evil with good.—While we receive from his fulness daily, let us not forget the anguish of his soul, when suffering for our sins: that we may mourn for our crimes, and crucify his crucifiers; that we may love and serve him; and, through envy, reproach, and tribulation, follow him to glory.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXXVIII. V. 1, 2. The inspired historian here breaks off his narration, to relate some other occurrences, which had taken place in Jacob's family, and were doubtless an additional cause of great grief to the aged Patriarch.—Though Judah and his brethren so strenuously opposed the marriage of Dinah with an uncircumcised person; yet he, and probably all the rest, married the daughters of those who were not circumcised. (Note, xxxiv. 14—17.)—The marriages of Israelitish women with uncircumcised persons, were, by the law, virtually forbidden; for they were not allowed to marry Gentiles, who had not fully embraced the religion of Israel, and who were consequently uncircumcised. But if the daughters of uncircumcised persons were converted to the worship of the true God, not being capable of circumcision, they might become the wives of Israelites, without violating any statute; and indeed this seems to have been allowed in some other cases. (Deut. xxi. 10—14. Judg. xiv. 1—4. Ruth iii. 9—13. iv. Matt. i. 5.) It does not however appear, that Judah was more careful in this respect, than Esau had been. He must have been very young when he married, which probably took place before Joseph was sold into Egypt; yet he seems to have acted without Jacob's consent, by the advice of his Canaanitish friend. Adullam was not far from Ephrath, and, it is generally supposed, to the north of Hebron. Probably, Judah at this time left his father's house for some other residence.—

<sup>b</sup> Josh. xv. 35. tain <sup>b</sup> Adullamite, whose name *was*  
<sup>1</sup> Sam. xxi. 1. Hirah.  
<sup>2</sup> Sam. xxiii. 13.

<sup>c</sup> iii. 6. vi. 2. xxiv. <sup>2</sup> And Judah <sup>c</sup> saw there a daughter  
<sup>3</sup> xxxiv. 2. Judg. of a certain Canaanite, whose name  
<sup>xiv. 2. xvi. 1</sup> *was* <sup>d</sup> Shuah; and he took her and went  
<sup>2</sup> Sam. xi. 2. in unto her.  
<sup>d</sup> 1 Chr. ii. 3. Sana.

<sup>e</sup> xlvii. 12. Num and he conceived and bare a son:  
<sup>xxvi. 19</sup> and he called his name <sup>e</sup> Er.

<sup>f</sup> 17. 25. 1 Chr. iv. And she conceived again, and bare  
<sup>21.</sup> a son; and she called his name Onan.

<sup>g</sup> xxi. 21. xxiv. 3. <sup>5</sup> And she yet again conceived, and  
<sup>h</sup> bare a son; and called his name <sup>h</sup> Shelah: and he was at Chezib, when she  
<sup>i</sup> bare him.

<sup>j</sup> xxi. 21. xxiv. 3. <sup>6</sup> And Judah <sup>j</sup> took a wife for Er his  
<sup>k</sup> first-born, whose name *was* Tamar.

<sup>l</sup> xiii. 13. xix. 13. <sup>7</sup> And Er, Judah's first-born, was  
<sup>2</sup> Chr. xxxiii. 6. <sup>l</sup> wicked in the sight of the LORD; and  
<sup>m</sup> the LORD slew him.

<sup>n</sup> Lev. xviii. 16. <sup>8</sup> And Judah said unto Onan, <sup>n</sup> Go  
<sup>Deut. xxv. 5—</sup> in unto thy brother's wife, and marry  
<sup>10. Ruth i. 11</sup> her, and raise up seed to thy brother.  
<sup>iv. 5—11. Matt.</sup>  
<sup>xxii. 23—27</sup>

<sup>o</sup> Jam. iv. 5. <sup>9</sup> And Onan knew that the seed  
<sup>p</sup> should not be his: and it came to pass,  
<sup>q</sup> when he went in unto his brother's  
<sup>r</sup> wife, that he spilled *it* on the ground,  
<sup>s</sup> lest that he should give seed to his  
<sup>t</sup> brother.

<sup>u</sup> <sup>10</sup> And the thing which he did <sup>u</sup> dis-  
<sup>v</sup> pleased the LORD: wherefore he slew  
<sup>w</sup> him also.

Shuah was the name of Judah's wife's father, and not that of his wife (12).

V. 4, 5. Probably Judah was from home when these two sons were born, and so *his wife* named them.—*Chezib* is supposed to have been the same as *Achzib*. (Josh. xv. 44.)

V. 7. Er was "wicked in the sight of the LORD;" but perhaps not in the sight of man, from whom he concealed his crimes. The Lord, however, was so provoked at his secret sins, that he slew him.—Many premature deaths might probably be accounted for in the same manner, had we as impartial and well informed historians to record them.

V. 8. The custom of marrying a brother's widow, when he died childless, seems to have been traditional before it became a written law; and the first-born from such marriages was accounted the child of the deceased, adopted into his family, and so became his heir. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 9, 10. Onan's *habitual* conduct, (for this is meant,) was not only unnatural and detestable in itself, but full of envy and malice, and not without something of the nature of murder in it: for the same principle would have induced him to murder a child born to him, but accounted his brother's, if he could have done it with impunity. It implied also a contempt of the promise of a numerous pos-

<sup>k</sup> Ruth i. 13. <sup>11</sup> Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter-in-law, Remain a widow at thy father's house, <sup>k</sup> till Shelah my son be grown; (for he said, Lest peradventure he die also as his brethren *did*;) and Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house.

<sup>l</sup> <sup>12</sup> ¶ And <sup>l</sup> in process of time, the daughter of Shuah, Judah's wife, died: and Judah was <sup>l</sup> comforted, and went up unto his <sup>m</sup> sheep-shearers to Timnath, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite.

<sup>n</sup> <sup>13</sup> And it was told Tamar, saying, Behold, thy father-in-law goeth up to <sup>n</sup> Timnath, to shear his sheep.

<sup>o</sup> <sup>14</sup> And she put her widow's garments off from her, and covered her with a veil, and wrapped herself, <sup>o</sup> and sat in <sup>o</sup> an open place, which is by the way to Timnath: for she saw <sup>o</sup> that Shelah was grown, and she was not given unto him to wife.

<sup>p</sup> <sup>15</sup> When Judah saw her, he thought her <sup>p</sup> to be an harlot: because she had covered her face.

<sup>q</sup> <sup>16</sup> And he turned unto her by the way, and said, Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee (for he knew not that she *was* his daughter-in-law): and she said, <sup>q</sup> What wilt thou give me that thou mayest come in unto me?

terity, made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of that Seed especially in whom all nations "should be blessed."

V. 11. Perhaps Judah, being ignorant of the real cause of his sons' death, attributed it to some ill behaviour of Tamar, and therefore secretly determined not to marry Shelah to her. For the present, however, he put the matter off, by intimating that his son was too young, and that he should wait some time longer before he allowed them to marry.

V. 14—16. Tamar could not think this a probable way of forwarding her marriage with Shelah; but perhaps she concluded that Judah never intended it. It is supposed, that, according to the custom of the times, she was considered as Shelah's wife, and could not be married to another in such circumstances. Some think, that she was ambitious of being brought into the line of Christ's ancestors, and of having children by some of Jacob's family; and perhaps some intimation had been given, that our Lord should spring from Judah: not expecting therefore to be married to Shelah, she saw no other way but the very criminal one which she adopted. If this was her motive, though it by no means excuses or palliates her conduct, she certainly obtained her end; for Christ was descended from her by this very incestuous intercourse!—Judah did not discover that she was his daughter-in-law, as she was

<sup>r</sup> Ez. xvi. 33.  
<sup>a</sup> Heb. a kid of  
the goats.

<sup>b</sup> 24, 25. Prov. xx.  
16. Luke xvi. 8.

<sup>c</sup> Jer. xxii. 24.  
Luke xv. 22.

<sup>d</sup> 25, 26. Hos. iv.  
11.

<sup>e</sup> 14. 2 Sam. xiv.  
2 s.

<sup>f</sup> Judg. xiv. 20.  
2 Sam. xiii. 3.  
Luke xxiii. 12.

<sup>g</sup> Or, in Enajim.  
14.

<sup>h</sup> Prov. vi. 33.  
Rom. vi. 21.  
2 Cor. iv. 2.  
Eph. v. 12. Rev.  
vii. 15.

<sup>i</sup> Heb. become a  
contempt.

17 And he said, 'I will send *thee* <sup>a</sup> a kid from the flock: And she said, 'Wilt thou give *me* a pledge, till thou send it?'

18 And he said, What pledge shall I give thee? And she said, 'Thy signet, and thy bracelets, and thy staff that *is* in thine hand: and he <sup>b</sup> gave *it* her, and came in unto her, and she conceived by him.

19 And she arose, and went away, and <sup>c</sup> laid by her veil from her, and put on the garments of her widowhood.

20 ¶ And Judah sent the kid by the hand of <sup>d</sup> his friend the Adullamite, to receive *his* pledge from the woman's hand: but he found her not.

21 Then he asked the men of that place, saying, Where *is* the harlot, that *was* <sup>e</sup> openly by the way-side? And they said, There was no harlot in this *place*.

22 And he returned to Judah, and said, I cannot find her; and also the men of the place said *that* there was no harlot in this *place*.

23 And Judah said, Let her take *it* to her, <sup>f</sup> lest we <sup>g</sup> be shamed: behold, I sent this kid, and thou hast not found her.

24 And it came to pass about three months after, that it was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter-in-law hath

<sup>h</sup> played the harlot; and also behold, she *is* with child by whoredom: and Judah said, Bring her forth, and <sup>i</sup> let her be burnt.

25 When she *was* brought forth, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, By the man whose these *are*, *am* I with child: and she said, <sup>j</sup> Discern, I pray thee, whose *are* these, the signet, and bracelets, and staff.

26 And Judah acknowledged *them*, and said, <sup>k</sup> She hath been more righteous than I; <sup>l</sup> because that I gave her not to Shelah my son; <sup>m</sup> and he knew her again no more.

27 ¶ And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that behold twins *were* in her womb.

28 And it came to pass when she travailed, that *the one* put out *his* hand; and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, This came out first.

29 And it came to pass as he drew back his hand, that behold his brother came out; and she said, 'How hast thou broken forth? *this* breach *be* upon thee: therefore <sup>n</sup> his name was called <sup>o</sup> Pharez.

30 And afterward came out his brother, that had the scarlet thread upon his hand; <sup>p</sup> and his name was called Zarah.

<sup>xxxiv.</sup> 31. Judg. xix. 2. Jer. ii. 20. iii. 1. 6. 8. Ez. xvi. 15. 28. 41. xxiii. 5. 19. 44. Hos. ii. 5. iii. 3. iv. 15.  
<sup>9.</sup> Lev. xx. 10. xxi. 9. Deut. xxii. 21. —27. 2 Sam. xii. 5. 7. Jer. xxix. 22, 23. Matt. vii. 1—5. Rom. ii. 1, 2.  
<sup>xxxvii.</sup> 32. Ps. 1. 21. Jer. ii. 26. Rom. ii. 16. 1 Cor. iv. 5. Rev. xc. 12.

<sup>1</sup> Sam. xxiv. 17. 2 Sam. xxiv. 17. Ez. xvi. 32. Hab. i. 13. John viii. 9. Rom. iii. 19. d 14.  
<sup>e</sup> Job xxiv. 31. 32. xl. 5. Matt. iii. 8. 1 Pet. iv. 2, 3.

Or, *Wherefore hast thou made this breach against thee?*

<sup>xlvi.</sup> 12. Num. xxvi. 20. 1 Chr. ii. 4. ix. 4. —Neh. xi. 4. 6. Perez. Matt. i. 3. Luke iii. 33. Phares. <sup>1</sup> That is, a breach. <sup>5</sup> 1 Chr. ix. 6. Zerah. Matt. i. 3. Zera.

veiled: and he took her for a harlot, because she sat by the way-side.

V. 17. *Pledge.*] *Ἀπαύων*, Sept. which is rendered *earnest* in 2 Cor. i. 22. v. 5. Eph. i. 14.

V. 18. *Signet, bracelets, and staff.*] These were probably of considerable value, and would afford Tamar an opportunity of exposing Judah; yet he was so infatuated as to entrust them with a supposed harlot!

V. 21. *Where is the harlot?*] By the answer returned to this question, we learn that these practices were neither so common, nor so shameless, among the Canaanites, as they are now in general among nominal Christians.

V. 23. *Lest we be shamed.*] For the whoredom, and for the folly connected with it.

V. 24. Some suppose, that Judah only meant to brand Tamar with a mark of infamy. If he meant to burn her to death, though pregnant, it shews, not only that he considered her as betrothed to Shelah, and an adulteress; but also that he was actuated by excessive severity, and dislike to Tamar.—In those days, when a general civil government was not established through the country, but different tribes and families were ruled by their several heads; the injured party, if a principal person, seems to have been both accuser, judge, and frequently the executioner; as in

the case of murder, the nearest relation was the avenger of blood.

V. 25. He who had been the adviser of the sale of Joseph, and of sending his coat to Jacob, with this taunting message, "Know now whether this be thy son's coat or no;" was at length taunted in a similar manner, "Discern, I pray thee, whose are *these*!" (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 26. Judah had *intentionally* committed only fornication, while Tamar had been guilty of incest: yet, conscious of being the occasion of her crime by withholding Shelah, and of excessive severity in the harsh sentence which he had uttered against her, and perhaps being truly penitent, he condemned himself more than her: "and he *knew* her again no more." Though he was yet young, it does not appear that he married again.—It cannot be supposed, that Tamar was after this married to Shelah; but probably she lived the rest of her days in widowhood.

V. 27—30. By a hard labour, Tamar was corrected for her crime. From these twins, the offspring of so much sin, descended the principal part of the tribe of Judah, from whom the whole nation are to this day called Jews, or *Judeans*; and who had little cause to boast that "they *were* not born of fornication."—Some make the singular circumstances of this birth emblematical of the Jews and

## CHAP. XXXIX.

Joseph is bought by Potiphar, and preferred in the family, 1—6; tempted by his mistress, but overcomes the temptation, 7—12; accused by her, and imprisoned by Potiphar, 13—20; favoured by the Lord's presence, and advanced by the keeper of the prison, 21—23

<sup>a</sup> xxvii. 36. xlv.  
<sup>4</sup> Ps. cv. 17. Acts  
vii. 9.

<sup>b</sup> xxviii. 25. 28.  
<sup>c</sup> 21. 22. xxviii.  
15. 1 Sam. iii. 19.  
xvi. 18. Ps. xlv.  
7. 11. Is. viii. 9.  
10. xli. 10. xliii.  
2. Jer. xv. 20.  
Matt. i. 23. Acts  
vii. 9. 10. Rom.  
viii. 31.

AND Joseph <sup>a</sup> was brought down to Egypt: and Potiphar an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of <sup>b</sup> the Ishmaelites, which had brought him down thither.

2 And <sup>c</sup> the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man: and he

Gentiles: the Jews, like Zarah, seemed marked for priority in the church of Christ, yet they drew back; and the Gentiles, like Pharez, have got the birthright: yet, in due time, the Jews shall again find admission, and share the same privileges.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

## V. 1—11.

What a melancholy view do these records give us of Jacob's family, of the trouble which he had with his children, and of the state of religion in the visible church of God!—Is this "Judah, whom his brethren shall praise!" Rather let us praise God for his patience with him; and that "where sin had abounded, grace" as we have reason to conclude, "much more abounded" in his salvation.—The friendship of those, who flatter young persons, and assist them in gratifying their licentious inclinations, is often much valued, and their company courted and preferred before that of pious friends and relations: but it corrupts good manners and principles, and makes bad ones worse. Though, all things considered, it is best for most men to marry early in life; yet surely not when they are incapable of judging for themselves, and will not be counselled or directed by their parents and friends; but are influenced by those who fear not God, to form connexions with others of the same character. Indeed, parents themselves frequently lead their children into the mistakes and sins, of which they themselves have been guilty; and are instrumental in their ruin, temporal and eternal.—The Scriptures sparingly hint at those vile practices, which, being done in secret, are a shame to be spoken of: this suffices to shew, that the Lord notices and abhors them, and will bring to light all the lasciviousness, of which it is to be feared multitudes are guilty in heart and life, who stand fair in the world's esteem. Then the secret history of every individual, who hath not truly repented, and washed away his sins in the blood of Christ, will be written with an impartial pen, and published to the world of men and angels: every mouth will be stopped; and God's righteousness, in the condemnation of sinners, manifested to the whole universe.

## V. 12—30.

Mirth, festivity, and vain company, furnish fuel to  
VOL. I.

was in the <sup>d</sup> house of his master the <sup>d</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 20—24.

3 And his master <sup>e</sup> saw that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand.

4 And Joseph <sup>f</sup> found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him <sup>g</sup> overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.

5 And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake: and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had, in the house, and in the field.

<sup>e</sup> xxi. 22. xxvi. 24.  
28. xxx. 27. 30.  
1 Sam. xviii. 14.  
28. Zech. viii. 23.  
Rev. iii. 9.  
<sup>f</sup> 23. Josh. i. 7.  
2 Chr. xxvi. 5.  
Neh. ii. 20. Ps.  
i. 3. 1 Cor. xvi.  
2.  
<sup>g</sup> 21. xviii. 3. xix.  
19. xxxii. 5.  
xxxiii. 8. 10.  
Neh. ii. 4. 5.  
Prov. xvi. 7.  
22. xv. 2. xxiv.  
2. xli. 40. 41.  
Prov. xiv. 35.  
xvii. 2. xxvii. 18.  
Acts xx. 28.

<sup>i</sup> xii. 2. xix. 23.  
xxx. 27. Deut.  
xxviii. 3—6. Act.  
xxvii. 24.

licentious inclinations, and opportunity inflames the heart; then interest, credit, and conscience are sacrificed, and the wisest of men act as if bereft of common sense: for "wine and whoredom take away the heart," and stupify the conscience.—What need have we then to "watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation!" Unthought of consequences will soon prove the folly of those, who give licence to their lusts; and they, who fear *shame* before men, more than *condemnation* before God, often find the very thing come upon them which they feared, notwithstanding all their care to prevent it.—Injurious suspicions and unjust treatment frequently drive those to evil practices, who were not previously disposed to them; but miserable and infatuated beyond expression are they, who barter chastity, reputation, and even their souls, for the paltry reward of sin. Nor are any more hardened against compassion, or more disposed to treat others with unrelenting severity, than they who are most indulgent to themselves, and heedlessly continue in unrepented wickedness. Yet it is hopeful, when being put to shame before men produces conviction of guilt, humiliating confessions, and renunciation of the sin thus exposed, never more to return to it.—But while we compassionate pious Jacob, thus wounded on every side by the misconduct of his family; let us admire the sovereign purpose and grace of God, who, by all these events, was preparing for the manifestation of his Son in human nature. Our Redeemer sprang from Judah by Tamar, and from Pharez: for his excellency was personal; and, though himself sinless, it suited the end of his appearance, for him to be "made in the likeness of sinful flesh."

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIX. V. 2—6. Joseph was not only favoured with the comforting presence of the Lord, and with seasons of peculiarly sweet communion with him; but he was so remarkably furnished with wisdom from above, and prospered in all his undertakings, that it was evident, even to Potiphar himself, that the Lord was with him, assisting and succeeding them. Thus, though a slave, he was had in reputation; and, being diligent in his business, he became a favourite with his master, who greatly countenanced and confided in him. Potiphar, no doubt, would hear

; 4. 8. 23.

6 And he <sup>1</sup>left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat: and Joseph was <sup>a</sup> a goodly person, and well favoured.

k xii. 14, 15. xxix.  
17. 1 Sam. xvi.  
12. Acts vii. 20.

l vi. 2. Job xxxi.  
1. Ps. cxix. 37.  
Ec. xiii. 5, 6.  
12-16. Matt. v.  
28. 2 Pet. ii. 14.  
1 John ii. 16.

m 2 Sam. xiii. 11.  
Prov. vii. 13.  
Jer. lii. 3.

n Prov. i. 10, ii.  
10. 16-19. vi. 20.  
-25, 32, 33. vii.  
25-27. ix. 13-  
18. xxii. 14. xxiii.  
26-28.

o Neh. vi. 11.  
Luke xii. 48.  
1 Cor. iv. 2. Tit.  
ii. 10.

p xx. 3, 6. Lev.  
xx. 10. 2 Sam.  
xi. 27. Job xxxi.  
9-12. Jer. v. 8,  
9. 1 Cor. vi. 9,  
10. Gal. v. 19-  
21. Heb. xiii. 4.  
Rev. xxi. 8. xxii.  
15.

q Num. xxxii. 23.  
2 Sam. xii. 13.  
Neh. v. 15. Ps.  
li. 4. Jer. xxviii.  
16. 1. 7.

7 ¶ And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife <sup>1</sup>cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, <sup>m</sup> Lie with me.

8 But he <sup>n</sup>refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master woteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand.

9 *There is* <sup>o</sup> none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me, but thee, because thou *art* his wife: <sup>p</sup> how then can I do this great wickedness, and <sup>q</sup> sin against God?

10 And it came to pass as she spake

to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, <sup>r</sup> or to be with her.

11 ¶ And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and *there was* <sup>s</sup> none of the men of the house there within.

12 And she <sup>t</sup> caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: <sup>u</sup> and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.

13 And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth,

14 That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in <sup>v</sup> a Hebrew unto us to mock us: <sup>w</sup> he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a <sup>x</sup> loud voice.

r Prov. i. 15. v. 8.  
1 Cor. vi. 18. xv.  
33. 1 Thes. v. 22.  
2 Tim. ii. 22.  
1 Pet. ii. 11.

s Job xxiv. 15.  
Jer. xxiii. 24.  
Mal. iii. 5.

t Prov. vii. 13. Ec.  
vii. 26. Ez. xvi.  
30-34.  
u 1 Sam. xv. 27.  
Prov. vi. 5. Mark  
xiv. 51, 52.

x 17. x. 21. xiv.  
13. xl. 15.  
y Is. li. 7. liv. 17.  
Matt. v. 11. xxvi.  
59. Luke xxiii.  
2. 2 Cor. vi. 8  
1 Pet. ii. 20. iii.  
14-18. iv. 14-  
19.  
\* Heb. great.

from Joseph, (who, it is evident, avowed his religion, and refused to join in idolatry,) many things concerning JEHOVAH, the God whom he worshipped: and finding all his affairs prospered, and that Joseph ascribed this to the Lord's special blessing, he might be convinced, (as Laban had been concerning Jacob,) that the Lord blessed him for Joseph's sake; indeed, it seems to have been evident to all concerned. Thus at length Potiphar, having full confidence in his integrity, prudence, and good success, left all his concerns to his management; and, without anxiety, enjoyed his abundance. Considering Potiphar's rank, it is not probable that Joseph was preferred to so important a station, till his ability and fidelity had been fully proved. About thirteen years elapsed, from the time when he was sold into Egypt, to that of his standing before Pharaoh. Some years he was confined in prison: but probably more elapsed during his continuance in Potiphar's family, before his imprisonment; where he would have large opportunity of acquiring that kind of knowledge and address, which his future elevated station required.—Joseph's comeliness is spoken of, in the very terms before used in the original concerning his mother Rachel. (xxix. 17.)

V. 7. *Lie with me.*] The disparity in rank betwixt Potiphar's wife and Joseph, and the observation of his modesty, as equal to his other virtues, probably made her despair of inveigling him by distant hints: and, considering how much it was his interest to oblige her, and how dangerous to give her offence, and hurried on by her criminal passions, she was not ashamed to address him in this impudent manner, not greatly fearing a repulse.

V. 8—10. Attending to the circumstances before mentioned, and considering Joseph as a single man in the vigour of youth, the importunity with which he was assaulted, and the opportunity and privacy afforded him; we cannot too much admire this glorious victory of chastity, the power of divine grace displayed in it, and the excellence of him who was hated of his brethren. Comparing

his conduct with that of Judah, Reuben, and the other sons of Jacob, it must be allowed, that he had justly the preference in his father's esteem.—Nor was this refusal more worthy of admiration, than the *manner* of it. The calmness of his spirit, the force of his arguments, the generosity and delicacy, as well as piety, of his sentiments, are most beautiful.—His master's kindness to him, the honourable station which he held in his family, the peculiar relation in which his tempter stood to his generous benefactor, the greatness of the injustice and ingratitude to him;—but above all, the greatness of the wickedness in the sight of God, whose authority and displeasure he was not ashamed to mention to this adulterous woman:—these were the topicks on which he insisted; and had not her vile passions stupified and hardened her heart, surely she must have been reclaimed, or even converted to his God, and induced to embrace that religion, which he so adorned and recommended by his conduct!—While she assailed him day by day continually, no doubt Satan, as far as permitted, would paint to his imagination in lively colours the advantages of compliance, and the consequences of refusal: but all was in vain; for the grace of our Lord was sufficient for him. And when he found her deaf to the remonstrances of duty, conscience, gratitude, honour, and the fear of God, and that he could not reclaim her, he avoided her company as much as possible; being distrustful of himself and fearful of being overcome, if he parleyed with the temptation.

V. 13—16. The base affection of this wicked woman, being finally disappointed, was changed for the most rancorous enmity; and she seems to have exulted in the opportunity of being revenged upon Joseph. When therefore the men came in, she addressed them in the affected language of rage and disdain; alluding to Potiphar, in language which seemed to charge him as accessory to the indignity, which she pretended to have received. She called Joseph a *Hebrew*, in contempt of his original and

15 And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out.

<sup>z</sup> Jer. iv. 22. ix 3.—5. 16 And she <sup>a</sup>laid up his garment by her until his lord came home.

<sup>a</sup> 14. Ex. xx. 16. xxiii. 1. 1 Kings xxi. 9—13. Ps. lv. 3. cxx. 3. 4. Prov. xix. 6. 9. 17 And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, <sup>a</sup>The Hebrew servant which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me.

18 And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out.

<sup>b</sup> 19 And it came to pass, when his master <sup>b</sup>heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that <sup>c</sup>his wrath was kindled.

religion: and added, that he left his garment with her; intimating, that when she called aloud for help, he hasted to escape; upon which seizing hold of his garment, she had in vain endeavoured to retain him till they came to apprehend him.

V. 17. *To mock me.*] To insult and treat me in a base, unworthy manner.

V. 19, 20. Joseph did not attempt to speak in his own defence; perhaps he was not permitted; or he might not be inclined, sensible it would be in vain. Doubtless, however, he would say, as David did, "Thou shalt answer for me, O LORD, my God." Potiphar was no doubt blameable, for so hastily crediting this accusation against a person of approved excellence: yet, considering the absolute authority which masters possessed over the lives of their slaves, the vehement rancour of his accuser, that accuser his master's wife, and the baseness of the crime very plausibly laid to his charge; it must be ascribed to a special interposition of God, that he was not immediately put to death. Instead of this, he was cast into the prison where the king's prisoners were confined: in which circumstance also the hand of the Lord should be noticed; for in any other prison probably Pharaoh would never have heard of him.

V. 22. *He was the doer of it.*] Through the wisdom and fidelity which Joseph manifested, he soon acquired the confidence of the keeper of the prison; and though at first severely treated, (*Note, Ps. cv. 18.*) yet he afterwards became both comfortable and useful. No doubt, the prisoners were used by him with singular humanity, and probably benefited by his pious counsels, excellent example, and winning benevolence.

V. 23. *Because the Lord, &c.*] This was so evident that the keeper of the prison noticed it; and was influenced, perhaps even converted, by what he observed. Thus, in all respects, Joseph was a blessing. (xii. 2.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

##### V. 1—10.

Our enemies may strip us of external distinctions and ornaments, but wisdom and grace cannot be taken from

20 And Joseph's master took him, and put him <sup>d</sup>into the prison, a place where <sup>e</sup>the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.

21 ¶ But <sup>f</sup>the Lord was with Joseph, and <sup>g</sup>shewed him mercy, and <sup>h</sup>gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

22 And the keeper of the prison <sup>i</sup>committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison: and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.

23 The <sup>j</sup>keeper of the prison looked not to any thing *that was* under his hand; <sup>k</sup>because the LORD was with him: and *that* which he did, the LORD made it to prosper.

us: they may banish us from our friends, relatives, and country; but they cannot deprive us of the presence of the Lord: they may even exclude us from the benefits of common providence, rob us of our liberty, and confine us in dungeons; but they cannot shut us out from the throne of grace, or bereave us of the blessings of salvation.—The ordinances of God and the society of his people are very useful, and, in some sense, almost necessary, to the life of faith and growth of grace, especially in young converts; so that parents and ministers are justly fearful lest their beloved children or people should be secluded from them: but if, contrary to our inclination, we should be deprived of these advantages, His gracious presence can supply the deficiency, and even make our souls like a watered garden, rendering us comfortable, respectable, prosperous, and useful.—Had Potiphar purchased Joseph with half the substance of his house, he would have made an advantageous bargain; and, till imposed upon, he learned his value by experience, and treated him accordingly. Yet how little do many Christians understand the worth of such servants as fear God, who will always be most faithful, industrious, and successful! But we must allow, on the other hand, that mere pretenders to religion, of character and conduct exactly the reverse of Joseph, occasion this prejudice, among those who cannot or will not discriminate, between the humble Christian, and the noisy hypocrite.—When the Lord pleases he can easily give his servants favour, even among strangers, and no one was ever a loser by being kind to them. In general, they who accommodate themselves to a low and laborious situation, will get forward, and acquire confidence. But alas! prosperity draws on temptation: and personal accomplishments are often snares to others, as well as to the possessor, who has therefore no cause to glory in them; nor ought any one to envy or covet them. Through the force of human depravity, those amiable qualities, which should command esteem, attract the attention of the licentious eye, and excite the licentious passions; which, having acquired the ascendancy, scorn restraint and regard to modesty and decency. Thus "when lust is conceived, it bringeth forth sin;" and the infatuated wretch, rushing

## CHAP. XL.

Pharaoh's chief butler and chief baker being imprisoned, Joseph is charged with them, 1—4. He interprets their dreams, and offers a petition to the chief butler, 5—19. The dreams are accomplished, and the chief butler forgets Joseph, 20—23.

a xxxix. 20—23.  
Esth. vi. 1.  
b 13. Neh. i. 11.  
ii. 1, 2.

AND <sup>a</sup>it came to pass after these things, <sup>b</sup>that the butler of the king of Egypt and <sup>c</sup>his baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt.

c Ps. lxxvi. 10.  
Prov. xvi. 14.  
Acts xii. 20.  
d 1 Chr. xxxvii. 27.

2 And Pharaoh was wroth against two of his officers, against <sup>d</sup>the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers.

3 And he put them in ward in the

headlong to destruction, turns seducer, and becomes the factor for Satan, in tempting others to wickedness. Nor is any thing more to be dreaded than such a tempter, or more to be shunned than such temptations; so that if we do not mean to commit iniquity, we ought to "flee as a bird from the snare of the fowler, and as a roe from the hand of the hunter." Let us not, however, rest satisfied with admiring Joseph, in the honourable victory which he acquired; but let us consider him as a bright example proposed to our imitation, and an illustrious proof of the energy of divine grace. Trusting to that grace, we may hope to be more than conquerors, not only if exposed to the fiery trial of persecution, but even if assaulted in the far more dangerous manner that Joseph was. But, would we stand stedfast in the day of trial, we must have our minds armed with gratitude, justice, fear of God, faith, love, abhorrence of evil, contempt of worldly pleasure or gain, and readiness for the cross: we must learn also to judge of every sin, and of licentious indulgences especially, not in that slight manner which the world does; but as enormous crimes, "for the sake of which the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience." And, that importunity may not prevail over us, nor secrecy encourage us, we should endeavour to have our minds habitually possessed, with a sense of our obligations unto God, his all-seeing eye upon us, and the approaching discoveries of the day of judgment.

## V. 11—23.

If Satan cannot induce us to sin, he will do his utmost to distress us: and we must expect the embittered resentment of those, whose wicked inclinations we disappoint; and to be accused of the very crimes which we abhor, yea, because we abhor them. It is, however, far "better, if the will of God be so, that we suffer for well-doing, than for evil-doing:" a clear conscience and the presence of a merciful God, will support us, not only under our trials, but under the most injurious calumnies: and we need not use much labour to vindicate ourselves; for in due time, the Lord will vindicate us, and clear off every aspersion.—The more meekly and patiently we suffer, the less bitterness shall we experience in our trials, and the more consistent will our conduct be with the Christian

house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, <sup>e</sup>the place where Joseph <sup>e</sup>was bound.

4 And <sup>f</sup>the captain of the guard <sup>f</sup>charged Joseph with them, and he served them; and they continued a season in ward.

5 ¶ And <sup>g</sup>they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream; the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which <sup>h</sup>were bound in the prison.

6 And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, <sup>i</sup>and behold they <sup>i</sup>were sad.

g 8. xx. 3. xxxvii.  
5. 10. xli. 1—7.  
Judg. vii. 13.  
Dan. ii. 1—3. iv  
5. 9. 19.

i 8. Dan. iv. 5. v.  
6.

character. By all these things, the Lord is training up his people for glory: perhaps for better scenes, and important services, in this present world: and, if we are not in a wrong spirit, or out of the path of duty, we can never be out of the way either of comfort or usefulness.—But let us not forget, through Joseph, to look unto Jesus, who "suffered being tempted," yet without sin; who was calumniated and persecuted, but without cause; "who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth" to recriminate, or to vindicate himself; and who by the cross ascended to the throne. May we be enabled, and contented, to follow in the same path of submissive suffering, to the same place of glory.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XL. V. 3. Potiphar was "captain of the guard:" and it seems this state-prison was adjoining to his house, and entrusted to his care; so that the keeper of the prison probably was his deputy. (xxxvii. 36.)

V. 4. Joseph at first was not only closely confined, but severely treated in the prison. (Note, Ps. cv. 18.) Yet, after some time, Potiphar's resentment seems to have cooled: and, considering the whole of Joseph's prudent and excellent conduct, he perhaps began to suspect that he had been maliciously accused. He however connived at the kindness shewn to Joseph, and, being sensible of his abilities, was not unwilling he should be trusted, and prove serviceable in that situation. Being thus employed, he gave the king's butler and baker, as prisoners of rank, all the attendance required.—'On how many little incidents of which the parties at the time think nothing, do some of the greatest events depend! If they had gone to another prison, Joseph might have died where he was, and no provision been made for the seven years of famine; and Jacob and his family, with millions of others, have perished for want; and so all the promises of their becoming a great nation, and of the Messiah springing from among them, and all nations being blessed in him, would have been frustrated. But he that appoints the end, appoints all the means which lead to it.' Fuller.

V. 6. The prisoners, considering their dreams as supernatural, were very melancholy; for their situation, and per-

7 And he asked Pharaoh's officers that *were* with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, <sup>k</sup> Wherefore <sup>\*</sup> look ye so sadly to day?

<sup>k</sup> 2 Sam. xiii. 4.  
Neh. ii. 2. Luke  
xxiv. 17.  
<sup>\*</sup> Heb. are your  
faces evil?

8 And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and *there is* no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, <sup>l</sup> Do not interpretations *belong* to God? tell me *them*, I pray you.

<sup>l</sup> xli. 15, 16. Is.  
viii. 19. Dan. ii.  
11. 23. 47. v. 11  
—15. 1 Cor. xii.  
10, 11.

9 And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said unto him, In my dream, behold, <sup>m</sup> a vine *was* before me.

<sup>m</sup> xxxvii. 6—10.  
Judg. vii. 13—  
15 Dan. ii. 31.  
iv. 10, &c.

10 And in the vine *were* three branches: and it *was* as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes.

11 And Pharaoh's cup *was* in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand.

<sup>n</sup> xli. 25. Dan. ii.  
26, &c. iv. 19,  
46.

12 And Joseph said unto him, <sup>o</sup> This is the interpretation of it: <sup>o</sup> The three branches *are* three days.

<sup>o</sup> xli. 26. Judg. vii.  
14. Matt. xxvi.  
26. 1 Cor. x. 4.  
Gal. iv. 25.

13 Yet within three days <sup>p</sup> shall Pharaoh <sup>l</sup> lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler.

<sup>p</sup> 2 Kings xxv. 27.  
Ps. iii. 3. Jer. lxi.  
31.  
<sup>†</sup> Or, reckon. 19,  
20. marg.

14 But <sup>q</sup> think <sup>q</sup> on me when it shall be well with thee, and <sup>r</sup> shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me; and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house:

<sup>q</sup> Heb. remember  
me with thee.

<sup>r</sup> 1 Sam. xxv. 31.  
Luke xxiii. 42.  
1 Cor. vii. 21.  
<sup>†</sup> Josh. ii. 12. 1 Sam.  
xx. 14, 15. 2 Sam.  
ix. 1. 1 Kings ii.  
7.

haps conscious guilt, caused them to forebode the worst. Indeed, it must have appeared very extraordinary, that each of them should have so significant a dream at the same time.

V. 7. This is a beautiful specimen of that attentive tenderness and sympathy, by means of which God gave Joseph favour with every one whom he approached.

V. 8. The prisoners could not consult the diviners, in whom they placed confidence; and this added to their anxiety.—Joseph's apposite question intimates, that he had before discoursed with them concerning the true God, and endeavoured to draw them off from those lying vanities to his worship and service. It also precluded them from giving him the honour of the interpretation.

V. 9—13. The rapid budding and blossoming of the vine, and ripening of the grapes, seems to have fixed the interpretation to three *days*, rather than *weeks*, *months*, or *years*: and the actual delivery of the cup into Pharaoh's hand obviously denoted a prosperous event.—“The three branches are three days” (12). “This is my body.”

15 For indeed I was <sup>s</sup> stolen away out of the land of <sup>t</sup> the Hebrews: and here also have I <sup>u</sup> done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.

<sup>s</sup> xxxvii. 28. Ex.  
xxi. 16. Deut.  
xxiv. 7. 1 Tim.  
i. 10.  
<sup>t</sup> xiv. 13. xli. 12.  
<sup>u</sup> xxxix. 20. 1 Sam.  
xxiv. 11. Ps. lxx.  
3, 4. Dan. vi. 22.  
John x. 32. xv.  
25. Acts xxiv. 13  
—21. xxv. 10, 11  
1 Pet. iii. 17, 18.  
<sup>x</sup> 1, 2.

16 ¶ When <sup>x</sup> the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good; he said unto Joseph, I also *was* in my dream, and behold, *I had* three <sup>y</sup> white baskets on my head.

<sup>y</sup> Or, baskets full  
of holes.

17 And in the uppermost basket *there was* of all manner of <sup>z</sup> bake-meats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head.

<sup>z</sup> Heb. meat of  
Pharaoh, the  
work of a baker,  
or cook.

18 And Joseph answered and said, This is the interpretation thereof: <sup>a</sup> The three baskets *are* three days.

<sup>a</sup> See on 12.—xli.  
25. 1 Cor. x. 4.  
xi. 24.

19 Yet <sup>b</sup> within three days shall Pharaoh <sup>c</sup> lift up thy head from off thee, and shall <sup>d</sup> hang thee on a tree: <sup>e</sup> and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.

<sup>b</sup> 13  
<sup>c</sup> Or, reckon thee  
and take thy of-  
fice from thee.  
<sup>d</sup> 22. xli. 13. Deut.  
xxi. 22, 23. Josh.  
viii. 29. x. 26.  
2 Sam. xxi. 6.  
Gal. iii. 13.  
<sup>e</sup> 17. 1 Sam. xvii.  
44. 46. 2 Sam.  
xxi. 10. Ex.  
xxxix. 4.  
Matt. xiv. 6.  
Mark vi. 21.

20 ¶ And it came to pass the third day, *which was* Pharaoh's <sup>f</sup> birth-day, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he <sup>g</sup> lifted up the head of the chief butler, and of the chief baker, among his servants.

<sup>f</sup> Or, reckoned. 13  
19. Marg. Matt.  
xviii. 23—25  
Luke xvi. 1, 2

21 And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again; and he <sup>h</sup> gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand:

<sup>h</sup> 13. Neh. ii. 1

22 But <sup>i</sup> he hanged the chief baker: as Joseph had interpreted to them.

<sup>i</sup> e 8. 19. xli. 11—  
13. 16. Dan. ii.  
19—23. 30. v.  
12.

23 Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, <sup>j</sup> but forgot him.

<sup>j</sup> Job xix. 14. Ps.  
xxxix. 12. Ec. ix.  
15, 16. Am. vi.  
6.

V. 14, 15. Joseph desired, by an appeal to Pharaoh, to obtain his liberty; but he had no further request to present. He did not say by whom, or in what manner, he was *stolen*, and sold for a slave; for he was not disposed to criminate or reproach: neither did he so much as accuse his wicked mistress, or at all reflect on Potiphar, or express any resentment for his false imprisonment.—It seems that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with large families and in flourishing circumstances, had so long sojourned in the southern part of Canaan, that it had become known in the adjacent countries as “the land of the Hebrews.”

V. 16—19. The bake-meats, eaten by the birds and not brought to Pharaoh, was the unfavourable presage. The bad dream would not admit of a good interpretation; nor could Joseph, without unfaithfulness, conceal the truth, however it might pain him to speak it. The baker might be benefited by the warning, if he prepared to meet the predicted event.

V. 20—22. The anniversary of Pharaoh's birth-day being observed as a season of festivity, these officers were enquired after; and either through the merits of their

## CHAP. XLI.

Pharaoh has two dreams, which the magicians cannot interpret, 1—8. The chief butler recommends Joseph, who is sent for, and interprets the dreams to foretel seven years of great plenty and seven of as great scarcity, 9—32. He gives counsel to Pharaoh; and is highly preferred, 33—44; and married, 45. The seven years of plenty, and Joseph's wise management, 46—49. The names of his two sons, 50—52. The seven years of scarcity begin, and the Egyptians are relieved by Joseph, 53—57.

<sup>a</sup> xxxvii. 5—10.  
<sup>xi</sup> 5. <sup>Esth.</sup> vi. 1.  
<sup>Dan.</sup> ii. 1—8. <sup>iv.</sup>  
<sup>5.</sup> &c. <sup>Matt.</sup>  
<sup>xxvii.</sup> 19.  
<sup>b</sup> <sup>Deut.</sup> xi. 10.  
<sup>Es.</sup> xxxix. 3. 9.

AND it came to pass at the end of two full years, <sup>a</sup> that Pharaoh dreamed, and behold he stood by <sup>b</sup> the river.

cause, or the caprice of their sovereign, they were thus differently disposed of.

V. 23. Neither the kindness shewn by Joseph, nor the interpretation of his dream thus remarkably verified, nor the discourses which doubtless he had heard concerning religion, nor the excellent conduct of Joseph which adorned it, made any lasting impression on the chief butler, when he was again possessed of the emoluments of his office, and enjoying the pleasures of the court!

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

High stations are slippery places; and from the presence-chamber to the dungeon is, in many earthly courts, only a short step: but a place in the favour of God, who will not forsake his true servants, is of unspeakable value.—In the voluntary actions of men, who know not God and pay no regard to him, we may discern his hand; and perceive how his purposes unfold, and his counsels slowly, but surely, work towards an accomplishment. While we are encouraged by the gracious dealings of the Lord towards his afflicted servant, let us mark how he resembled Christ; and may we, through the grace of God resemble and imitate him, in fidelity, humanity, compassion, unaffected piety, and humility; in repressing the pride and resentment, which agitate our hearts, embitter our spirits, and sometimes disgrace our conversation, when we meet with injurious treatment; or speak of that which we have met with; and in modestly pleading our own cause, without needlessly mentioning or exposing the faults, even of our most malignant enemies.—The foresight of sinners, however attained, reaches but a few days forward; but, by faith, the believer looks through the sufferings of time, and anticipates the glories of eternity.—Though we ought not in general to expect information from dreams, and need not regret the want of an interpreter: yet, to be favoured with a wise and faithful interpreter of God's providences and oracles, especially in seasons of affliction, is an inexpressible mercy. (*Note, Job xxxiii. 19—26.*) Here also “interpretations belong to God;” from him we must seek them, and to him give the praise, whatever instruments he employs. But the same faithful interpretation, which encourages one man, will contain an awful warning to another of a contrary character: yet, even this is of salutary tendency; for blessed be God, if we discover our danger, we need not long seek in vain for a refuge.—Tem-

2 And behold, <sup>c</sup> there came up out of <sup>c</sup> 17—27. the river seven well-favoured kine, and fat-fleshed; and they fed in a meadow.

3 And behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill-favoured, and lean-fleshed; and stood by the *other* kine, upon the brink of the river.

4 And the ill-favoured and lean-fleshed kine did eat up the seven well-favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke.

5 And he slept and dreamed the second time: and behold, seven ears

poreal deliverances must generally be longer waited for by the Lord's servants, than by others, that they may have them with the fullest advantage, and be previously prepared for them: and he will teach them to cease from man, before they obtain their best blessings.—The festive observation of birth-days by men, who are exceedingly desirous of living in this world, seems rather incongruous: for, in fact, they thus celebrate, with every indication of joy and gladness, the decease, as it were, of one year after another of their uncertain span; nor are the two instances of this vanity, recorded in Scripture, suited to recommend the practice. (*Mark vi. 16—29.*) A Christian, however, may properly observe his birth-day, with praise and thanksgiving to God for giving him life, and with gladness of heart that he approaches the conclusion of sin and sorrow, and the completion of his felicity. He may also take occasion, at these returning seasons, to bless the Lord for the mercies of the past year, to humble himself for the sins which he has committed, and to seek the divine assistance and blessing in all he shall undertake during the year on which he then enters.—We must not complain or be discouraged, if we are forgotten, or ungratefully requited, by those whom we have served. Ingratitude is, alas! the fault of our nature; and we as well as others are guilty of it, especially in our base forgetfulness of God.—But let us remember the sufferings, promises, and love of our Redeemer; and mark in this narration of Joseph, a type of Jesus, in the depth of his humiliation, mercifully assuring one of the malefactors, who hung beside him, of immediate and eternal felicity; and with awful justice leaving the other to hardness of heart and eternal perdition.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XLI. V. 1. Joseph must have been a considerable time in prison, before he would be so far trusted, as to have the two state-prisoners under his charge; they were confined for some time, and yet two years more elapsed without any tokens of approaching deliverance! Surely he would often be ready to say, “LORD, how long?”—But it was the will of God, that his servant should receive liberty, and preferment also, not as an obligation conferred on an indigent person; but for the benefit of others, and in the character of a benefactor to the king and people of Egypt.—The scene of Pharaoh's dreams is laid at the river Nile, the annual overflowing of







THE RIVER NILE UNDER ITS USUAL APPEARANCE.





THE NILE, AS IT APPEARS AT THE PERIOD OF ITS OVERFLOW.



• Heb. *fat*. Deut. of corn came up upon one stalk, \*rank and good.  
xxxii. 14.

d Ez. xvii. 10. xix. 6 And behold, seven thin ears and  
12. Hos. xiii. 15. <sup>d</sup> blasted with the east-wind sprang up after them.

7 And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears: and Pharaoh awoke, and behold *it was* a dream.

8 And it came to pass in the morning, that \*his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the \*magicians of Egypt, and all \*the wise-men thereof: and Pharaoh told them his dream; <sup>h</sup> but *there was* none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh.  
e xl. 6. Dan. ii. 1  
—3. iv. 5. v. 6.  
vi. 28. viii. 27.  
Hab. iii. 16.  
f Ez. vii. 11. 22.  
viii. 7. 18. 19.  
ix. 11. Lev. xix. 31.  
xx. 6. Deut. xxi. 9—14. Is. viii. 19. xix. 8. xlvii. 12, 13. Dan. ii. 2. iv. 7. v. 7. 11.  
g Matt. ii. 1. Acts vii. 22.  
h Job v. 12. 18. Ps. xxi. 14. Is. xix. 11—13. xxxix. 14. Dan. ii. 4—11. 27, 28. 1 Cor. iii. 18—20.  
i xl. 1—3. 14. 23.

9 ¶ Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, 'I do remember my faults this day.

10 Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, *both* me, and the chief baker.

11 And we \*dreamed a dream in one night, I and he: we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream.  
j xl. 5—8.

12 And *there was* there with us a young man, an Hebrew, \*servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he \*interpreted to us our dreams: to each man according to his dream he did interpret.  
k xxxvii. 36.  
xxxix. 1. 20.  
l xl. 12—19.

13 And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was: \*me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged.  
m xl. 20—22. Jer. i. 10. Ez. xlii. 3.  
n 1 Sam. ii. 8. Ps. cv. 19—23. cxlii. 7. 8.  
o Ez. x. 16. Dan. ii. 25.  
† Heb. *made him* *run*. Ez. x. 16. Dan. ii. 25.  
p 2 Sam. xix. 24. 2 Kings xxv. 29. Esth. iv. 1—4. v. 1. Is. lxi. 3. 10. Jer. lxi. 32, 33.

14 Then Pharaoh \*sent and called Joseph, \*and they \*brought him hastily out of the dungeon; and \*he shaved *himself* and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh.

15 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and *there is* none that can interpret it: and \*I have heard say of thee, \*that thou canst understand a dream, to interpret it.  
q 9—13. Dan. v. 16.  
Or, when thou hearest a dream, thou canst interpret it.

16 And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, \*It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.  
r xl. 8. Dan. ii. 18—23. 28—30. 47. Acts iii. 12. xiv. 14, 15. 2 Cor. iii. 5.

17 ¶ And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, \*In my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river.

18 And behold, there came up out of the river seven kine, \*fat-fleshed, and well-favoured; and they fed in a meadow.  
t Jer. xxiv. 1—3. 5. 8.

19 And behold, seven other kine came up after them, poor and very ill-favoured, and lean-fleshed, such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt for badness.

20 And the lean and the ill-favoured kine did eat up the first seven fat kine.

21 And when they had \*eaten them up, it could not be known that they had eaten them; but they *were* still ill-favoured, as at the beginning. So I awoke.  
† Heb. *come to the inward parts of them*. Ez. iii. 3. Rev. x. 9, 10.

22 And I saw in my dream, and behold, seven ears came up in one stalk, full and good.

23 And behold, seven ears \*withered, thin, \*and blasted with the east-wind, sprang up after them.  
i Or, *small*.  
u 6. 2 Kings xix. 26. Ps. cxxxix. 6. 7. Hos. viii. 7. ix. 16.

24 And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears: and I told *this* unto the magicians; but *there was* none that could declare *it* unto me.

25 And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh is one: \*God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do.  
x See on 16.—Is. xli. 22, 23. xliii. 9. Mark xiii. 23. Rev. iv. 1.

26 The seven good kine *are* seven

which caused the fertility of Egypt; but the failure of it was followed by famine, or at least by scarcity.

V. 2—7. The fat cattle and full ears of corn were apt emblems of plenty; the lean cattle and blighted ears, of famine. "The kine" seem to bear an allusion to the grass for the use of cattle; and "the ears," to the corn for the food of man.

V. 8. The circumstances of Pharaoh's dreams were strange and unnatural, yet they seemed very significant; and they impressed his mind, as a presage of some great events to himself or his kingdom: and God so ordered it, to forward Joseph's advancement, that the magicians and wise men could not make so much as a plausible conjecture at the meaning of them. (*Marg. Ref.*) It does not

appear by what rules they interpreted dreams, or why they declined giving any interpretation on this occasion.

V. 9. *My faults.*] Either formerly against Pharaoh, or in forgetting Joseph.

V. 16. Thus Joseph spake of the Lord and his "statutes before kings, and was not ashamed." By this modest and pious answer he tacitly condemned all the pretended skill of the magicians, and endeavoured to draw the king himself "from these lying vanities unto the living God:" at the same time, he renounced all pretensions to superior sagacity, expressed his good will to Pharaoh, and intimated a confidence that the dream and interpretation would prove beneficial to his kingdom.

V. 25—27. Both dreams had one meaning; the same

years; and the seven good ears *are* <sup>7</sup> seven years: <sup>8</sup> the dream *is* one.

27 And the seven thin and ill-favoured kine that came up after them, *are* seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east-wind, shall be seven years of famine.

28 This *is* the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: <sup>a</sup> What God *is* about to do, he sheweth unto Pharaoh.

29 Behold, there come seven years of great plenty, throughout all the land of Egypt.

30 And there shall arise after them <sup>b</sup> seven years of famine, and all the plenty <sup>c</sup> shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt: and the famine shall <sup>d</sup> consume the land.

31 And the plenty shall not be known in the land, by reason of that famine following: for it *shall be* very <sup>e</sup> grievous.

32 And for that the dream was <sup>f</sup> doubled unto Pharaoh twice; <sup>g</sup> it *is* because the thing *is* <sup>h</sup> established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.

33 Now <sup>i</sup> therefore let Pharaoh <sup>j</sup> look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.

34 Let Pharaoh do *this*, and let him appoint <sup>k</sup> officers over the land, <sup>l</sup> and

take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years.

35 And let them <sup>m</sup> gather all the food <sup>n</sup> of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities.

36 And that food shall be for store to the land, against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt: <sup>o</sup> that the land <sup>p</sup> perish not through the famine.

37 And <sup>q</sup> the thing was <sup>r</sup> good in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of all his servants.

38 And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find *such a one* as this *is*, a man <sup>s</sup> in whom the Spirit of God *is*?

39 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as <sup>t</sup> God hath shewed thee all this, *there is* none so discreet and wise as thou *art*.

40 Thou <sup>u</sup> shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people <sup>v</sup> be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.

41 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, <sup>w</sup> See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.

42 And Pharaoh took off <sup>x</sup> his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's

<sup>7</sup> See on xl. 12.  
<sup>8</sup> ii. 24. Ex. xxvi.  
<sup>9</sup> i. John v. 7.

<sup>a</sup> See on 16. 25.

<sup>b</sup> 27. 2 Sam. xxiv.  
13. 1 Kings xvii.  
1. 2 Kings viii.  
1. Luke iv. 25.  
Jam. v. 17.  
<sup>c</sup> 21. 51. Prov.  
xxxi. 7. Is. lxxv.  
16.  
<sup>d</sup> xlvii. 13.

<sup>e</sup> Heb. heavy.  
1 Sam. v. 6. Is.  
xxiv. 20.

<sup>f</sup> xxxvii. 7. 9.

<sup>g</sup> 2 Cor. xiii. 1.

<sup>h</sup> Num. xxiii. 19.

<sup>i</sup> Is. xiv. 24—27.

<sup>j</sup> xlv. 10. 11.

<sup>k</sup> Matt. xxiv. 35.

<sup>l</sup> Or, prepared. Is.

<sup>m</sup> xxx. 33. Matt.

<sup>n</sup> xxv. 34. 41.

<sup>o</sup> Mark x. 40.

<sup>p</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 9. Rev.

<sup>q</sup> ix. 15.

<sup>r</sup> Dan. iv. 27.

<sup>s</sup> Ex. xviii. 19—

<sup>t</sup> 22. Deut. i. 13

<sup>u</sup> Acts vi. 3.

<sup>v</sup> Or, overseers.

<sup>w</sup> Prov. vi. 6—8.

<sup>x</sup> xxii. 3. xxvii.

<sup>y</sup> 12.

<sup>48, 49, 56, xlv.</sup>

<sup>6, 7.</sup>

<sup>xlvi. 13—25.</sup>  
<sup>1</sup> Heb. be not cut  
off. 30.

<sup>m</sup> Prov. x. 20. xxv.  
11. Acts vii. 10.  
<sup>n</sup> Josh. xxii. 30.  
2 Sam. iii. 36.  
1 Kings xxi. 2.  
margins.

<sup>o</sup> Num. xxvii. 18.  
Job xxii. 8.  
Dan. iv. 8. 18.  
v. 11. 14.  
<sup>p</sup> See on 16. 25  
28. 33.

<sup>q</sup> xxxix. 4—6. Ps.  
cv. 21, 22. Prov.  
xxii. 29. Dan. ii.  
48. vi. 3.  
<sup>r</sup> Heb. be armed,  
or kiss. 1 Sam.  
x. 1. Ps. ii. 12.

<sup>s</sup> 44. Esth. x. 3.  
Dan. iv. 2. 3.  
Matt. xxviii. 18.  
Phil. ii. 9—11.  
<sup>t</sup> Esth. iii. 10. 12.  
vi. 7—12. viii. 2.  
8. 10. 15. x. 3.  
Dan. ii. 46, 47.  
v. 7. 29. Luke  
xv. 22.

events being represented under two emblems.—The seven good kine and the seven good ears, “were seven years,” or denoted seven years: a very common mode of expression; though in a single instance multitudes have inferred things absurd and impossible from one similar to it; viz. “This is my body.”—(See xl. 12.)

V. 28—32. Thus Joseph emphatically intimated to Pharaoh, that the fertility of Egypt, or the contrary, was entirely the work of JEHOVAH; and that the overflowing of the Nile, and its failure, were *second causes*, entirely directed and ordered by the God of heaven.

V. 33—36. Joseph presumed to offer Pharaoh this counsel, as the practical inference from the revelation which God had afforded him; for that was intended to forewarn the king, that he might make preparation. There could be no risk in following this advice; as corn was not to be reserved, except as it could be well spared from the regular consumption.—Besides all the corn which Pharaoh should lay up, it might be supposed that many of the wealthy Egyptians would provide private granaries; and that an immense quantity would, in different ways, be collected during the years of plenty.

V. 37. Under the present impression of Joseph's interpretation of the dream, not only Pharaoh, but his counsellors likewise, approved Joseph's advice as undeniably good; perhaps not without each expecting, for himself or

his friend, this lucrative and honourable employment.—Thus God gave Joseph *favour*, as well as *wisdom*.

V. 38. *Spirit of God.*] This conclusion probably sprang from the remainder of a traditional opinion, that the highest and noblest wisdom was derived from the inspiration of the Spirit of God: and the judgment of Pharaoh concerning Joseph was doubtless formed, not only from the interpretation, as excelling all the skill of the magicians; but also from his purposed plan, as equally superior to all the sagacity of his counsellors. All parties were silent on the occasion, and it may well be ascribed to God's overawing their minds, that no opposition was made, when we consider how propense human nature is to envy, and that Joseph was a stranger and a slave!

V. 40. Thus was Joseph made chief minister, and ruler in every department of government; as well as placed over the business of collecting corn: a station, which no man on earth could have held, with equal advantage to all concerned, and with less danger to any; for in this Joseph was an especial type of our perfectly wise, righteous, faithful, and compassionate Mediator and King.

*Be ruled.*] *ps*; be armed, kiss. (marg.)—Notes, 1 Sam. x. 1. Ps. ii. 10—12.

V. 41—43. Perhaps Joseph was modestly disposed to decline so weighty and exalted a station, and intimidated at the difficulty and danger of it; and therefore he needed

hand, and arrayed him in vestures of  
\* fine linen, and put 'a gold chain about  
his neck.

43 And he made him to ride in the  
second chariot which he had; and they  
cried before him, 'Bow the knee: and  
he made him "ruler over all the land  
of Egypt.

44 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph,  
I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall  
no man \* lift up his hand or foot in all  
the land of Egypt.

45 ¶ And Pharaoh called Joseph's  
name Zaphnath-paaneah; and he gave  
him to wife Asenath the daughter of  
Poti-pherah 'priest of On: and Joseph  
went out over *all* the land of Egypt.

46 And Joseph was ' thirty years old  
when ' he stood before Pharaoh king of  
Egypt. And Joseph went out from the  
presence of Pharaoh, and went through-  
out all the land of Egypt.

47 And in the seven plenteous years  
the earth brought forth by \* hand-  
fuls.

48 And <sup>b</sup> he gathered up all the food  
of the seven years which were in the  
land of Egypt, and laid up the food in  
the cities: the food of the field which  
*was* round about every city, laid he up  
in the same.

49 And Joseph gathered corn \* as  
the sand of the sea, very much, until  
he left numbering: for *it was* without  
number.

50 ¶ And ' unto Joseph were born  
two sons before the years of famine  
came: which \* Asenath, the daughter  
of Poti-pherah 'priest of On, bare unto  
him.

51 And Joseph ' called the name of  
the first-born ' Manasseh; for God, *said*  
*he*, hath made me forget all my toil,  
and all my father's house.

52 And the name of the second  
' called he \* Ephraim: for God hath  
caused me to be fruitful in <sup>h</sup> the land of  
my affliction.

53 ¶ And ' the seven years of plente-  
ousness, that was in the land of Egypt,  
were ended.

54 And \* the seven years of dearth  
began to come, ' according as Joseph  
had said: "and the dearth was in all  
lands; but in all the land of Egypt  
there was bread.

55 And when all the land of Egypt  
was \* famished, the people cried to  
Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said  
unto all the Egyptians, \* Go unto Jo-  
seph; what he saith to you, do.

56 And the famine was over all <sup>p</sup> the

\* Or, silk.  
† Prov. i. 9. Cant  
i. 10. Ez. xvi. 11.  
Dan. v. 7. 16.

† Or, Tender fa-  
ther. xlv. 8. Heb.  
Abreek.  
u xlii. 6. 30. 33.  
xlv. 8. 26. Acts  
vii. 10.

z Ex. xi. 7.

z Or, prince. Ex.  
ii. 16. marg.  
2 Sam. viii. 15.  
xx. 26. Heb.  
y xxxvii. 2. Num.  
iv. 3. 2 Sam. v.  
4. Luke ii. 23.  
z 1 Sam. xvi. 21.  
1 Kings xii. 6.  
Prov. xxii. 29.  
Dan. i. 19. Luke  
xxi. 36. Jude 24.

a xxvi. 12. Ps.  
lxxii. 16.

o 24, 36. xlvii. 21.

c xlii. 17. Judg.  
vii. 12. 1 Sam.  
xiii. 5. Ps. lxxviii.  
27. Jer. xxxiii.  
22.

o xvi. 20. xlviii.  
8.

e 45. xvi. 21.  
Or, prince.

f xlviii. 5. 13, 14  
18—20. Deut  
xxxiii. 17.  
! That is, Forget-  
ting. See on 30.  
—Ps. xiv. 10.

g xxix. 32—35.  
xxx. 6—13. 1.  
25.

\* That is, Fruit-  
ful. xlviii. 16.  
19. xlix. 22.

h Ps. cv. 17, 18.  
Am. vi. 6. Acts  
vii. 10.  
120—31. Ps. lxxiii.  
20. Luke xvi. 25

k Ps. cv. 16. Acts  
vii. 11.  
i 30.

m xliii. 2. 5. xlii.  
1. xlv. 11. xlvii.  
18.

n 2 Kings vi. 25—  
29. Jer. xiv. 1—  
6. Lam. iv. 3—  
10.

o 40, 41. Matt. iii.  
17. xvii. 5.

p Is. xxiii. 17.  
Zech. v. 3. Luke  
xxi. 35. Acts  
xviii. 26.

repeated assurances to encourage him.—By these several  
tokens, the king publicly avowed his appointment, and  
shewed that it would be at the peril of any one who dared  
to oppose it.—*Chariot* (43). This is the first time, that  
a chariot or any carriage is mentioned in Scripture.—*Bow  
the knee.*] See the margin.

V. 44. *I am Pharaoh.*] 'As sure as I am king of Egypt,  
I will stand by thee; so that no man shall do any thing  
contrary to thy command and allowance.'

V. 45, 46. Some interpret *Zaphnath-paaneah* to  
signify *The preserver of the land*: but others suppose it to  
mean, in the Egyptian tongue, *a revealer of secrets*: or  
"the man to whom secrets are revealed."—*Poti-pherah* is a  
different name from Potiphar, and another person than  
Joseph's master is meant. As priest, or prince, of On  
or Heliopolis, he was some great lord of the court, or at  
least had been; for perhaps he was dead, and his daughter  
a ward of Pharaoh.—Joseph immediately went over all the  
land to take surveys, build granaries, and make prepara-  
tions for the execution of his grand design.—*Thirty years  
old.*] Notes, xxvii. 1. xxxix. 2—6.

V. 47. *By handfuls.*] An uncommon and vast increase.

V. 49. Perhaps the fifth before mentioned was imposed  
as a publick tax; and Joseph might also buy large quan-  
tities, when corn was cheap, which he stored up near the  
spot; thus consulting both ease and convenience, and

giving the people a pledge that it was laid up *for* them, not  
taken *from* them.—Some think, that the grain, or a con-  
siderable part of it, was preserved in the straw, in stacks;  
that so the straw might be food for the starving cattle, the  
produce of the first years of plenty being used in the be-  
ginning of the scarcity.

V. 51. *Manasseh.*] *Causing to forget.* God had made  
Joseph forget all his toil and his father's house, by the  
prosperous event of his captivity, slavery, and imprison-  
ment. Perhaps, when he sought enlargement through the  
chief butler, he had thoughts of returning home, out of  
regard to his father and family: but, being now settled  
and engaged otherwise in Providence, he had relinquished  
this design.—It must be ascribed to the peculiar disposal  
of God, that he was kept from sending to enquire about  
his father, or to inform him of his advancement.

V. 54. *In all lands.*] In all the countries adjoining to  
Egypt.

V. 55. *Famished.*] The private stores of the Egyptians  
were after a time exhausted; and then they had in general,  
no other resource but the publick granaries, without which  
a desolating famine must have ensued.—The coincidence  
of events, with Joseph's predictions, would greatly increase  
his influence both with prince and people.

V. 56, 57. Joseph does not seem to have opened the  
publick granaries, till the private stock was nearly ex-

face of the earth: and Joseph opened <sup>†</sup> all the store-houses, and <sup>‡</sup> sold unto the Egyptians: and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt.

57 And <sup>§</sup> all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore <sup>¶</sup> in all lands.

## CHAP. XLII.

Jacob sends ten of his sons to Egypt to buy corn, 1—5. Joseph, who knows them but is unknown to them, imprisons them as spies, 6—17. They betray

hausted. This measure would tend to frugality, and subserve his design both of enriching the publick treasure, and preventing the horrors of famine in that and the adjacent countries.—“*Face of the earth*” (56). Or, “*Of the land,*” or, “*the country* (הָאָרֶץ).”

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

## V. 1—38.

The Lord in his appointed time will bring his people out of trouble, purified as gold from the furnace; but seldom according to their expectations, either as to the way or the season of their deliverance; and not until he hath brought them off from other dependences, to a simple trust in him and submission to him.—“*In the multitude of dreams there are divers vanities,*” and in general they are neither worth repeating, nor capable of any useful interpretation: yet, so absolutely is our imagination, sleeping as well as waking, in the Lord’s hand, that without supposing any thing prophetic, (as in Pharaoh’s dreams,) he may by a dream leave an impression upon the mind, of the most important consequences to ourselves and others.—We should not deem those expectations frustrated which are not immediately answered; nor that seed of the word thrown away, which does not immediately spring up: as the most negligent and forgetful may hereafter remember, and be humbled for their present inattention.—Deliverances, both from temporal and spiritual distress, often surprise the praying soul when least expected, so that a man at once becomes “*like them that dream:*” and as God frequently pours contempt upon princes, and takes pleasure in abasing the haughty; so he delights as much in advancing the humble “*from the dunghill, to make them inherit the throne of glory.*”—Humility and a regard to the glory of God are requisite, in order to behave suitably in prosperous circumstances; and an answer of peace may be expected, when those are consulted “*in whom is the Spirit of God,*” by those, who sincerely desire to know his truth and will.—To honour those who honour him, the Lord frequently “*confounds the wisdom of the wise,* and “*brings to nothing the understanding of the prudent;*” and when he pleases to give wisdom and favour, he can conciliate the affections of all, or overawe their spirits; and prevent opposition from the jarring counsels and selfish passions of the ambitious and envious.

before Joseph remorse for their cruelty to him; he conceals his sympathy; retains Simeon, and sends the rest home, with provisions, requiring them to bring their younger brother, 18—25. They find their money in their sacks’ mouths, and are alarmed: they report the matter to Jacob, who complains, laments, is affrighted, and refuses to send Benjamin, 26—38.

NOW <sup>a</sup> when Jacob <sup>b</sup> saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, <sup>c</sup> Why do ye look one upon another?

2 And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: <sup>d</sup> get you

a xli. 54. 57. Acts vii. 12.  
b 2. 1 Kings xix. 3. Hos. v. 15. Gal. ii. 7.  
c Josh. vii. 10. 2 Kings vii. 3, 4. Ezra x. 4. Jer. viii. 14.

d xliii. 2. 4.

## V. 39—57.

Important trusts, however unexceptionably obtained and managed, are an encumbrance rather than an advantage to the possessor; who might be more comfortable, though not so useful, in a more obscure situation. Indeed, all worldly prosperity, like the years of plenty, is fleeting away, and will soon be forgotten and swallowed up, in the afflictions which are coming upon the wicked. In Joseph however, we still see a bright example of fidelity, activity, and equity; and an instance of the extensive good, which in some circumstances may be done by one man, who is called forth, qualified, and prospered by the Lord.—The knowledge of future temporal events might in some instances be useful, yet would seldom be pleasant; but the knowledge of the future state and eternal world will be both useful and pleasant, if we do but “*labour for that meat, which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give us; for him hath God the Father sealed.*” He is the great Anti-type of Joseph.—Risen, ascended, and exalted on the throne of glory, all power is vested in him as Mediator: he is the *Revealer of secrets*, and the *Saviour of the world*. Through the whole earth the souls of men are perishing without resource, save in him, “*the Bread of Life,*” whose fulness is inexhaustible. To him the Father bears testimony, “*This is my beloved Son, hear ye him;*” “*Go to Jesus, and what he bids you, do.*” To those who attend to this voice and apply to him, he will open his treasures, and will satisfy the hungry soul in every age and nation, and that “*without money and without price.*” But they who slight this provision must starve; and they who bow not the knee before him, and “*will not that he should reign over them,*” will be inevitably destroyed, as enemies to him and his cause.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XLII. V. 1, 2. Jacob learned, not only from report, but from those who had actually procured supplies, that in this time of general scarcity there was abundance of corn in Egypt, which was sold to other nations.—When he said, “*Why do ye look one upon another?*” it implied that already they were reduced to great distress, and scarcely knew what to do: and if this was the case in Jacob’s family, after the first or second year of the famine, how terrible must have been the case of multitudes, before the seven years were expired!

down thither, and buy for us from thence; <sup>e</sup> that we may live, and not die. 3 And Joseph's <sup>f</sup>ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt.

4 But <sup>g</sup>Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren: for he said, <sup>h</sup>Lest peradventure mischief befall him.

5 ¶ And the sons of Israel came to buy <sup>i</sup>corn among those that came: <sup>j</sup>for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

6 And Joseph <sup>k</sup>was the <sup>l</sup>governor over the land, and <sup>m</sup>he <sup>n</sup>it was that sold to all the people of the land: and Joseph's brethren came, and <sup>o</sup>bowed down themselves before him, <sup>p</sup>with their faces to the earth.

7 And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange unto them, and spake <sup>q</sup>roughly unto them; and he said unto them, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food.

8 And Joseph knew his brethren, <sup>r</sup>but they knew not him.

9 And Joseph <sup>s</sup>remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them, and said unto them, <sup>t</sup>Ye <sup>u</sup>are spies; to see the <sup>v</sup>nakedness of the land ye <sup>w</sup>are come.

10 And they said unto him, Nay, <sup>x</sup>my lord, but to buy food are thy servants come.

11 We <sup>y</sup>are all one man's sons: we <sup>z</sup>are <sup>aa</sup>true men, thy servants are no spies.

12 And he said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land ye are come.

13 And they said, <sup>ab</sup>Thy servants <sup>ac</sup>are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and behold, the youngest <sup>ad</sup>is this day with our father, and <sup>ae</sup>one <sup>af</sup>is not.

14 And Joseph said unto them, <sup>ag</sup>That <sup>ah</sup>is <sup>ai</sup>it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye <sup>aj</sup>are spies.

n Luke xxiv 16  
John xx. 14. xxi. 4.  
o xxxvii. 5-9

p 9. 6. 30, 31 34  
Num. xiii. 2. 16  
-20. Josh. ii. 1.  
vi. 23. Judg. i.  
24. 1 Sam. xxvi.  
4. Luke xx. 20.  
Heb. xi. 31.  
Ex. xxxii. 25.

q xxxvii. 29. 37.  
xxxviii. 8. xlv.  
9. 1 Sam. xxv.  
17. 1 Kings xviii.  
7.

r 19. 33. 34. John  
vii. 18. 2 Cor. vi.  
8.

t 11. 32. xliii. 7.

u 36. 38. xxxvii.  
30. xlv. 20. 28.  
xlv. 26. Lam. v.  
7. Matt. ii. 18.  
x 9-11. Job xiii.  
24. xix. 11. Matt.  
xv. 21-28.

V. 3. All Jacob's sons seem to have been married, and to have had families, at this time: perhaps the wealth of the family being thus divided, and by the badness of the times exceedingly diminished, they had parted with most of those servants of whom we before read: and probably they disposed of the rest, previously to their going to reside in Egypt; for no further mention is made of servants, or of any that went down, besides Jacob and his descendants, with their wives.—Camels, of which Jacob had formerly possessed very many, (xxxi. 17. xxxii. 15,) would have been more suited to fetch corn upon, than asses: but all of these seem to have been previously disposed of, probably to raise money, with which to purchase food, in this emergency. (xlv. 11.) For none are afterwards mentioned among his possessions, or those of his sons.

V. 4. *Lest... mischief, &c.*] As Jacob supposed had befallen his beloved Joseph.

V. 6. *Bowed, &c.*] Joseph's dreams at length began to be accomplished: his brethren's sheaves bowed to his sheaf; for his was full, and their's were empty.—Probably a peculiar vigilance was on this occasion exercised respecting foreigners, lest any should come for bad purposes; and all, who were any way remarkable, were brought before Joseph in person. Thus his brethren would be introduced to him; for it must be supposed, that he employed deputies in selling the corn in different parts of the land.

V. 7, 8. It is evident that Joseph did not behave thus from resentment; for in the whole transaction he exceedingly denied himself, and put a powerful restraint on his own inclinations. No doubt he was unwilling to augment his father's grief, and would rather have rejoiced to set his heart at ease by an immediate message; yet his behaviour had for a time a contrary tendency. It is most probable

that the whole transaction, from Joseph's first advancement to Jacob's descent into Egypt, was conducted by some intimations from God to Joseph, in order to accomplish his purposes respecting Jacob and his posterity.—It would not indeed have been proper for Joseph immediately to receive his brethren into favour, till it appeared that they were sensible of their guilt, and shewed some symptoms of remorse. Now, by being concealed, he had a fair opportunity of discovering the real state of their mind, from time to time: and by virtue of his authority, he was able not only to make strict trial of them, but to employ *means* exactly suited to produce that state of mind which he wished to see; by exciting a beneficial remorse of conscience, and repressing their pride and stoutness of heart. By his own experience he knew the good effects of severe and long continued troubles, and was willing to try the same remedy upon them. At the same time he seems to have been very solicitous to obtain information concerning the state of the family; especially as he did not see Benjamin among his other brethren.—Joseph was seventeen when sold into Egypt; he was now about thirty-eight; and he might be more altered in the space of above twenty years than his elder brethren. This would concur with his rank and state, to prevent their knowing him.

V. 9. Joseph now experienced in part the accomplishment of his dreams, of which perhaps he had sometimes been ready to despair.—To effect his purposes, he charged his brethren with being spies, sent by some foreign prince who intended to invade Egypt, that they might spy out the most defenceless quarter for an attack; and he urged that they only covered their real business under the pretence of buying corn.

V. 11-13. It was not likely that one man would venture ten sons in the hazardous employment of spies.—

15 Hereby ye shall be proved: <sup>†</sup>by the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, <sup>†</sup>except your youngest brother come hither.

16 Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be <sup>\*</sup>kept in prison, <sup>\*</sup>that your words may be proved, whether *there be any* truth in you: or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye *are* spies.

17 And he <sup>†</sup>put them all together into <sup>†</sup>ward, three days.

18 And Joseph said unto them the third day, This do, and live: *for* <sup>\*</sup>I fear God.

19 If ye *be* true *men* let one of your brethren be bound in the <sup>†</sup>house of your prison: go ye, <sup>\*</sup>carry corn for the famine of your houses.

20 But <sup>†</sup>bring your youngest brother unto me: so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die. <sup>\*</sup>And they did so.

21 And <sup>†</sup>they said one to another, We *are* verily guilty concerning our

brother, in that <sup>†</sup>we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us; and we would not hear: therefore is <sup>\*</sup>this distress come upon us.

22 And Reuben answered them, saying, <sup>†</sup>Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore behold also, <sup>\*</sup>his blood is required.

23 And they knew not that Joseph understood *them*; for <sup>†</sup>he spake unto them by an interpreter.

24 And he turned himself about from them, and <sup>\*</sup>wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them <sup>\*</sup>Simeon, and bound him before their eyes.

25 Then Joseph <sup>†</sup>commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and <sup>\*</sup>to give them provision for the way: <sup>\*</sup>and thus did he unto them.

26 ¶ And they laded their asses with the corn, and departed thence.

27 And as one of them opened his

Thus Joseph drew from them the information which he wanted: but what must have been his feelings when they said, "One is not!"

V. 15. It is painful to censure so high a character as Joseph. But the expression "by the life of Pharaoh," could be no other than a sort of court-oath, and a profane flattery of the prince, which Joseph should not have sanctioned by his example. It may be supposed, that he did not customarily use it, but only now assumed it as a more effectual blind; but still it was, at best, "doing evil, that good might come." "Let your communication" (that is, in ordinary conversation,) "be yea yea, nay nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." An oath by any creature is virtually an act of idolatry; and even the outward concurrence, in such a case, should be strictly avoided.

V. 17. Considering Joseph's authority, the nature of the crime of which he professed to suspect the strangers, and the roughness of his behaviour; they perhaps expected little else during these three days, than to be put to death.—They seem to have been unwilling to comply with his requirement; or they could not agree who should be the messenger of ill tidings to Jacob: and they were therefore confined till they submitted, and came to a determination.—*Three days.*] "The third day" (18).—Compare *Matt.* xx. 19. xxvii. 63, 64.

V. 18. *I fear God.*] This expression might surprise, and perhaps encourage, Joseph's brethren: but his chief design seems to have been this; by declaring that he, a supposed Egyptian, feared God, and would not do injustice, he meant to awaken their remorse; who, though educated in the true religion, had not been restrained by the fear of God from cruelly treating their brother.

V. 20. *They did so.*] They consented to the proposal V. 21, 22. Joseph's brethren at length felt a keen remorse, though perhaps insensible before, or at least not deeply convinced of their heinous crime: and considering how the fear of God influenced an Egyptian, as they supposed, their unrelenting malice to their brother recurred to their remembrance; and they were unable any longer to conceal their convictions, but began to speak their thoughts one to another on the subject.—The anguish of Joseph, and his earnest and pathetick intreaties for mercy, when his brethren were about to sell him for a slave, or to kill him, are not mentioned in the narrative, but are here introduced with great effect: and they were ready to conclude, that God was about to take vengeance upon them for that cruelty. Reuben had remonstrated at the time with his brethren, but they would not hear, and now he reproached them, and seemed to denounce their doom. Thus will conscience at length reproach and torture those, who at present neglect its warnings. In this respect Reuben could plead *not guilty*; but his conscience would condemn him in another matter, respecting which his brethren could plead *not guilty*. (xxxv. 22. *Notes*, xlix. 3, 4. *Rom.* ii. 12—16.)

V. 23. *They knew not.*] Thus Joseph was favoured with an encouraging token of the success of his plan, to support his mind till he should witness the final effect.

V. 24. Simeon was one of the murderers of the Shechemites, and probably of a daring, hardy spirit. It is not unlikely, that he was peculiarly vehement against Joseph when he was sold, or that he seemed at this time the least affected; and therefore Joseph allotted him this additional discipline.

V. 27. *Imm.*] Probably this was nothing more than a

y Deut. vi. 18  
1 Sam. i. 28  
xxv. 35. Matt.  
9. 38—37. xxiii.  
16—22 Jam. v.  
12.  
z 20. 84. xliii. 3.  
xlv. 20—34.

\* Heb. bound.  
a 7 12. 30

† Heb. gathered.  
la. xxiv. 22  
Acts v. 18.  
b xl. 4. 7. xli. 10.  
Lev. xxiv. 12.  
Acts iv. 3. Heb.  
xii. 10.  
c xxx. 11. Lev.  
xxv. 43. Neh. v.  
9. 15. Luke  
xxiii. 2. 4.

d xl. 3. Is. xlii. 7.  
22. Jer. xxxvii.  
15.  
e 4. 2. 26. xliii. 1.  
7. xlv. 23.

f 15. xliii. 6. xlv.  
23.  
g 26. vi. 22. John  
ii. 5.

h xli. 9. 2 Sam.  
xli. 13. 1 Kings  
xvii. 18. Job  
xxxiii. 27, 28.  
xxxiv. 31. xxxvi.  
8. 9. Hos. v. 15.  
Mark ix. 44. 46.  
48. Luke xvi. 28.

xxxvii. 23—28.  
Judg. i. 7. Prov.  
xxi. 18. xxiv. 11.  
12. xxxvii. 17.  
Jer. xxxiv. 17.  
Matt. vii. 2  
Jam. ii. 13.  
k Prov. i. 27, 28

xxxvii. 21, 22  
29, 30. Luke  
xxiii. 51. Rom.  
ii. 15.

m iv. 10. ix. 5, 6.  
J Kings ii. 32.  
2 Chr. xxiv. 22.  
Is. ix. 12. Ez.  
iii. 18. Luke xi.  
50, 51. Acts  
xxviii. 4.  
z Heb. an inter-  
preter was be-  
tween them.

n xliii. 30. Luke  
xix. 41. Rom.  
xii. 15. 1 Cor.  
xii. 26.  
o xxxiv. 25. xlix  
5—7.

p xlv. 1, 2. Is. ix.  
1.

q xlv. 21. Matt. vi  
33.

r Matt. v. 44. Rom  
xii. 17—21.

• xliii. 21. Ex. iv  
24. Luke ii. 7. x.  
34  
sack to give his ass provender in "the inn, he espied his money: for behold it was in his sack's mouth.

28 And he said unto his brethren, My money is restored; and lo it is even in my sack; and "their heart "failed them, and they were afraid, saying one to another, "What is this that God hath done unto us?

29 And they came unto Jacob their father, unto the land of Canaan, and told him all that befell unto them, saying,

30 The man *who is* the lord of the land spake "roughly to us, and took us for spies of the country.

31 And we said unto him, We are true men; we are no spies.

32 We be twelve brethren, sons of our father: one is not, and the youngest is this day with our father in the land of Canaan.

33 And the man, the lord of the country, said unto us, Hereby shall I know that ye are true men; leave one of your brethren *here* with me, and take food for the famine of your households, and be gone.

34 And bring your youngest brother unto me: then shall I know that ye are no spies, but *that ye are true men*: so will I deliver you your brother, and ye shall "traffick in the land.

35 And it came to pass as they emptied their sacks, that behold, "every man's bundle of money was in his sack: and when both they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid.

36 And Jacob their father said unto them, "Me have ye bereaved of my children. Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: "all these things are against me.

37 And Reuben spake unto his father, saying, "Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee: deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again.

38 And he said, My son shall not go down with you; for "his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye "bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.

shelter provided for travellers, to which every one brought his own provisions.

V. 28. The sons of Jacob, expecting no favour from the Egyptians, regarded this as a snare laid for them; and were afraid of being pursued, and prosecuted as thieves. (Notes, xlv. 2—16.) This was doubtless the effect, which Joseph intended to produce, in order to augment their convictions and humiliation. As they had before escaped when guilty, they were ready to conclude, that they should now suffer for a crime, of which they were innocent; and they acknowledged the hand of God in it.

V. 36. Probably, Jacob suspected a fallacy in the relation, and feared lest his sons had really committed some base crime, which was the cause of Simeon's being left behind; and perhaps that they had some design upon Benjamin: at least he charged the blame upon them, in language implying such distrust.—All these things lay as a heavy burden upon him, which he thought his sons but little felt. Jacob made this lamentation, when, had he known all, his heart would have exulted with joy.—*Me have ye bereaved, &c.* It is probable that concurring circumstances, and their conduct in other respects, made him suspect the truth of their report concerning Joseph.

V. 37. Reuben (as the first born) was the only one who brake silence on this occasion; and probably he intended principally, to divert the discourse from Joseph: but his proposal was very rash and absurd! What right had he over the lives of his children? and what satisfaction could the murder of two grand-children give Jacob for the loss of Benjamin?—Moreover, Reuben engaged to bring back

Benjamin without so much as adding, 'By the blessing of 'God,' or 'If the Lord will:' as if his puny arm could both defend and uphold him. Jacob, in other respects, seems to have placed but little confidence in him. (Notes, xliii. 8, 9. xlix. 8, 9.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—20.

When the Lord rendereth a "fruitful land barren for "the wickedness of them that dwell therein," he seldom proceeds to extremities. Though much misery is endured, there is some redress and respite; one country supplies the deficiencies of another, and one year furnishes a redundancy to help out the scarcity that follows or precedes it: for in the other world alone will happiness or misery be unmixed; no scarcity in the Canaan above, no redress in hell beneath.—In distress or danger, we should not stand looking one at another, desponding and inactive; but, having discovered where help may be had, we ought to apply for it without delay, and without shrinking from labour, or grudging expense; especially in the dangers to which our immortal souls are exposed. There is provision in Christ, and to him we must come, and from him we must diligently seek it; even though in obtaining it we be called to "deny ourselves, take up our cross, and forsake "all that we have."—When we or our friends go from home, we should commend ourselves and them to the divine protection; for we know not what unexpected dangers may be in the way: and, when returned in safety, we should not forget our tribute of grateful praise; for many

## CHAP. XLIII.

Jacob at length is persuaded to send Benjamin, who goes with his brethren into Egypt, 1—15. They are brought into Joseph's house, and are greatly alarmed, but are encouraged by Joseph's steward, 16—25. Joseph is kind to them, enquires about their father, is affected at seeing Benjamin; and they do obeisance to him, 26—29. Joseph retires to weep, and then hospitably entertains them, 30—34.

**AND** <sup>a</sup>the famine *was* sore in the land.

<sup>b</sup> 2 And it came to pass when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said unto them, <sup>b</sup> Go again, buy us a little food.

<sup>c</sup> 3 And Judah spake unto him, saying, The <sup>c</sup> man <sup>a</sup> did solemnly protest unto us, saying, Ye shall not <sup>d</sup> see my face, except your brother *be* with you.

<sup>d</sup> 4 If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food.

<sup>e</sup> 5 But if thou wilt not send *him*, we

<sup>e</sup> will not go down; for the man said unto us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother *be* with you.

<sup>f</sup> 6 And Israel said, Wherefore dealt ye *so* ill with me, *as* to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother?

<sup>g</sup> 7 And they said, The man <sup>†</sup> asked us <sup>†</sup> straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, *Is* your father yet alive? have ye *another* brother? And we told him according to the <sup>†</sup> tenour of these words: <sup>†</sup> Could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down?

<sup>h</sup> 8 And Judah said unto Israel his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go; <sup>†</sup> that we may live and not die, both we, and thou, *and* <sup>†</sup> also our little ones.

<sup>i</sup> 9 I <sup>h</sup> will be surety for him; <sup>†</sup> of my hand shalt thou require him: If I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever.

meet with terrible disasters.—Though God's purposes slowly unfold, yet they are certainly accomplished, often by the most improbable means; nay, those enemies, who have set themselves to defeat his designs, are made the instruments of their fulfilment!—Neither the guilt nor the consciousness of sin will wear out by time: and though men may commit crimes with unconcern, and remain insensible for many years, conscience being struck dumb and stupified; yet, there may be a time even in this life, when it shall awake, and inspire such terrors as cannot be described. Happy is it when this is the case: otherwise the never dying worm will certainly torment the soul for ever, in another world. In order therefore to awaken serious reflection in the guilty breast, the most afflictive dispensations of Providence are precious blessings; and, in some instances, it is the result of wise love, to treat the proud and careless with roughness and distance; and, as far as equity and the fear of God will allow, to shew them, in our dealings with them, the picture of their conduct to others, in order to bring their sins to remembrance, and excite a salutary remorse. They therefore who are of a very kind and tender disposition, if they would do good, must sometimes disguise their feelings under an assumed sternness; as the humane surgeon probes the wound, or cuts the limb, with firmness and apparent unconcern, while his heart bleeds for the anguish which he occasions.

## V. 21—38.

When conscience is once awakened, there needs no acuser; for every circumstance increases the dismay: and under calamities, in which many are involved, the consciousness of having avoided and protested against those crimes, which are thus called to remembrance, affords a singular support.—Many are the troubles of the righteous: yet imagination and a mistaken judgment often

magnify them; and many things appear to be *against* them, which are most effectually conducive to their good. The Lord will make such persons ashamed of their distrustful complaints; and their grey hairs shall not descend to the grave with that sorrow which they have presaged; for the latter end of the upright man shall be peace.—But in this narration let us look unto Jesus. Thus does he conceal himself and his favour: thus does he rebuke and chasten those for whom he hath purposes of love; and by sharp corrections, and humiliating conviction from the spirit of bondage, he breaks the stoutness and subdues the pride of their hearts, and brings them to true repentance: nor will he disclose his reconciled countenance, till he has fully humbled their hearts, perhaps by long continued discouragements; till he has proved their sincerity, and led them to the simplicity of faith and dependence on him: and then by “the Spirit of adoption,” he will manifest himself unto them as their Brother and their Friend. Yet before they fully know him, or taste that he is gracious, he both consults their good and sustains their souls: preserves them from despair, and strengthens them to wait upon him, and wait for him.—Thus may we do continually; never yielding to discouragement, determining to seek no other refuge, and humbling ourselves more and more under his mighty hand; and then in due time he will answer our petitions, and far exceed our expectations.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XLIII. V. 1—7. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 8, 9. Probably Judah, (whom we observed before to have shewn some tokens of repentance,) had acquired more of the confidence of Jacob, than either Reuben or Levi: and he seems to have been sincerely desirous of the welfare of Benjamin, as well as of the family; remembering perhaps with inward anguish his former treatment of

k xxx. 16.

\* Or, twice by surely now we had returned \* this second time.

11 And their father Israel said unto them, <sup>1</sup>If it must be so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and <sup>m</sup>carry down the man a present, <sup>n</sup>a little balm, and a little honey, <sup>o</sup>spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds.

12 And take <sup>p</sup>double money in your hand: and the money that was brought again in the <sup>q</sup>mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight:

13 Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man.

14 And <sup>r</sup>God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin: <sup>s</sup>† If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved.

15 ¶ And the men took that present, and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin; and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph.

16 And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to <sup>t</sup>the ruler of his house, Bring these men home, and <sup>u</sup>slay and make ready: for these men shall <sup>v</sup>dine with me at noon.

17 And the man did as Joseph bade: and the man brought the men into Joseph's house.

18 And <sup>w</sup>the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's

house, and they said, Because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time, are we brought in; that he may <sup>x</sup>seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses.

19 And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house, and they communed with him at the door of the house;

20 And said, O sir, <sup>y</sup>\* we came indeed down the first time to buy food.

21 And it came to pass, when <sup>z</sup>we came to the inn, that we opened our sacks, and behold, every man's money was in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight: and <sup>aa</sup>\* we have brought it again in our hand.

22 And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food: we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks.

23 And he said, <sup>ab</sup>\* Peace be to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: <sup>ac</sup>\* I had your money. <sup>ad</sup>\* And he brought Simeon out unto them.

24 And the man brought the men into Joseph's house, and <sup>ae</sup>\* gave them water, and they washed their feet, and he gave their asses provender.

25 And <sup>af</sup>\* they made ready the present against Joseph came at noon: for they heard that they should eat bread there.

26 ¶ And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and

<sup>1</sup> Heb. roll himself upon us. Job xxx 14

<sup>\*</sup> Heb. coming down we came down. 3. 7.

<sup>y</sup> xlii. 35.

<sup>z</sup> See on 12.—Heb. xlii. 18.

<sup>a</sup> Judg. vi. 23. xix. 20. 1 Sam. xxv. 6. 1 Chr. xii. 18. Ezra iv. 17. Luke xxiv. 38. John xiv. 27. xx. 19. 21. 26. <sup>†</sup> Heb. Your money came to me. b 14. xlii. 24. 36.

<sup>c</sup> xviii. 4. xix. 2. xxiv. 32. Luke vii. 44. John xlii. 4—17.

<sup>d</sup> 11. 18.

Joseph. His arguments were very forcible. Unless Benjamin went with them, they must all perish together by famine; and thus even he would be more endangered by staying at home, than by going into Egypt.—Judah's engagement meant, that he would venture or endure any thing to preserve Benjamin; which he fulfilled by the most heroick and generous proposal imaginable. (Note, xliv. 33, 34.)

V. 10. Jacob's refusal to let Benjamin accompany his brethren had already caused them to lose much time; and Judah thus intimated that the whole family was likely to perish, by means of their father's unreasonable care of an individual.

V. 11, 12. The productions of the high and mountainous parts of Canaan would differ greatly from those of Egypt, which is flat, and annually inundated. The dry seasons, which caused a famine, might not prevent the increase of those things which are here mentioned; and no doubt Jacob selected what he knew was likely to be most accept-

able to an Egyptian prince. He likewise directed his sons to carry back the money that had been returned, and to take other money with which to purchase corn; perhaps double the sum which they took before, in case the prices should be advanced. Thus they would shew, that they meant to act fairly.—[Spices.] (xxxvii. 25.) Some think, that these were brought from India. Marg. Ref. o.

V. 14. Jacob knew, by experience, the influence which the Lord has over every heart, to incline it favourably to his people: and it is observable that in this speech, in which he has recourse to his former method of prevailing with man, by faith and prayer to God, he is dignified with the name of Israel.—The concluding words expressed a humble resignation to the will of God. 'If I be bereaved of my children, be it so; the Lord hath wise reasons for thus dealing with me.'

V. 16—23. Joseph seems especially to have sought time to compose his mind, that his tender feelings respecting Benjamin might not defeat his designs.

<sup>e</sup> xxxvii. 29. xxxvii. 7-10. 19. 20. xlii. 6. Ps. xxii. 9. Rom. xiv. 11. Phil. ii. 10. 11. \*bowed themselves to him to the earth.

<sup>f</sup> Heb. peace. xxxvii. 14. Ex. xviii. 7. Judg. xviii. 15. 1 Sam. xvii. 22. xxv. 5. † Heb. *Is there* *peace* *to your father?* xlii. 11. 13. 27 And he asked them of *their* welfare, and said, *Is* your father well, 'the old man of whom ye spake? *Is* he yet alive?

<sup>g</sup> 26. xxxvii. 9. 10. <sup>h</sup> Ex. xviii. 7. 2 Sam. i. 2. xiv. 4. 1 Kings i. 16. 2 Chr. xxiv. 17. <sup>i</sup> xxx. 22-24. xxxv. 17. 18. 28 And they answered, Thy servant our father *is* in good health, he *is* yet alive: 'and they bowed down their heads, and <sup>h</sup> made obeisance.

<sup>k</sup> xlii. 13. <sup>l</sup> xlv. 8. Josh. vii. 19. 2 Chr. xxiv. 11. Matt. ix. 2. 22. Mark x. 24. m 1 Kings iii. 26. Jer. xxxi. 20. Phil. i. 8. ii. 1. Col. iii. 12. <sup>n</sup> John iii. 17. <sup>o</sup> xlii. 24. John xi. 28-38. Acts xx. 19. 31. 37. 2 Tim. i. 4. 29 And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his 'mother's son, and said, *Is* this your younger brother, <sup>k</sup> of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, 'my son.

<sup>p</sup> xlv. 22. 1 Sam. i. 5. ix. 22-24. <sup>q</sup> Heb. *drank largely*. Cant. v. 1. Hag. i. 6. John ii. 10. 30 And Joseph made haste; for 'his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought *where* to weep, and he entered into *his* chamber, and <sup>a</sup> wept there.

31 And he washed his face, and went out, and \*refrained himself, and said, Set on bread.

32 And they set on for him by himself, and for them by themselves, and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves; because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that *is* 'an abomination unto the Egyptians.

33 And they <sup>a</sup> sat before him, the first-born according to his birth-right, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another.

34 And he took *and sent* 'messes unto them, from before him. But Benjamin's mess <sup>a</sup> was five times so much as any of their's. And they drank, and <sup>a</sup> were merry with him.

V. 27. Joseph's enquiry was aptly introduced by the present brought to him; and while he, with wonderful propriety, acted in his assumed character, his question expressed the most benevolent and attentive disposition.

V. 28. In thus bowing down at the mention of their father, they, as it were, did obeisance in his name; according to Joseph's second dream. (xxxvii. 9, 10.)

V. 29—31. This union in Joseph of exquisite sensibility, with firmness and entire command of his passions, in every circumstance which required it, is a decided indication of a very superior character.

V. 32. Probably Joseph, as known to be a Hebrew, connived at the superstitious prejudices of the Egyptians; but he would not sit with his brethren, lest it should excite suspicion. The abomination, in which the Egyptians held eating with the Hebrews, has generally been ascribed to the latter eating the flesh of those animals which the former held sacred: therefore *shepherds* also were an abomination to the Egyptians, though they likewise had flocks and herds. This however is very doubtful; as we have no intimation of the kind in the history, nor any other records of so ancient a date. Indeed national, and even religious antipathies are so common, and so unreasonable; that it is not greatly worth while, to enquire particularly into the occasion of them.

V. 33. No doubt, Joseph's brethren were seated in this order by his appointment, which excited their surprise. But probably, they ascribed it to some extraordinary sagacity, or to divination, which he afterwards mentioned.

V. 34. *Five times, &c.*] A token of respect customary in those days, which should not be judged of by modern manners. Joseph tried whether his brethren would envy Benjamin this distinction, as they had envied *him* his coat of many colours. The word (רָפָף) rendered, *were merry*, sometimes means, *were intoxicated*: but it seems to be properly translated; for we cannot suppose, either that in such circumstances they would drink to excess, or that Joseph

would have countenanced them in so doing.—Εμεθυσθησαν. Sept. Μεθυσθωσι. John ii. 10. "Have well drunk."

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—14.

We should use great caution in forming resolutions, concerning our future measures in things indifferent; for our perseverance so much depends on the events of Providence, that the conduct which we most fully purpose may become impracticable: in most things, therefore, where duty is not concerned, we are best ruled by circumstances as they arise. But if we have formed a rash resolution, to which we cannot with propriety adhere; we must, virtually or explicitly, acknowledge our mistake, and forego our determination: for though *firmness* is essential to usefulness and comfort, yet *obstinacy* is both foolish and ruinous.—There may be cases, in which we must refuse obedience to an earthly superior; because it is superseded by a higher obligation: but this should never be done without necessity; and should always be grounded on cogent arguments, and expressed in gentle and respectful language: and even when a refusal is unexceptionable, an impartial judge can seldom approve the manner in which it is given.—When the Lord seems to frown on us, we are prone to blame others; and thus we often rebelliously murmur against the Author of our troubles, by quarrelling with the instruments.—But when all our contrivances are over-ruled, and necessity compels us to say, "It must be so now;" then submission to the will of the all-wise Disposer, and a believing dependence on the almighty Lord, who hath all hearts in his hands, will yield us a seasonable support. While we use every prudent conciliatory means, we shall best prevail with man, by first prevailing with the Lord in fervent prayer; and "Thy will be done" should close every petition for temporal benefits, or against temporal afflictions.—Though men value very highly their gold and silver, and the luxuries which are accounted the *best fruits* of every land; yet, in a time of famine, they willingly

## CHAP. XLIV.

Joseph directs his steward to put the money into the mouths of his brethren's sacks, and his silver cup into that of Benjamin, 1, 2; and afterwards to pursue them and accuse them of theft, 3—6. Their sacks are searched; the cup is found; and in deep distress they return to Joseph, 7—13. They humble themselves before him, 14—17; and Judah makes a most pathetic speech, concluding with a most generous request, 18—34.

\* Heb. him, that was over the house. xxiv. 2. xlii. 16. xli. 25.

AND he commanded \* the steward of his house, saying, \* Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth.

b xlii. 15, 16, 20. Deut. viii. 2, 16. xlii. 3. 2 Cor. viii. 8.

2 And put my <sup>b</sup> cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn-money: and he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken.

3 ¶ As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away, they and their asses.

4 And when they were gone out of

barter them away for bread: how little then will they stand us in stead in the day of wrath! and how ready shall we be, if truly wise, to renounce them all "as loss, for the "excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ!"—They who mean sincerely, are apt to engage for more than they can perform: and, if we feel our passions greatly moved, our tongue should be held in as with a bridle; or it may afterwards occasion us much trouble.

V. 15—34.

Terror once excited is increased by every event: yet innocence gives confidence, and supplies the want of eloquence; or rather furnishes that which is the most simple and expressive.—"He that walketh with wise men will be "wise:" and the good and pious words of the Egyptian, Joseph's steward, shew us that a godly man's conversation is never useless; and teach us to abound in that speech, which is good for the use of edifying.—Even they who, inadvertently and by oversight, have got possession of the property belonging to another, are bound to restore it, when they discover the mistake; and, however we acquire honest gain, we ought to look to the Lord as the Giver of it.—His purposes are continually advancing to their full accomplishment: but they who would have his special blessings, must wait for them; and they who desire to do special good, must learn to bridle and conceal their tenderest passions.—In Joseph's conduct, we see that of Jesus, who shews those whom he loves more and more of their extreme necessity; makes them perceive that he is their only Refuge from destruction; and, consulting their future good more than their present comfort, by salutary terrors and troubles overcomes their reluctance, and brings them to himself. Then, in his wise and holy sovereignty, according to that proportion which he sees good, he gives

VOL. I.

the city, and not yet far off, Joseph said unto his steward, Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, "Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?"

c 1 Sam. xxiv. 17. 2 Chr. xx. 11. Ps. xxxv. 12. cix. 6. Prov. xvii. 13. John x. 32.

5 Is not this *it*, in which my lord drinketh? and whereby indeed he <sup>†</sup> divineth? ye have done evil in so doing.

† Or, maketh trial. 15. marg.

6 And he overtook them, and he spake unto them these same words.

7 And they said unto him, <sup>d</sup> Wherefore saith my lord these words? God forbid that thy servants should do according to this thing.

d xxxiv. 25—31. xxxv. 22. xxxvii. 18—32. xxxviii. 16—18. Josh. xxii. 22—29. 2 Sam. xx. 20. 2 Kings viii. 13.

8 Behold, <sup>e</sup> the money which we found in our sacks' mouths we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan: 'how then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold?

e xlii. 27. 35. xliii. 12, 21, 22.

9 With whom *soever* of thy servants it be found, <sup>f</sup> both let him die, <sup>h</sup> and we also will be my lord's bond-men.

f See on 7.—Jam. ii. 10, 11.

10 And he said, Now also *let it be* according unto your words: 'he with

g xxxi. 32. Job xxxi. 38—40. Ps. vii. 3—5. Acts xxv. 11. h xliii. 18. i 17. 33. Ex. xxii. 3. Matt. xviii. 24, 25.

them some taste of his exhilarating love, and welcomes them to the provisions of his house, as earnest of what he further intends for them; yet so as still to prove and try them, with a view to their more complete humiliation.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XLIV. V. 2. It may be supposed, that this silver cup had been used at the entertainment. (xliii. 32—34.)—Joseph seems to have been desirous of ascertaining beyond doubt, how his brethren stood affected to Benjamin, Jacob's present favourite, and to their father on his account. Had they envied and hated Benjamin, (the other son of Rachel, Leah's rival,) as they had him; and had they been influenced by the same unfeeling indignation against Jacob as they were formerly, they would on this occasion have discovered it: for when the cup was found upon Benjamin, they would have had a plausible pretence for leaving him to be a slave, and returning home without him. In this case Joseph no doubt would have acted far otherwise than he did, when the event proved them to be so affectionately disposed both towards Benjamin and their father. At the same time this trial was exceedingly calculated to increase their humiliation.

V. 4—6. The abruptness of this unexpected address was well suited to surprise and confuse, and to favour the design.—Joseph probably meant that by *divination* he had discovered who had stolen his cup (15); which he could not have done, had he divined *by means of the cup*. and the words might be rendered, "that about which he "hath used divination."—It is not however certain, that *divination* is meant; as the original word is used sometimes for accurate investigation or diligent observation. (xxx. 27. 1 Kings xx. 33. Heb.)

V. 9. Probably Joseph expected that his brethren, con-

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whom it is found shall be my servant; and ye shall be blameless.

11 Then they speedily took down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack.

12 And he searched, *and*<sup>k</sup> began at the eldest, and left at the youngest: and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.

13 Then they <sup>m</sup>rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city.

14 ¶ And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house, (for <sup>n</sup>he *was* yet there,) and they <sup>o</sup>fell before him on the ground.

15 And Joseph said unto them, <sup>p</sup>What deed *is* this that ye have done? <sup>q</sup>Wot ye not, that such a man as I can certainly <sup>r</sup>divine.

16 And <sup>s</sup>Judah said, "What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear ourselves? <sup>t</sup>God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants: behold, we *are* my lord's servants, both we, and *he* also with whom the cup is found.

17 And he said, "God forbid that I should do so: *but* the man in whose hand the cup is found, <sup>x</sup>he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up <sup>y</sup>in peace unto your father.

18 ¶ Then Judah came near unto him, and said, O my lord, <sup>a</sup>let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine <sup>a</sup>anger burn against thy servant: for thou *art* even <sup>b</sup>as Pharaoh.

19 My lord <sup>c</sup>asked his servants, saying, Have ye a father or a brother?

20 And we said unto my lord, We have a father, an old man, and <sup>d</sup>a child of his old age, a little one: <sup>e</sup>and his brother is dead, and <sup>f</sup>he alone is left of his mother, and his father loveth him.

21 And thou saidst unto thy servants, <sup>g</sup>Bring him down unto me, that I may set mine eyes upon him.

22 And we said unto my lord, The lad cannot leave his father; for if he should leave his father, <sup>h</sup>his father would die.

23 And thou saidst unto thy servants, <sup>i</sup>Except your youngest brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more.

24 And it came to pass, when we came up unto thy servant my father, <sup>k</sup>we told him the words of my lord.

25 And our father said, <sup>l</sup>Go again, and buy us a little food.

26 And we said, <sup>m</sup>We cannot go down: if our youngest brother be with

scious of their innocence, would make use of such language as this; which favoured his design of proving how they stood affected towards Benjamin. Their money had before been put into their sacks, they knew not how, and they might have suspected somewhat similar on this occasion: their confidence therefore was very imprudent.

V. 12, 13. 'In very agony they rend their clothes.—'As they walk along their thoughts turn on another event. '—"It is the LORD." We are murderers:—divine vengeance suffers us not to live.' Fuller.

V. 14. Now Joseph had, in every sense, the dominion over his brethren, according to their interpretation of his dreams.

V. 15. *Wot ye not? &c.*] 'What! Could you suppose that I, who foretold the famine seven years before it came, was unable to discover who had stolen my cup?'

V. 16. *God hath found out, &c.*] Probably Judah inwardly meant, the former guilt of himself and his brethren, which was now visited upon them. Conscious of his own innocence, as to the present concern, he very prudently waved all mention of it; for otherwise he must either have allowed Benjamin's guilt, or reflected on Joseph's equity.

V. 17. *Get you up, &c.*] At this time the experiment was at the crisis, and no doubt Joseph anxiously expected the event.

V. 18. *As Pharaoh.*] That is, equally to be respected and feared. The reader should keep the dreams still in mind: Joseph's brethren soon learned what was become of them. (xxxvii. 20.)—Judah, being entrusted with Benjamin, and perhaps more affectionate than the rest both to him and his father; and having conceived the generous design mentioned in the close of the chapter, assumed the office of speaker in the name of the rest; probably with their concurrence. But it was an arduous task to plead with the judge, after sentence had been passed.

V. 20. Joseph had been long dead to his father, and his brethren had been long accustomed to speak of him as dead.—Every word in this verse is simplicity and pathos itself. No man of the least taste or sensibility can read it, without great emotion. Indeed the whole speech is exquisitely beautiful, and perhaps the most complete pattern of genuine natural eloquence, extant in any language. Had Joseph been merely a humane judge, and no relation, and had Benjamin been guilty, such an address must have been irresistibly forcible: with what feelings then must Joseph have heard it!—When we read this generous speech we forgive Judah all the past, and cannot refuse to say, "Thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise." xlix. 8.

V. 26. *We cannot, &c.*] Judah had said, "We will not;" (xliii. 5;) but he here softened the harshness of that expression.

us, then will we go down: for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother *be* with us.

27 And thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that <sup>a</sup> my wife bare me two sons.

28 And <sup>o</sup> the one went out from me, and I said, <sup>p</sup> Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since.

29 And if <sup>q</sup> ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.

30 Now therefore <sup>r</sup> when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad *be* not with us; (seeing that <sup>s</sup> his life is bound up in the lad's life:)

31 It shall come to pass, <sup>t</sup> when he seeth that the lad *is* not *with us*, that he will die: and thy servants <sup>u</sup> shall bring down the grey hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave.

32 For thy servant became <sup>x</sup> surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever.

33 Now therefore, <sup>y</sup> I pray thee, let thy servant abide, instead of the lad, a bond-man to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren.

34 For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad *be* not with me? <sup>z</sup> lest peradventure I see the evil that shall <sup>aa</sup> come on my father.

a xxix. 16—21. 28.  
xxx. 22—25.  
xxv. 16—18.  
xvii. 19.  
c xxxvii. 13, 14.

p xxxvii. 33.

p xlii. 26 28. xliii. 14. Pa. xxxviii. 8, 4

r 17. 31. 34.

s 1 Sam. xviii. 1.  
2 Sam. xviii. 33

t 1 Sam. iv. 17, 18.  
2 Cor. vii. 10.  
1 Thes. iv. 13.

u 29. xxxvii. 26.  
27. 35. xlii. 21.  
23. 36—38. 1 Sam. xxii. 22.

x See on xliii. 8.

y Ex. xxxii. 32.  
Rom. v. 7—10.  
ix. 8.

z 1 Sam. ii. 23, 34.  
2 Chr. xxxiv. 23.  
Esth. viii. 6. Jer. li. 10, 11.  
Heb. *find*. Pa. cxvii. 8. cxix. 143. marg.

V. 28. Judah touched on this subject with a kind of trembling hesitation. As a part of his plea it must not be omitted; yet his conscience seems to have made him falter in reporting Jacob's language, which he knew resulted from a deception.—It is surprising that Joseph could refrain on hearing this.

V. 30, 31. Nothing can exceed the tender affection expressed for Jacob in this speech; which confirms the sentiment, that from the discovery of Judah's incest with Tamar, he had been a true penitent, and consequently a more dutiful son than before. It might be feared, that the sad tidings of Benjamin's hopeless bondage would quite overwhelm Jacob, and cause his immediate death. Perhaps Judah considered the former guilt of himself and brethren respecting Joseph, as the cause of this severe visitation; and as the means of rendering it insupportable to Jacob. In deep anguish of conscience, he seems to have apprehended, that he and his brethren would actually be chargeable in the sight of God, with the guilt of murdering their father; as well as of the death or slavery of Joseph and Benjamin.

V. 33, 34. Judah would be as useful a servant as Benjamin; Joseph would be no loser; his father could perhaps survive the loss of him; and he was willing to submit to any hardship, rather than occasion and witness his aged father's death.—What must Benjamin have felt, when he heard his brother conclude his speech with a proposal, which could never have been thought of, if it had not been actually made!—Perhaps the annals of the whole world do not produce an instance of so heroick and disinterested affection in any mere man. Some would even dare to die for a beloved or honoured friend, who nevertheless would not willingly submit to be a slave for life to ransom him. Without exception, this may be considered as by far the most affecting speech that was ever recorded. Either the speakers and writers, in this sacred volume, excelled all other men in native genius and simple eloquence, or they were *divinely inspired*: for surely, no men ever spake and wrote as they did.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—17.

They who have been guilty of deceit and injustice, must

blame themselves when afterwards suspected without cause, and put upon repeated trials, before they recover the confidence of those whom they have injured: but, if they are sincere, the event will make amends for the severest scrutiny.—Though open and direct measures are generally preferable; yet, in some cases, stratagems are lawful: and never more so, than when they tend to the benefit of the persons for whom they are laid, in order that they may remember and repent of their own treacherous dealings.—To reward evil for good is so evidently base, that nothing can be urged in excuse of it: how then shall we stand in judgment before that God, whom we have so ungratefully requited for his multiplied benefits?—Men think it hard to be suspected of crimes, which are contrary to a few of their outward actions; though they are inwardly conscious of much worse, which they conceal from their fellow-creatures! Yet conscious innocence has no occasion to fear a fair trial: but, as all hearts are totally concealed from us, except our own, we should be cautious in answering for others also: and they, who are most confident in self-justification, may soon have their mouths stopped, and not know what to say.—If, before the powerful of the earth, it is sometimes prudent to wave the question of right, and to appeal to their compassion and generosity; much more should we submit to the righteousness of God, and renouncing all other pleas, cast ourselves upon his infinite compassion: for he is perfectly righteous, and will be acknowledged to be so, by all who would approach him with acceptance.

#### V. 18—34.

In many cases, undissembled narrations form the most conclusive and affecting arguments. (*Acts* xi. 1—18.) Such addresses to the tender passions, as are grounded upon evident reason, truth, and fact, and carry with them internal testimony of disinterestedness, generosity, and relative affection, are almost irresistible: and the glow of filial affection, through manly sense and fortitude, has a peculiar beauty and energy.—How careful should children be not to grieve their parents, lest by embittering their infirm age, they should shorten their days, and be indicted now at the bar of their own consciences, or hereafter at

## CHAP. XLV.

Joseph makes himself known to his brethren, 1—3; encourages them by shewing them the Lord's merciful purposes in these transactions, 4—8; orders them to fetch his father and family into Egypt; and cordially embraces them, 9—15. Pharaoh confirms the invitation, 16—20. Joseph furnishes his brethren for their journeys, and exhorts them to concord, 21—24. They report the whole to Jacob, who hardly believes the tidings, but is at length revived by them, 25—28.

a xliii. 30, 31. Jer. xx. 9.

b 2 Sam. i. 20. Matt. xviii. 15. Acts x. 41.

\* Heb. gave forth his voice in weeping. Num. xiv. 1. 2 Kings xx. 3.

**T**HEN Joseph <sup>a</sup> could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, <sup>b</sup> Cause every man to go out from me: and there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.

2 And he <sup>c</sup> wept aloud: and the

the judgment-seat of God, for the horrible crime of parricide; which many are guilty of who never suspect themselves, or are suspected by others!—True penitents will shew, that a total revolution has taken place in their principles and practice: were it possible, they would undo their former misconduct; and therefore they will endeavour to make amends for it, and prevent any further ill effects, though in the most self-denying manner: and this will evidence that their sins are pardoned, and prepare the way for their receiving the comfort of forgiveness.—Thus Jesus, the Antitype, proceeds to humble and prove his people, even after they have had some tastes of his loving-kindness: he brings their sins renewedly to remembrance, that they may renew and evidence their repentance; he tries, that he may manifest, their graces: his bowels yearn over them, while his face wears a frown, and his hand holds the rod of correction; and thus by rebukes and chastenings, he prepares them for comfort here and for glory hereafter.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XLV. V. 1, 2. It is a remarkable proof of the strength of mind, which united with exquisite sensibility in Joseph's character, that he could so long repress his emotions, and conceal them from all parties; but Judah's most affecting speech and generous proposal entirely overcame him. He would not, however, let the Egyptians learn any particulars of his brethren's guilt; and he still refrained himself, till the former were gone out of the room: but then his restrained passions burst forth with the greater violence.

V. 3. Joseph had doubtless all along been addressed and spoken of, by his Egyptian name, or by his titles of office: so that, though the historian calls him Joseph, probably his brethren had never heard that name before, from any person in Egypt.—It is impossible that the tongue, the pen, or the pencil, can ever do justice to the mixed emotions of surprise, fear, grief, remorse, hope, natural affection, and joy, which must alternately, yet almost at the same instant, have seized upon their minds at this unexpected discovery.—But Joseph evidently perceived, that confusion and terror were likely to predominate, and to

Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.

3 And Joseph said unto his brethren, <sup>c</sup> I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; <sup>d</sup> for they were <sup>e</sup> troubled at his presence.

4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you: and they came near: and he said, <sup>f</sup> I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.

5 Now therefore <sup>g</sup> be not grieved, <sup>h</sup> nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for <sup>i</sup> God did send me before you to preserve life.

6 For these <sup>j</sup> two years hath the fa-

c Matt. xiv. 27. Acta vii. 13.

d Joh iv. 5. xxiii. 15. Zech. xi. 10. Mark vi. 50. Luke v. 8. xxiv. 37, 38. Rev. i. 7. Or, terrified.

e xxxvii. 28. i. 18. Acta ix. 5.

f Is. xl. 1, 2. 2 Cor. ii. 7.

g Heb. neither let there be anger in your eyes.

h 7. 8. xliii. 25. i. 20. 2 Sam. xvi. 13—12. xvii. 14. Job i. 21. Ps. cv. 18, 17. Acta ii. 23. iv. 24—28. vii. 9—15.

i xli. 29—31. 54—56. xlvii. 18.

fill them with apprehensions, that he would now avenge the injustice and cruelty, of which they had been guilty.

V. 4. The name of Joseph might have led his brethren to a recollection of his features and voice: yet the mention of their having sold him was necessary, though painful; both to remove all doubts of his being their brother, and also to introduce the kind attempt, which he intended to make, to obviate their fears, and to inspire confidence and comfort.—Perhaps he called them near to him, lest the Egyptians should overhear this part of the conversation.

V. 5. Every passion has its proper boundaries, which it ought not to exceed. The skilful physician aims to produce an effect: yet, having produced it, he often sees occasion to check, and even sometimes to counteract, his first intention; lest it prove excessive, and expose the patient to the opposite danger. Joseph had designed to humble and to reprove his brethren, to bring their sin to remembrance, to fill them with remorse for it, and to evince that they really repented, and were not disposed to repeat the crime. But he now perceived, from their confusion and dismay, that they were in danger of being overwhelmed by over-much sorrow, and of sinking under despondency: and therefore he endeavoured to comfort and encourage them. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Not only would the authority of one, whom they had so grossly injured, affright them; but the excellence of his character, the reputation which he had acquired, and the accomplishment of those dreams, as divine predictions, which they had contemptuously opposed, would make their crime appear more horrid than before; and all together might induce them to conclude, that they had sinned beyond the reach of forgiveness.—Though the merciful purpose of God, in sending him into Egypt, in no degree excused their sin, and therefore ought not to prevent their humiliation and repentance; yet it might very properly abate their anguish of spirit, and encourage their hope of pardon from so gracious a God: and it might assure them of Joseph's forgiveness, who clearly saw the wisdom of God, and richly experienced his goodness, in that event.

V. 6. *Earing.*] That is, plowing, or preparing the ground and sowing it. It appears by this, that the Egyptians, finding Joseph's predictions exactly accomplished

mine *been* in the land; and yet *there are* five years, in the which *there shall* neither *be* <sup>1</sup>earing nor harvest.

<sup>1</sup> Ez. xxxiv. 21. D-ut. xxi. 4. 1 Sam. viii. 12. Is. xxx. 24. \* Heb. to put for you a remnant. k Judg. xv. 18. 1 Chr. xi. 14. Ps. xlv. 4. Acts vii. 35. 1 John xv. 16. Rom. ix. 16. m xli. 39-48. Judg. xvii. 10. Job xxix. 16. n 26-28. o 18, 19, 20. p xlii. 34. xlvii. 1 -4. Ez. viii. 22. ix. 26. q John xiv. 2, 3 xvii. 24. r xlvii. 12. Matt. xv. 5, 6. Mark vii. 9-12. s xlii. 23. Luke xxvi. 20. John xx. 27. t John xvii. 24. 1 Pet. i. 10-12. Rev. xxi. 23. u Acts vii. 14.

7 And God sent me before you, \* to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and \* to save your lives by a great deliverance.

8 So now <sup>1</sup> it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a <sup>m</sup> father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.

9 Haste you, and go up to my father, and say unto him, <sup>n</sup> Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt; <sup>o</sup> come down unto me, tarry not.

10 And thou shalt dwell <sup>p</sup> in the land of Goshen, <sup>q</sup> and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast.

11 And there <sup>r</sup> will I nourish thee; (for yet *there are* five years of famine;) lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.

12 And behold, <sup>s</sup> your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that *it is* my mouth that speaketh unto you.

13 And ye shall tell my father of all <sup>t</sup> my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste, and <sup>u</sup> bring down my father hither.

thus far, followed his counsel, and wasted no corn in sowing the land. The entire failure of the accustomed overflowing of the Nile, which probably took place, would in general render agriculture impracticable; yet where it might have been attempted, it was not. (xlvii. 23.)

V. 8. 'No longer confine your thoughts to your own misconduct in that affair: but see and admire the wonderful contrivance of God in it, who sent me hither for such important benefits, especially to you and your families.'—Thus Joseph, by repeatedly pointing out the wisdom and mercy of God in these dispensations, both obviated the desponding conclusions, which his brethren might have been tempted to deduce, and assured them of his cordial forgiveness.—He was made a father to Pharaoh, as the instrument of God in preserving him and his kingdom.

V. 12. Benjamin was so very young when Joseph was sold, that it is not probable he remembered him; but doubtless he had heard much concerning him.

V. 13. *Tell my father.*] This direction was given, not in ostentation, but to rejoice Jacob's heart, and likewise to induce him the more readily to come into Egypt.

V. 14. Benjamin, having no share in the crimes of his

14 And he <sup>x</sup> fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.

15 Moreover <sup>y</sup> he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.

16 ¶ And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come: and <sup>†</sup> it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants.

17 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye; <sup>z</sup> lade your beasts, and go, get you unto the land of Canaan.

18 And take your father, and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat <sup>a</sup> the fat of the land.

19 Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you waggons out of the land of Egypt <sup>b</sup> for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father and come.

20 Also <sup>c</sup> regard not your <sup>d</sup> stuff: for <sup>e</sup> the good of all the land of Egypt is your's.

21 And the children of Israel did so: and Joseph gave them <sup>f</sup> waggons, according to the <sup>g</sup> commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way.

22 To all of them he gave <sup>h</sup> each man changes of raiment: but <sup>i</sup> to Ben-

brethren towards Joseph, would have his joy unmingled with those painful feelings, which the rest experienced.

V. 15. *Kissed.*] As a token of entire reconciliation and endeared affection. This seems to have been the first thing which encouraged them to speak to him.

V. 16. *It pleased.*] This is a conclusive testimony how highly Joseph was esteemed, and how little he was envied.

V. 17. Pharaoh left all other concerns to Joseph: but here he generously interposed, and gave most liberal orders, about Jacob and his family; which would be very agreeable to the feelings of all parties.

V. 19. *Waggons.*] No mention has hitherto been made of *horses*, among the possessions of the patriarchs, or of *wheel-carriages*, both of which abounded in Egypt at that time. It is probable these waggons were drawn by horses. (Notes, xlvii. 17. Deut. xvii. 16.)

V. 20. *Your stuff.*] Such furniture, or other property, as could not be conveniently removed so far, should be left behind without concern.

V. 22. *To Benjamin.*] Thus Joseph still continued the trial of his brethren, to see whether any of them were disposed to envy Benjamin.

jamin he gave three hundred *pieces* of silver, and five changes of raiment.

23 And to his father he sent after this manner; ten asses \* laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she-asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way.

24 So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, <sup>b</sup> See that ye fall not out by the way.

25 ¶ And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father;

26 And told him, saying, <sup>i</sup> Joseph *is* yet alive, <sup>j</sup> and he *is* governor over all the land of Egypt. <sup>k</sup> And <sup>l</sup> Jacob's heart fainted, <sup>m</sup> for he believed them not.

27 And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the waggons which Joseph had sent to carry him, <sup>n</sup> the spirit of Jacob their father revived.

28 And Israel said, <sup>o</sup> *It is enough*: Joseph my son *is* yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.

<sup>b</sup> xxxvii. 22. xlii. 22. Pa. cxxxiii. John xiii. 34, 35. Eph. iv. 31, 32. Phil. ii. 2-5. Col. iii. 12, 13. 1 Thes. v. 13.

<sup>k</sup> xxxvii. 22. xlii. 22. Pa. cxxxiii. Job ix. 16. xxix. 24. Pa. cxxxvi. 1. Luke xxiv. 11. 41.

<sup>m</sup> Judg. xv. 19. Ps. lxxxv. 6. Is. lvii. 15. Hos. vi. 2.

<sup>n</sup> xvi. 30. Luke ii. 28-30. John xvi. 21, 22.

V. 24. It would be natural for this company, during so interesting a journey, to converse freely concerning their conduct in selling Joseph, and the manner in which they should relate the particulars to Jacob: and as some of them had been much more criminal than others, and as Reuben, in Joseph's hearing, had sharply reproached his brethren; these passions might easily produce altercations, and even quarrels of fatal consequence. But as, after all, Joseph forgave and loved them; so he required them to forgive and love one another.

V. 26. For above twenty years Jacob had been used to consider his beloved Joseph as dead; with what emotions then must he have heard the words, "Joseph is yet alive, and is governor over all the land of Egypt!"

V. 27. This must have been attended by a confession of their own base conduct respecting Joseph; but Jacob had no heart now for reproaches or complaints.

V. 28. *It is enough, &c.*] 'I shall then account myself to have lived long enough.'—Joseph's glory in Egypt seemed little to Jacob. As he was alive, that thought swallowed up all other considerations.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—8.

In endeavouring to render men sensible of their faults, we should be careful lest we needlessly expose them.—True excellence does not consist in being devoid of passions, but in having them all under the government of reason and conscience; so as to know how to restrain them, and how to yield to them with prudence and expediency: and true wisdom discovers itself, in being able to suit our conduct and conversation to the persons with whom we have to do, and to the circumstances in which they are placed.—In speaking to men about the concerns of their souls, two grand objects should always be kept in view; namely, to awaken the careless conscience to an adequate sense of guilt and danger, and to inspire the burdened and desponding heart with the hope of pardon and peace.—It is very profitable for us to observe the footsteps of Providence, and to note how infinite wisdom and goodness deduce the most beneficial effects from the crimes and follies of men: especially we should study the history of our own lives with this design: we shall not then want proof, that the only wise God hath over-ruled many of our mistakes and sins to our important good; and thus we may

also perceive some of the outlines of *his* plan, "who work-  
"eth all things after the counsel of his own will." This review, if duly made, cannot reasonably lead us to entertain a slighter sense of the evil of sin, or better thoughts of ourselves; it cannot encourage us to go on in disobedience, or lessen our humiliation and self-abasement; but, on the contrary, it will convince us the more deeply of our own ignorance and folly, and render us more ashamed of offending against so kind a Benefactor. Yet it will prevent our despairing of forgiveness; check that sorrow, which unfits the mind for duty and damps our gratitude; and excite that admiration, love, and confidence, which produce cheerful obedience.

##### V. 9—28.

We should ever manifest brotherly love, even to those who have treated us injuriously; and shew a readiness to forgive, and an earnest desire to disperse those fears and jealousies, which the recollection of past offences may excite; by uniting the most compassionate affection, with our faithful attempts to make men sensible that they have offended.—But what haste ought children to make, and what gratification should they account it, to contribute to the comfort of their tender parents! They should check every mean desire, and spur themselves on to every laudable pursuit, with the idea, that the one will grieve, and the other gladden, a kind parent's heart. They ought to value prosperity, especially as enabling them to share it with them; and spare a considerable portion, even of a moderate provision, to requite the cares, toils and anxieties of an aged father and mother. How shamefully unlike Joseph are they, who, in comparative affluence, through pride, covetousness, or self-indulgence, neglect, and leave to languish in indigence, such near relations!—Oh! how it adorns the doctrine of God our Saviour, when believers, by a blameless, useful, and prudent conduct, conciliate the good will of many, and silence the reproaches of all.—It men may without injustice confer unmerited favours on whom, and in what proportion, they please; who shall dare to find fault, if our *righteous* God, punishing none above their deservings, "has mercy on whom he will have mercy?"—When the reasons of the divine appointments are made known to us, we shall clearly perceive the Lord's wisdom, love, and faithfulness; we shall know that all those things are for us which once we thought

## CHAP. XLVI.

Jacob offers sacrifices, and has an encouraging vision, 1—4. He goes with his family into Egypt, 5—7. The names and the number of his descendants, 8—27. He meets and confers with Joseph, who instructs his brethren how to answer Pharaoh, 28—34.

AND Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to <sup>a</sup>Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices <sup>b</sup>unto the God of his father Isaac.

2 And God spake unto Israel <sup>c</sup>in the visions of the night, and said, <sup>d</sup>'Jacob, Jacob: and he said, Here *am* I.

3 And he said, I *am* God, the God of thy father: <sup>e</sup>'fear not to go down into Egypt; for <sup>f</sup>'I will there make of thee a great nation.

4 I <sup>g</sup>'will go down with thee into Egypt; <sup>h</sup>'and I will also surely bring thee up *again*: and <sup>i</sup>'Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes.

5 And Jacob rose up from Beer-sheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, <sup>j</sup>'in the waggons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him.

6 And they took their cattle, and

their goods which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came <sup>m</sup>into Egypt, Jacob and all his seed with him:

7 His sons and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.

8 ¶ And these *are* <sup>n</sup>the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons: <sup>o</sup>'Reuben, Jacob's first-born.

9 And the sons of Reuben: Hanoch, and Phallu, and Hezron, and Carmi.

10 And the sons of <sup>p</sup>'Simeon; <sup>q</sup>'Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and <sup>r</sup>'Jachin, and <sup>s</sup>'Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman.

11 And the sons of <sup>t</sup>'Levi; <sup>u</sup>'Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

12 And the sons of <sup>v</sup>'Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zarah: But Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Pharez were Hezron, and Hamul.

13 And the sons of <sup>w</sup>'Issachar; Tola, and <sup>x</sup>'Phuvah, and <sup>y</sup>'Job, and Shimron.

14 And the sons of <sup>z</sup>'Zebulun; Sered, and Elon, and Jahleel.

<sup>a</sup> xvi. 14. 31.  
<sup>b</sup> xxvi. 23. 1 Sam. iii. 20.  
<sup>c</sup> iv. 4. viii. 20.  
<sup>d</sup> xii. 8. xxi. 13.  
<sup>e</sup> xxxiii. 20. xxxv. 3. 7. Job i. 5. xlii. 8.  
<sup>f</sup> xxi. 35. xxvi. 23—25. xxxviii. 13.  
<sup>g</sup> xxi. 42. 53.  
<sup>h</sup> xv. 1. Num. xii. 6. Job iv. 13. xxxiii. 14. 15.  
<sup>i</sup> xxi. 1. Ex. iii. 3. 4. 1 Sam. iii. 4. 10. Acts ix. 4. x. 13.  
<sup>j</sup> xv. 13. xxvi. 2. 3. ix. xii. 10. Jer. xi. 9. Acts xxvii. 24.  
<sup>k</sup> xii. 2. xxv. 11. Ex. i. 7—10. Deut. i. 10. x. 22. xxvi. 5. Acts vii. 17.  
<sup>l</sup> xxviii. 15. ix. xliii. 1. 2.  
<sup>m</sup> xv. 14—16. i. 13. 24. 25. Ex. iii. 8. k. 1. 1.

<sup>n</sup> xxxi. 17. xiv. 19. 27.

<sup>m</sup> Num. xx. 15. Deut. x. 22. Josh. xiv. 4. 1 Sam. xii. 8. Ps. cv. 23. Is. lii. 4. Acts vii. 15.

<sup>n</sup> Ex. i. 1—5. 1 Chr. ii. 1, 2. o. xxix. 32. xlix. 3, 4. Ex. vi. 14. Num. i. 20, 21. ii. 10—13. xxvi. 6. 1 Chr. v. 1, 3. p. xxix. 33. xxxiv. 25. 30. xlix. 5—7. Ex. vi. 15. Num. i. 22, 23. ii. 12, 13. xxvi. 12, 13.

<sup>q</sup> Or, Nemuel. <sup>r</sup> Or, Jarib. <sup>s</sup> Or, Zerah.

<sup>t</sup> 1 Chr. iv. 24. <sup>u</sup> Ex. vi. 16. Num. i. 17—22. xxvi. 57, 58. Deut. xxxiii. 8—11. 1 Chr. vi. 1—3. <sup>v</sup> Or, Gershom.

<sup>w</sup> 1 Chr. vi. 16. <sup>x</sup> xxxviii. 1—3. 24—30. xlix. 1, 25. 27. xxvi. 19—21. Deut. xxxiii. 7. Judg. i. 2. 1 Chr. ii. 3—5. iv. 1, v. 2. Ps. lxxviii. 68. Matt. i. 1—3. Heb. vii. 14. Rev. v. 5.

<sup>y</sup> xlix. 14, 15. Num. i. 23, 29. xxvi. 28—29. Deut. xxxiii. 18. 1 Chr. xii. 32. <sup>z</sup> Or, Puah. <sup>aa</sup> Or, Jashub. <sup>ab</sup> 1 Chr. vii. 1. <sup>ac</sup> xlix. 13. Num. i. 30, 31. xxvi. 26, 27. Deut. xxxiii. 15, 19.

against us, and that our murmurs sprang from ignorance and unbelief; we shall say, "It is enough," 'I am now satisfied;' and therefore in the exercise of faith we should endeavour to anticipate that discovery.—Here also we behold Jesus, manifesting himself as a Brother and Friend to those, who once were his despisers, his enemies, and, in some sense, his murderers, having previously humbled them in true repentance; preventing most kindly their dismay and confusion; assuring them of his love, and of the provisions of his grace; explaining to them the mysteries of his cross, and the designs of the Father in his sufferings and glory; admitting them into sweet fellowship with himself; bidding them go, and inform others of his love and grace, that they may come and share it also; commanding them to lay aside envy, anger, malice, and contention, and live in peace with each other; teaching them willingly to renounce the world for him and his fullness; giving them earnestness of his love, and supplying all that is needful to bring them home to himself, that "where he is, there they may be also." And though, when he sends for his people by death as his messenger, they may at first feel some discouraging apprehensions; yet the thoughts of seeing his glory, and being with him, will enable them at length to say, "It is enough;"—"I am willing to die, and go to see, and be with, the Beloved of my soul."

## NOTES.

CHAP. XLVI. V. 1. Perhaps Jacob chose Beer-sheba for his solemn sacrifices, either as having been frequently

the scene of his father's communion with God, or because it was the last place in Canaan, which he was now leaving never to see again. He spoke at first with rapture of going to see Joseph; but it had been revealed to Abraham, that his posterity would be durably oppressed in Egypt; and Isaac had been forbidden to go thither. Perhaps, recollecting these things, Jacob hesitated about leaving Canaan, till he had sought direction and protection from God.—Nothing is recorded concerning sacrifices, from this time till Israel's deliverance from Egypt.

V. 4. God would surely bring Jacob back again to Canaan, *in his posterity*, of which his burial in Canaan was an earnest; and Joseph would be with him in his dying moments, to perform the last offices of filial affection, and to close his eyes. Thus the Lord assured him, that his beloved Joseph would survive him, and that no heavy calamities would come on his seed during his life.

V. 7. *His daughters, &c.*] Jacob had but one daughter (15); but perhaps his sons' wives were intended. His sons' daughters are also mentioned; yet only one of them is named (17); and it does not appear on what account she was distinguished from the rest.

V. 12. Judah was the fourth son of Leah, and Joseph was born when Jacob had been married about seven years: (xxix. 35. xxx. 24, 25:) consequently Judah might be about three or four years older than Joseph; yet he could not be above forty-four at this time, for Joseph was only forty.—His two sons Er and Onan had been married to Tamar, and a considerable time after their death had elapsed

<sup>a</sup> xxx. 32—35. 15 These *be* the sons of <sup>a</sup> Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padan-aram, with his daughter Dinah: all the souls of his sons and his daughters *were* thirty and three.

<sup>v</sup> xxx. 11. xlix. 19. Num. i. 24, 25. Deut. xxxiii. 20, 21. 16 And the <sup>v</sup> sons of Gad; <sup>\*</sup> Ziphion, and Haggai, Shuni, and <sup>†</sup> Ezbon, Eri, and <sup>†</sup> Arodi, and Areli.

<sup>†</sup> Or, Zephon. 17 And the sons of <sup>\*</sup> Asher; Jimnah, and Ishuah, and Isui, and Beriah, and Serah their sister: And the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel.

<sup>a</sup> xxxix. 24 xxx. 10. 18 These *are* the sons of <sup>a</sup> Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter: and these she bare unto Jacob, *even* sixteen souls.

<sup>b</sup> xxxix. 18. xxx. 24. xxxv. 16—18. 24. xlix. 27. 19 The sons of <sup>b</sup> Rachel, Jacob's wife; <sup>°</sup> Joseph, and Benjamin.

<sup>c</sup> xxxvii. xxxix. xl—xlv. xlvii. xlix. 22—27. l. 1. &c. Num. i. 36, 37. xxvi. 38—41. Deut. xxxiii. 12—17. 20 And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born <sup>d</sup> Manasseh and Ephraim, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah <sup>†</sup> priest of On bare unto him.

<sup>d</sup> xli. 51, 52. xlviii. 4. 13, 14. Num. i. 32—35. xxvi. 28—37. 21 And <sup>°</sup> the sons of Benjamin *were* Belah, and Becher, and Ashbel, Gera, and Naaman, <sup>†</sup> Ehi, and Rosh, <sup>†</sup> Muppim, and <sup>†</sup> Huphim, and Ard.

<sup>e</sup> l Chr. vii. 6—12. viii. 1—7. f Num. xxvi. 38. Ahiuram. g Num. xxvi. 39. Shupham. l Chr. vii. 12. Shuphim. h Num. xxvi. 39. Hupham. i xlix. 16. 17. Num. i. 38, 39. Deut. xxxiii. 22. k Num. xxvi. 42. 43. Shuham. l xlix. 21. Num. i. 42, 43. xxvi. 48—50. m l Chr. vii. 13. Jahziel.

22 These *are* the sons of Rachel, which were born to Jacob: all the souls *were* fourteen.

23 And the sons of <sup>†</sup> Dan; <sup>†</sup> Hushim.

24 And the sons of <sup>†</sup> Naphtali; <sup>†</sup> Jahzeel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shillem.

25 These *are* the sons of <sup>a</sup> Bilhah, which Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter, and she bare these unto Jacob: all the souls *were* seven.

26 All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his <sup>†</sup> loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls *were* threescore and six.

27 And the sons of Joseph which were born him in Egypt, *were* two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, *were* <sup>°</sup> threescore and ten.

28 ¶ And he sent <sup>†</sup> Judah before him unto Joseph, <sup>†</sup> to direct his face unto <sup>†</sup> Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen.

29 And Joseph made ready <sup>\*</sup> his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father to Goshen; and presented himself unto him: and he <sup>†</sup> fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while.

30 And Israel said unto Joseph, <sup>\*</sup> Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou *art* yet alive.

31 And Joseph said unto his brethren, and to his father's house, <sup>\*</sup> I will go up and shew Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and my father's house, which *were* in the land of Canaan, are come unto me:

32 And the men *are* <sup>†</sup> shepherds, for <sup>\*</sup> their trade hath been to feed cattle;

before Pharez was born. (xxxviii.) It can then hardly be conceived, that this event took place much before Judah was forty years old. So that Pharez could not be more than four or five years old at this time. The heads of families, therefore, which were born in Egypt during Jacob's life, seem to have been included.

V. 15. *Thirty and three.*] When Er and Onan are deducted, the whole number amounts only to thirty-two; but Jacob himself must be added to complete the number.

V. 21. The marginal references shew, that several of these were Benjamin's grand-children. It is evident that Benjamin was born after Dinah had been defiled, and she was about Joseph's age: supposing her therefore but in her fourteenth year at that time, Benjamin could not now be more than twenty-five or twenty-six years old: we can then scarcely conceive, that he could have several grand-children.—It is therefore most probable, that the historian mentions some born in Egypt during Jacob's life-time, who afterwards became heads of families in Israel, as it was before intimated. (Note, 12.)

V. 27. Threescore and six were before mentioned (26); so that Joseph and his two sons, together with Jacob himself complete the seventy persons here enumerated; and

the numbers stated in verses 15. 18. 22. 25. amount to seventy.—The Septuagint, adding some of the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh, who became heads of families in these tribes, makes the number seventy-five: and perhaps St. Luke took the number as it stood in this version, in recording the speech of Stephen before the council. Other methods, however, have been devised for reconciling the sacred historians. (Note, Acts vii. 14.)

V. 28. *To direct.*] To give Joseph notice of his arrival, that he might meet him in Goshen. This region lay near the entrance of Egypt, bordering on Arabia.—Judah seems to have been selected on this occasion, as having acted nobly in Joseph's presence before.

V. 29. As a prince, Joseph went forth to meet his father in a chariot, shewing him proper respect: but for Jacob, always a plain man and now in years, he sends a convenient, but less splendid conveyance; as the varied term evidently implies.

V. 32—34. 'It is observable, how careful Joseph is to keep his brethren clear of the snares of Egypt...He is more concerned for their purity than their outward dignity...If we wish to destroy our souls, or the souls of our children, let us seek for ourselves, and for them,

z xiv. 12.

"and they have brought their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have.

33 And it shall come to pass when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say,

a xlvii. 3, 4. Jon. i. 8.

"What is your occupation?

b 32. xxxiv. 5. xxxvii. 12.

34 That ye shall say, "Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle, from our youth even until now, both we *and* also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; "for every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians.

c xliii. 32. Ex viii. 26.

## CHAP. XLVII.

Joseph presents, first his brethren, and then his father, to Pharaoh; with the conference between them, 1—12. The terms on which Joseph dealt out corn to the Egyptians: and the compact which he finally settled between Pharaoh and his subjects; with their grateful acknowledgements, 13—26. Jacob on the approach of death calls Joseph, and gives orders concerning his burial, 27—31.

a xiv. 16. xlv. 31.

**THEN** "Joseph came and told Pharaoh, and said, My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds,

'great things; but if not, it becomes us, having food and raiment, therewith to be content.' Fuller.—*Abomination* (34). Note, xliii. 32. This would more effectually keep them distinct and separate from the Egyptians.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In those events and undertakings, which appear most joyful, there are probable consequences involved, which may remind us to "rejoice with trembling;" and warn us not to proceed without seeking counsel, assistance, and a blessing from the Lord. Attending on his ordinances, and receiving the pledges of his covenant-love, we may expect his presence and that peace which it confers: and when we are satisfied that we are his people, and in the path which he marks out to us, being assured of his supports and consolations, we may not only enter into the iron furnace of bondage and oppression, but into the fiery furnace of persecution.—In all our removals, we need to be reminded of our removal out of this world: and though it is desirable to be surrounded at the eve of life with our beloved friends and children; yet nothing can encourage us to fear no evil, when "passing through the valley of the shadow of death," but the presence of Jesus Christ to receive our souls.—Be our families never so large, God's providence can with perfect ease support them: and be repenting sinners never so numerous, "the unsearchable riches of Christ" are sufficient, and in Heaven there is room enough, for them all.—However generous our friends may be, it is prudent to be modest, and not to give them any ground to suspect us of encroaching, or to complain that we are burdensome. In general the further from courts, the nearer to Canaan; and however obscure and despised our lot be, if it prove advantageous to our souls, and favourable to communion with God, we ought to be

and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and behold they are <sup>b</sup> in the land of Goshen.

b xlv. 10. xlv. 29. Ex. viii. 22. ix. 26.

2 And he took some of his brethren, <sup>c</sup> even five men, <sup>e</sup> and presented them unto Pharaoh.

c 2 Cor. iv. 14. Col. i. 28. Jude 24.

3 And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, "What is your occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we *and* also our fathers.

d xlv. 33, 34. Am. vii. 14. 5. Jon. i. 8. 2 Thes. iii. 10.

4 They said moreover unto Pharaoh, "For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks, "for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, "let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen.

e xlv. 10. xv. 12. Deut. xxvi. 5. Ps. cv. 23. 1a. lli. 4. Acts vii. 6. f xliii. 1. Acts vii. 11.

5 And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee:

g xlv. 34.

6 The land of Egypt <sup>h</sup> is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and thy brethren to dwell, in the land

h xlii. 9. xx. 15. xxxiv. 10. xlv. 18—20.

thankful for it. Our lives are in the Lord's hands, whatever we wish and desire; and though we should be willing to die, yet we should be also willing to wait his time. In the mean while, if even the abhorrence of the world keep us separate from it, we have cause to rejoice and be glad on that account.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XLVII. V. 2. Joseph, by thus presenting his brethren, both shewed respect to Pharaoh, and intimated that he would do nothing without his knowledge and approbation: he also put honour upon them, manifesting that he was not ashamed of them, though now his inferiors; and that he did not harbour resentment against them.

V. 3. Pharaoh took it for granted, that Jacob's sons had some peculiar occupation; and, though a shepherd was had in abomination among the Egyptians, they did not attempt to conceal their employment. Thus they shewed a hearty concurrence with Joseph, in choosing to remain in their obscure, but more safe and advantageous employment. (Note, xlv. 32—34.)

V. 4. Probably, Jacob and his sons only meant to continue in Egypt till the famine was over; but, meeting with kind treatment, they remained there: at length another king arose; and they were detained in bondage, *contrary to their intention*, but according to the purpose and prediction of God.

V. 6. Pharaoh seems to have been fully sensible of Joseph's excellent services, and very grateful for them. He would, however, have none but men of activity advanced even as shepherds. It does not seem to have been the custom at that time, for kings to prefer the dependents of great statesmen, out of compliment to them, whether fit for preferment or not. It is at least evident, that Joseph

of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any men of activity amongst them, then make them 'rulers over my cattle.

7 ¶ And Joseph brought in Jacob his father, and set him before Pharaoh: and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

8 And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, 'How old art thou?

9 And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, 'The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and I have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers, in the days of their pilgrimage.

10 And Jacob 'blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.

11 And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of 'Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.

12 And Joseph nourished 'his father and his brethren, and all his father's household with bread 'according to their families.

13 ¶ And there was no bread in all the land: for the famine was very sore, 'so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan 'fainted by reason of the famine.

14 And Joseph gathered up all 'the

o xiv. 19. Num. vi. 23—27. Dent. xxxiii. 1. Ruth ii. 4. 2 Sam. viii. 10. xix. 39. Pa. cxix. 46. cxix. 8. Heb. vii. 7.

p Ex. i. 11. xii. 57.

q Matt. xv. 4—6. Mark vii. 10—13. 1 Tim. v. 4. 8.

r Or, as a little child is nourished. Heb. according to the little ones. 1. 24. 1 Thea. ii. 7.

r xlii. 20. 1 Kings xviii. 5. Jer. xiv. 1—6. Lam. ii. 19, 20. iv. 9. Jer. ix. 12. Joel i. 10—12. t xlii. 56.

1 Sam. xxi. 7. 1 Chr. xxvii. 29—31. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 10. Prov. xxii. 29.

k See on 10.

\* Heb. How many are the days of thy life? 9.

1 Chr. xxix. 15. Ps. xxxix. 12. cxix. 19. 64. Heb. xi. 9—16. xiii. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 11.

m Job xiv. 1. Ps. xxxix. 5. lxxxix. 47, 48. xc. 3—12. Jam. iv. 14.

n 28. v. 27. xi. 11, 24. 26. xxv. 7. xxxv. 23. l. 26. Ex. vii. 7. Dent. xxxiv. 7. Josh. xxiv. 29. 2 Sam. xix. 32—36. Job xlii. 16, 17.

did not require, and Pharaoh did not propose, neither did the sons of Jacob expect, such advancement: they only desired pasturage for their flocks. If the rich and great are disposed to overlook and neglect their poor relatives; these on the other hand are often equally culpable, in expecting such things from them, as it would be very improper to confer. The cattle of the Egyptians, as it appears from the subsequent history, were very numerous, and highly valued; (16. Ex. ix. 3—6. 19—21;) nor is there any intimation, that they did not use them for the same purposes as other nations did; or that at so early a period they worshipped them. Perhaps shepherds were held in abomination in Egypt, only as a low and vulgar set of men, compared with princes, sages, and soldiers.

V. 7. With the gravity of old age and the piety of a believer, and even with the authority of a patriarch and a prophet, Jacob pronounced a blessing upon Pharaoh: that is, he solemnly supplicated the Lord to bestow his blessing upon him. Thus he acted in character, as not ashamed of his religion, and as desirous of expressing his gratitude to the benefactor of himself and family, and of recompensing him in the only way in which he was able. And though Jacob thus in some sense assumed the superiority, Pharaoh seems to have been well pleased with this token of his regard; having, in the character and usefulness of Joseph, abundantly experienced the value of the blessing of Jacob's God, and perhaps being himself favourably disposed to his worship.

V. 8. Pharaoh observed somewhat peculiarly venerable in the aspect of Jacob; and conceiving perhaps that he was older than he really was, (to which appearance his various hardships and trials might contribute,) he was curious to know his age.

V. 9. We have here a very uncommon answer to a very common question; but it is an answer full of pertinent instruction and admonition. Jacob calls his life a pilgrimage; that is, the sojourning of a stranger in a foreign country, or his journey home to his own country; intimating that he was not at home on earth, and that his habitation, his inheritance, and his treasures were in heaven, whither he was daily journeying, in the bent and

desires of his heart, and the tenour of his conduct. "For they which say such things confess that they seek a better country, that is, a heavenly." (Note, Heb. xi. 13—16.) He also numbers his life by the days of his years: it consisted of a few years, each year composed of a few days. One day goes, and another, and soon a year is gone: and thus year after year imperceptibly glides away, till life, with its many sorrows and scanty pleasures, comes to an end; just as a wearisome journey gradually is finished, and we arrive at home. Though Jacob had now lived a hundred and thirty years, yet he accounted them but few, in comparison of the lives of his forefathers; and as nothing compared with eternity. They were evil also; not only as the lives of others are, but in that he had had an uncommon share of troubles.—Such an answer, from so venerable a person, could not fail to impress the mind of Pharaoh, and almost to extort the reluctant sigh, by reminding him of the insufficiency and short continuance of all human prosperity and felicity; and that after a life of vanity and vexation, man goes down into the grave, from the throne as well as from the cottage; and that nothing can make him happy, but the prospect of an everlasting home in heaven, after the close of his short weary pilgrimage on earth.

V. 11. Those parts of Egypt which lay low, might perhaps afford good pasturage, especially in the plains near the Nile; though the upland countries, and most parts of Canaan especially, were totally burnt up during the years of famine.—'There was more grass in the marshes and fenny parts of Egypt, when the Nile did not overflow enough to make plenty of corn.' Augustine.

V. 12. Besides pasturage for the flocks and herds, Joseph supplied the several branches of his father's family with corn, by a stated allowance, according to the number of their households.

V. 13. Fainted.] A strong metaphor, taken from the fainting or languor of an individual for want of sustenance, and applied, in a manner emphatically descriptive, to the distress of the whole nation. This was about the end of the third year of the famine.

V. 14. Into Pharaoh's house.] None of it being appropriated to Joseph's own use, or given in presents or pen

money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought: and "Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house.

15 And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, "Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth.

16 And Joseph said, Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail.

17 And they brought their cattle unto Joseph: and Joseph gave them bread *in exchange* \* for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses; and he \* fed them with bread, for all the cattle, for that year.

18 When that year was ended, they came unto him the second year, and said unto him, "We will not hide it from my lord, how that our money is spent, my lord also hath our herds of cattle; there is not ought left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies and our lands.

19 Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? "Buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh: "and give *us* seed, that we may live and not die, that the land be not desolate.

20 And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyp-

tians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's.

21 And as for the people he removed them <sup>b</sup> to cities, from *one* end of the borders of Egypt, even to the *other* end thereof.

22 Only the land of the <sup>†</sup> priests † bought he not: <sup>°</sup> for the priests had a portion *assigned them* of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them; wherefore they sold not their lands.

23 Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have <sup>a</sup> bought you this day, and your land, for Pharaoh: lo, <sup>°</sup> *here* is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land.

24 And it shall come to pass in the increase, that you shall give 'the fifth *part* unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.

25 And they said, "Thou hast saved our lives: <sup>b</sup> let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants.

26 And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, *that* Pharaoh should have the fifth *part*; 'except the land of the <sup>‡</sup> priests only, <sup>‡</sup> which became not Pharaoh's.

27 ¶ And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt in the country of Goshen: and they had possessions therein, and <sup>b</sup> grew, and multiplied exceedingly.

<sup>a</sup> Luke xvi. 1, 2.  
10—12. 1 Cor. iv.  
2. 1 Pet. iv. 10.

<sup>b</sup> 19. Ps. xxxvii. 3.  
Is. xxxviii. 16.  
Matt. vi. 11.

<sup>c</sup> Ex. ix. 3. 1 Kings  
x. 28. Is. xxi.  
1.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. led them.

<sup>e</sup> 2 Kings vi. 28

<sup>f</sup> Neh. v. 2, 3. Job  
ii. 4. Lam. v. 6.  
9. Matt. xvi. 26.  
Phil. iii. 8, 9.

<sup>g</sup> See on 22

<sup>b</sup> xlii. 48.

<sup>†</sup> Or, princes. xli.  
46. 50. marg.  
Ezra vii. 24.

<sup>d</sup> 19.

<sup>c</sup> xli. 27. xlv. 6.  
Pa. cvii. 36, 37.  
Prov. xii. 11. xlii.  
23. Is. xxxviii. 24.  
25. Is. 10. 2 Cor  
ix. 10.

<sup>f</sup> xli. 34 Lev  
xxvii. 32. 1 Sam.  
viii. 15—17. Pa.  
cxii. 5.

<sup>g</sup> xli. 45. marg.  
xlv. 6—8. Prov.  
xi. 26, 27.  
h xxxviii. 15. Ruth  
ii. 18.

<sup>‡</sup> Or, princes.—  
See on 22.

<sup>k</sup> xlii. 16. xxvi. 4.  
xxviii. 14. xlv.  
3. Ex. i. 7. Pa.  
cvii. 38. Zech.  
x. 8. Acts vii. 17.

sions to his family.—Thus the people were sustained during the fourth and fifth years.

V. 17. *Horses.*] This is the first time that horses are mentioned in scripture. The patriarchs, as far as we can learn, had no horses, nor are any mentioned among the possessions of Israel when they left Egypt. (*Ex.* xii. 38.)

V. 19. *Give us seed.*] As this was the seventh year of the famine, and as every particular had hitherto accorded to Joseph's prediction, the people fully expected an end to the calamity. Probably, the Nile had begun again to overflow; and therefore they wanted corn for seed, as well as for bread.

V. 21. This verse may only mean, that Joseph removed the people from the distant villages to the cities, where the corn was stored up, in all parts of the land, for the convenience of supplying them with food: but, if the common interpretation be adhered to, the state of affairs in Egypt might require this regulation, as conclusive to pub-

lick tranquillity, and to the more equitable distribution of property.

V. 22. *Priests.*] This word is sometimes translated *princes*; and seems here used, not only for the ministers of the superstitious worship of the Egyptians, but for the officers of state, and for their wise men and diviners, who, having their maintenance from Pharaoh, were not under the necessity of selling their lands.

V. 23—26. Adverting to the words of the people, Joseph says, "I have bought you:" but it is evident he took no advantage of this part of the agreement. It does not appear, that even their *political liberty* was materially abridged in consequence: but they held their lands, either their former estates, or others assigned to them, by a new tenure; on condition of paying one-fifth of the clear produce as a constant tax to Pharaoh: and this was made a *law*, which remained in force when Moses wrote his history, probably above two hundred years after. This reserve

28 And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt <sup>1</sup>seventeen years: so <sup>2</sup>the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years.

29 And the time drew nigh that Israel <sup>m</sup>must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, <sup>a</sup>put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh,

and <sup>o</sup>deal kindly and truly with me; <sup>o</sup>xxiv. 49.

<sup>p</sup>bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt.

30 But I will <sup>a</sup>lie with my fathers, and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt, and bury me in their burying-place. And he said, I will do as thou hast said.

31 And he said, Swear unto me: And he sware unto him. <sup>r</sup>And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head.

<sup>r</sup>xviii. 2. 1 Kings 1. 47. Heb. xl. 21.

seems to have been made instead of all other taxes, and it does not appear to have been at all oppressive; it is indeed evident, that the people did not consider it as a hardship, but the contrary.—The absurd opinion, that Joseph reduced the Egyptians to *personal slavery*, is contrary to the whole tenour of the narration, and not the least trace of it can be discerned in the subsequent history. But it seems to have originated with those, who are glad of any pretext to criminate approved characters of Scripture, as their only way of answering the arguments which demonstrate it to be divinely inspired.—Joseph was raised up by the Lord for this very service, and he is every where commended in it, and no where censured: the friends of revealed truth should, therefore, be very cautious, how they start objections to his conduct, of which at this distance of time and place they cannot be competent judges. The customs and maxims of different regions and ages are exceedingly dissimilar. No doubt, the government of Egypt, both before and after this transaction, was far more arbitrary than Britons would approve. It is manifest however, that the Egyptians were entirely satisfied with Joseph's management, both at the time and long after; and regarded him with the warmest gratitude as a publick benefactor. And though we may not perceive the reason of some arrangements; yet the whole transaction is strongly marked with such equity, benevolence, disinterestedness, and impartiality, as have seldom, if ever, been equalled. Joseph acted between Pharaoh and his subjects in the fear of God, and without any undue attachment to the interests of his brethren, or even of his own children. (Note, xlviii. 5.)—It was also *necessary* that the corn should be *sold*, not *given*; nay, that it should be sold at a high price: otherwise it would have been improvidently used; and in that case a destructive famine must have followed, before the end of the seven years; and to complete the misery, the seed to sow the land might not have been reserved. Raising the price of corn, in a *real* scarcity, by increasing the difficulty of obtaining it, reduces a nation to short allowance, and so preserves the inhabitants from destruction.—Joseph, by giving the Egyptians seed, encouraged them to cultivate their land, and sanctioned, in his prophetic character, their expectation of a crop.—In Egypt the harvest follows the seed-time much more closely than in this country; so that hope now dawned on the afflicted inhabitants.

V. 29, 30. Jacob was sensible that death was speedily approaching, and he greatly desired the presence of his beloved Joseph, who lived at court, while himself was at a considerable distance; for not even affection to his parent could induce Joseph to relax his unremitting attention to the important duties of his station.—Jacob's dying request, "not to be buried in Egypt," evidenced his belief of the

Lord's promise concerning Canaan, of which land he would thus take and keep possession. It also intimated, that he desired to have his lot after death, not with the Egyptians, but with his fathers Abraham and Isaac, in that heavenly rest which Canaan typified.

V. 31. *Israel bowed, &c.*] In an act of solemn worship, yet in feebleness thus supporting himself, and expressing his full satisfaction and his willingness to leave the world. (Note, Heb. xi. 21.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—10.

The kindness of liberal benefactors, so far from encouraging us to encroach upon them, should remind us to shew them all proper attention and deference: and in attending to some *peculiar relative duties*, we should look round upon the *whole circle*, and so proportion them as not to entrench upon others.—When Joseph selected *five* from his *eleven* brethren to present before Pharaoh, he doubtless had good reasons for his conduct, though not made known to us, nor probably to them. Thus the Lord Jesus, in dispensing his special benefits as he sees good, acts in perfect wisdom, though we are not acquainted with the grounds of his distinguishing grace: and thus, neither despising our meanness, nor ashamed even in his highest exaltation "to call us brethren," nor resenting our past misconduct, however base, he presents us, when we submit and believe in him, for acceptance before his Father's throne.—Industry in any honest employment is always creditable; and indeed all, who are not in some way diligent, are worthless encumbrances on the community. Nor ought a man, in compliance with fashion or prevalent notions, to be ashamed of the lowest useful occupations; for nothing that is not sinful is disgraceful, in the sight either of God, or of wise and good men.—It is generally best to abide with God in our own calling; for what the world calls *mending ourselves*, is frequently little better than renouncing peace, content, and a situation favourable to the prosperity of our souls, for gilded cares, encumbrances, and manifold temptations.—Indeed, our life is but a pilgrimage: few and evil are the days of it; and provided they be spent with God, and to his glory, the rest is of very little consequence. If we have a prospect that, when we go hence and are no more seen, we shall go home to our Father's house, we shall not want, and ought not to desire, the paltry interests of the world; why then should we burden ourselves with unavailing cares and sorrows? Why covet riches, shortly to be left behind? Why engage in projects to be left unfinished? or aspire at distinctions which death will terminate? We do not act thus on a journey, when our heart is at home: the conveniences or inconveniences, which we

## CHAP. XLVIII.

Jacob being sick is visited by Joseph with his two sons, 1, 2. He adopts Joseph's sons as his own children; with an affectionate mention of Rachel's death, 3—8. He blesses Joseph and them, prophetically preferring the younger to the elder, 9—20. He predicts the return of his family to Canaan, and assigns a portion there to Joseph, 21, 22.

**AND** it came to pass after these things, that *one* told Joseph, Behold, *thy father is sick*: and he took with

a John xi. 3.

him <sup>b</sup> his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. b xii. 50—52. xlii. 20. 123. Job xlii. 16. Ps. cxxviii. 6.

2 And *one* told Jacob, and said, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee: and Israel <sup>c</sup> strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed. c Deut. iii. 28. 1 Sam. xxiii. 16. Neh. ii. 18. Ps. xli. 3. Prov. xxiii. 16. Eph. vi. 10.

3 And Jacob said unto Joseph, <sup>d</sup> God Almighty <sup>e</sup> appeared to me at <sup>f</sup> Luz in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, d xvii. 1. xxviii. 3. xxxv. 11. Ex. vi. 3. Rev. xxi. 22. e xxviii. 12—19. xxxv. 6, 7. 12. Hos. xii. 4. f Judg. i. 23.

4 And said unto me, Behold, <sup>g</sup> I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of peo- g xii. 2. xlii. 16, 16. xlii. 17. xxvi. 4. xxviii. 13.

meet with, but little affect us to retard our progress; we do not want to erect stately mansions, or to lay up wealth, in a country which we are leaving, and to which we shall return no more; nor do we encumber ourselves with those things which we are not in need of, and which must be left behind when we embark for our native country.—“Godliness with contentment is great gain: for we brought nothing into this world; and it is certain we can carry nothing out; and having food and raiment, let us be therewith content.” But oh! how miserable are they, who have all their good things during the few and evil days of this present life, and whose last comfort must expire with their dying breath!—Let us then “give diligence to make our calling and election sure;” and, as our days are likely to be so much fewer than Jacob’s, let us often ask ourselves seriously, how old we are: that our life may not vanish unimproved, nor death approach while we are unprepared for it. “A hoary head is a crown of glory,” only “when it is found in the way of righteousness;” and they whose consistency of character will bear them out, need neither be ashamed nor afraid to bear testimony for God before the greatest princes, who, if wise, will highly value their pious prayers.

## V. 11—31.

They who have been exalted, cannot too carefully avoid the appearance of despising their former equals; and they who have been injured, the appearance of resenting former ill treatment: and when we receive kindness from men, we should acknowledge the kindness of God in raising up such friends.—A useful life consists in a constant succession of duties: exalted stations, properly filled, call for unremitting labour and attention; and they who occupy them need great wisdom, firmness, disinterestedness, and impartiality, to ward off envy, to silence reproach, and to keep a clear conscience; rendering to God, to the prince, and to the people, their respective dues. But if Providence calls a man to such a station, he ought to seek grace sufficient for it, and expect that God will bestow it upon him.—If withholding the rain from heaven, or other customary advantages, so soon reduces the most opulent nations to poverty and distress; how absolute must our dependence be upon Him, whom we so often wantonly offend and foolishly forget! And if Joseph extorted this confession from the Egyptians, “Thou hast saved our lives;” what multitudes will gratefully say to Jesus at last, “Thou hast saved our souls from the most tremendous

destruction, and in the season of uttermost distress!”—The Egyptians were willing to part with all their property, and even their liberty, for the saving of their lives: can it then be too much, for us to count all but loss, and part with all, at his command and for his sake, who will thus both save our souls, and give us a hundred fold even in this present world? And surely, if saved by Christ, we shall willingly become the devoted servants of him and his Father, whose glory he consults in harmony with our salvation.—Yet they who lived on Joseph’s provision, and even Jacob who was so dear to him, must die; but Jesus gives us the true Bread, that we may eat and live for ever. To him then let us apply, and devote ourselves to his service; and when we draw near to death, he who supported us through life, will meet us, and assure us of an everlasting inheritance. Then, on the very bed of death, we may bow down and worship with joyful hearts, and breathe out our spirits into his faithful hands, with the most entire composure and satisfaction.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XLVIII. V. 1. As Jacob did not appear to be immediately in the state of a dying person, Joseph had returned to his important employments: but being informed by a messenger of his relapse or increasing sickness, and expecting his death, he went to visit him, and took his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, with him; either by Jacob’s express desire, or in hopes that the solemn scene, together with the dying benediction and discourse of the venerable Patriarch, would make a useful impression upon their minds. They were at this time above twenty years of age.

V. 2. *Strengthened himself, &c.*] Jacob, being animated by the presence of Joseph and his sons, exerted all his strength to improve this last opportunity. He was also endued with inward strength, and raised above himself by the Holy Spirit, that he might utter those prophecies with which he was inspired.

V. 3, 4. Jacob had called Luz by the name of *Beth-el*. (xxviii. 19.) The Lord had twice appeared to him there; but he especially referred to the time when he fled from Esau. That unexpected visit of a gracious God, in his extreme distress, could never be erased from his memory: and, as he had already experienced in a great degree the fulfilment of the promises then made to him, he mentioned them with much thankfulness, before he pronounced the subsequent blessings on his posterity.

ple; and will give this land to thy seed after thee <sup>for an</sup> everlasting possession.

5 And now thy <sup>two</sup> sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt, before I came unto thee into Egypt, <sup>are</sup> mine; as <sup>Reuben</sup> and Simeon, they shall be mine.

6 And thy issue which thou begettest after them, shall be thine, and shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance.

7 And as for me, when I came from Padan, <sup>Rachel</sup> died by me in the land of Canaan, in the way: when yet *there was* but a little way to come unto <sup>Ephrath</sup>: and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath, the same *is* Bethlehem.

8 ¶ And Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, Who *are* these?

9 And Joseph said unto his father, They *are* <sup>my</sup> sons, whom God hath given me in this *place*: And he said, Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will <sup>bless</sup> them.

V. 5. Thus Jacob adopted Ephraim and Manasseh, that being numbered with his own sons, they might, as heads of distinct tribes, have a proportionable share in the inheritance of Canaan. This he spake by the Spirit of prophecy.—Considering Joseph's rank and prospects in Egypt, a carnal mind would have regarded this remote inheritance, with the rest of Jacob's sons, as a very inconsiderable matter. But it does not appear that Joseph either purchased estates, or amassed wealth in Egypt, for his sons; and this, not only because he was disinterested, but because he was a believer, and was unwilling to attach his children to Egypt; desiring, on the contrary, to lead their thoughts to Canaan, and to the inheritance of the children of Israel, as their proper portion. Jacob also wished them to consider, that to be numbered with *his* sons, who was the heir of the promises made to Abraham and Isaac, and who had been named Israel, because he prevailed with God, and would certainly prevail with man, was far more honourable and desirable, than to be the richest of Pharaoh's courtiers. Probably, this led them to unite interests with the Israelites, and to adhere to the worship of God, in preference to the Egyptians and their superstitions, with which, in their station, they were peculiarly in danger of being infected.—Reuben and Simeon were the two eldest sons of Jacob.

V. 6. It does not appear, that Joseph had any other children; but, according to this limitation, if he should have, they must be incorporated with the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.

V. 7. The manner, in which this is introduced, intimates how much Jacob laid that stroke to heart. He

10 (Now <sup>the</sup> eyes of Israel were <sup>dim</sup> for age, *so that* he could not see.) And he brought them near unto him; and he <sup>kissed</sup> them, and embraced them.

11 And Israel said unto Joseph, <sup>I</sup> had not thought to see thy face; and lo, God hath shewed me also thy seed.

12 And Joseph brought them out from between his knees, and he <sup>bowed</sup> himself with his face to the earth.

13 And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand towards Israel's right hand, and brought *them* near unto him.

14 And Israel stretched out his right hand, and <sup>laid it</sup> upon Ephraim's head, who *was* the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, <sup>guiding</sup> his hands wittingly; for Manasseh *was* the first-born.

15 And he <sup>blessed</sup> Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac <sup>did</sup> walk, the God

seemed still to feel the anguish of it, and to assign it as a reason of his peculiar attachment to Rachel's posterity. This tender mention to Joseph of his beloved parent must have been peculiarly affecting.—The circumstance of Rachel's dying in child-birth, while on a journey, explained the reason, why she was not buried in the cave of Machpelah, where Jacob desired to be buried with the rest of his family; and it was introduced no doubt for that purpose.

V. 8. Jacob could discern that two persons besides Joseph were present; but he was so dim sighted, that he could not certainly tell who they were (10).

V. 9. "Whom God hath given me, in this place," whither I was sold as a slave, where I was long imprisoned, and where I have received so many mercies.—The piety of this language should not pass unnoticed.

V. 12. *He bowed, &c.*] Joseph thus shewed, that his external greatness did not render him forgetful of the respect due to his father, or of the veneration to which his age and piety entitled him; and evinced the high value which he put upon the adoption of his children, to be partakers of the promised blessings.

V. 14. Though Manasseh was the first-born, and Jacob knew it; yet under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, he by this token gave Ephraim the preference.—"God was wont <sup>from the beginning</sup> to prefer the younger. . . to shew that <sup>divine</sup> benefits were not confined to the order of nature, <sup>but</sup> dispensed freely, according to God's most wise goodness." *Theodore.*—Laying on of hands is here first mentioned in Scripture. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15. Jacob first blessed Joseph, and then his sons;

<sup>a</sup> xxviii. 20. Ps. xxxvii. 3. Ec. ii. 24. 25. v. 12. 18. vi. 7. Is. xxxiii. 16. Matt. vi. 25—34. 1 Tim. vi. 6—10.

which <sup>a</sup>fed me all my life long unto this day,

<sup>b</sup> 16 The <sup>b</sup>Angel which <sup>c</sup>redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let <sup>d</sup>my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them <sup>e</sup>grow into <sup>e</sup>a multitude in the midst of the earth.

<sup>c</sup> Matt. ii. 13. John xvii. 15. Rom. viii. 23. 2 Tim. iv. 18. Tit. ii. 14. <sup>d</sup> 5. xxxii. 28. Deut. xxviii. 10. Jer. xiv. 9. Am. ix. 12. Acts xv. 17. <sup>e</sup> Heb. as fishes increase. i. 21. 22.

17 And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it <sup>f</sup>displeased him: and he held up his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head.

<sup>e</sup> Ex. i. 7. Num. xvi. 26—37. Deut. xxxii. 17. Josh. xvii. 17. <sup>f</sup> Heb. was evil in his eyes. xxviii. 6. Num. xxii. 34. marg. 1 Kings xvi. 25. <sup>g</sup> xix. 18. Ex. x. 11. Matt. xxv. 9. Acts x. 14. xi. 8.

18 And Joseph said unto his father, 'Not so, my father: <sup>g</sup>for this is the first-born; put thy right hand upon his head.

19 And his father refused, and said,

or he blessed Joseph in blessing his sons.—Abraham and Isaac walked before God, by habitually through faith, maintaining communion with him in his ordinances, devoting themselves to his service, acting as under his eye, depending on his protection, and rejoicing in his loving kindness and mercy. (Note, v. 21—24.)—Jacob had often been in outward straits, and especially with his numerous posterity had been in great distress by famine; but God had always provided for him, and had sent Joseph before-hand to make preparation for him in Egypt. There God had fed him seventeen years in his infirm old age by Joseph, just as long as he had fed Joseph by Jacob's hand in his infancy and youth; thus enabling the son to requite his parent.—This divine interposition was therefore very properly introduced: and as Jacob had been fed, he did not complain, though he had not been enriched, but greatly impoverished.

V. 16. Jacob here called "God, before whom Abraham and Isaac had walked," and who had "fed him all his life long," "the Angel." As God does not give his glory to the creatures, we may be sure that such things were not spoken of a created angel. This is one proof therefore among many, that he, who is by Malachi called "the Messenger," or Angel, "of the Covenant," even Jesus Christ, was known by the Patriarchs to be distinct from the Father, yet One with him; and that as such he manifested himself to them, and was worshipped by them. (Notes, xxxii. 30. Hos. xii. 3—6.) The deliverances from misery and danger of sinful men, who believe in him, according to his word, by the interposition of God, coming through the ransom of the blood of Christ, are frequently in Scripture entitled *redemptions*. Jacob, now closing his eyes in death, joyfully considered himself as "redeemed from all evil;" and therefore expected henceforth good, and nothing but good.—He prayed for his grandsons, that they might stand in the place, inherit the privileges, and walk in the steps, of their progenitors; but especially, that his new name, ISRAEL, "might be named on them."

<sup>h</sup> I know *it*, my son, I know *it*: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become <sup>i</sup>a multitude of nations.

20 And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall 'Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim, and as Manasseh: <sup>k</sup>and he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

21 And Israel said unto Joseph, 'Behold, I die: but <sup>m</sup>God shall be with you, and bring you again into the land of your fathers.

22 Moreover, I have <sup>n</sup>given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of <sup>o</sup>the Amorite with my sword and with my bow.

<sup>h</sup> xvii. 20. 21. xxv. 23. Num. i. 33—35. ii. 19—21. Deut. xxxiii. 17. Is. vii. 17. Ez. xxxvii. 10.

<sup>i</sup> Heb. fulness.

<sup>j</sup> xxiv. 60. Ruth iv. 11, 12.

<sup>k</sup> Num. ii. 18—21. vii. 48. 54. x. 22. 23. xiii. 8. 11. 16.

<sup>l</sup> 1. 24. Ps. cxlvi. 3. 4. Zech. i. 5. 6. Acts xiii. 36. Heb. vii. 3. 8. 23—25.

<sup>m</sup> xxviii. 16. xlv. 4. Deut. xxxi. 8. Josh. i. 5. 9. iii. 7. Ps. xlvii. 46.

<sup>n</sup> xxxiii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 32. 1 Chr. v. 2. John iv. 5. o xv. 16. xxxiv. 28. Josh. xvii. 14—18.

(Rev. ii. 17. iii. 12.) This would be a NAME of nobler import than any which Egypt could afford.

V. 17—20. Joseph was not satisfied with his father's conduct; supposing that he was influenced by a groundless partiality, and not by the guidance of the prophetick Spirit.—The pre-eminence belonged to Manasseh by general custom, and thus it was afterwards commanded in the law: yet in many parts of Scripture we have instances of the younger being preferred to the elder. The law teaches us what is just and proper for us to do; but a sovereign God, in conferring *unmerited favour*, claims an indisputable right of "doing what he will with his own." He however always exercises it in perfect equity, faithfulness, and wisdom.—Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph in faith, and in consequence of an immediate revelation; and the prediction was fully accomplished in their subsequent history. (Note, xlix. 22—26.)

V. 22. Jacob first bought this piece of ground of Hamor: but probably after the slaughter of the Shechemites, the Amorites seized upon it; and afterwards he recovered it by force of arms, in a way, and at a time, of which we are not informed. Though it does not appear that he or his sons, at this time or long after, had any advantage from it; yet in faith he bequeathed it to Joseph, as an accession to the portion which would be assigned by lot to his posterity, when put in possession of Canaan.—Here Joseph's bones were at length deposited. (Josh. xxiv. 32.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—8.

The death-beds of eminent believers often afford most instructive lessons. "This is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to heart;" and such scenes, with the prayers and counsels of dying persons, are so suited to make serious impressions on the young, the gay, and the prosperous, that we do well in taking our children with us on these occasions, when it can be done with propriety.—It is very desirable, if the Lord please, to bear our dying testi-

## CHAP. XLIX.

Jacob calls his sons together to receive his prophetic benediction, 1, 2. He addresses each of them by name, and utters predictions concerning their posterity, 3—28. He gives them a charge respecting his burial, and dies, 29—33.

mony to the truths of God, to his faithfulness, and to the pleasantness of his ways. One would wish to be strengthened at such a solemn season, to render our last service to our survivors; and we should have regard to this in our whole conduct, that we may so live as to give energy and weight to our dying exhortations: yet, after all, the Spirit dispenseth in this matter severally, as he willeth. Abraham and Isaac died in faith and in peace, yet we have no record of their dying testimony; but Jacob spoke with great copiousness and energy. All true believers are blessed at their death; but all do not depart equally full of spiritual consolation, nor are all alike edifying to the spectators.—The joint inheritance of the promised blessing with the true Israel of God, let who will despise it, is infinitely preferable to the sole inheritance of all the kingdoms of the world: and the best expression of particular affection for our children and relatives consists in recommending to them our God and our religion; and in seeking for them his grace by earnest prayers, that they may be his adopted children and heirs, according to the promise. Though we cannot bless them in Jacob's Spirit of prophecy, yet we may with his spirit of faith; and humbly hope that our prayers for them will be answered, and our exhortations followed, even after we are dead. But alas! too many parents, who profess themselves Christians, act in direct opposition to the example of Joseph, by anxiously and covetously, if not dishonestly, heaping up wealth for their children; as if they meant to teach them to forget the promised land, or to prefer a plenteous portion of this present world!

## V. 9—22.

There is nothing more comfortable to the dying believer himself, or more edifying and affecting to those around him, than to reflect upon and speak of the promises of God, and his experience of their faithful accomplishment; to be mindful of his Bethels and Peniels, and to acknowledge that, notwithstanding his trials and troubles, all hath been done wisely and graciously. In this view, even temporal mercies and deliverances, yea, our daily bread, when considered as the gift of the great "Angel of the covenant," the purchase of his redemption, and earnest of better things reserved for us, become most precious blessings. And when a dying man can consider himself with confidence as "redeemed from all evil;" as pardoned and sanctified; and about to have done with conflict, labour, sin, temptation, darkness, sorrow, and the danger of any more offending or dishonouring God; and having good, and nothing but good, before him to all eternity; with what comfort may he "walk through the valley of the shadow of death!" And though flesh and heart fail, though the eyes grow dim, and nature sink in decay, how may he triumph in that God, who is "the Strength of his heart, and his Portion for ever!" Having experienced, that the Lord hath been better to him, not only than his desponding fears, but even than his most sanguine hopes,

AND Jacob called unto his sons, and said, <sup>a</sup> Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you *that* which shall befall you in <sup>b</sup> the last days.

2 Gather yourselves together, and

<sup>a</sup> Deut. xxxi. 12.  
28, 29. xxxiii. 1.  
Am. iii. 7. Rev.  
iv. 1.  
<sup>b</sup> Num. xxiv. 14.  
Deut. iv. 30. 1s.  
ii. 2. Jer. xxiii.  
20. Dan. ii. 28.  
Acts. 17. 1 Tim.  
iv. 1. 2 Tim. iii.  
1. Heb. i. 2.

he may cheerfully descend into the grave, leaning on the tried faithfulness of God to his promises.—But would we thus die the death of the righteous, we must "walk before God in the land of the living;" and, in the exercise and obedience of faith, bear the name and tread in the steps of these ancient believers: then, though our comforts are dying all around us, our heavenly Father will be with us, to countervail all losses, and to fulfil his largest promises.—Whatever we think while we live, we shall at death know, that to be "fed all our life long," is all that we can have in this world. Little indeed can those possessions profit us, about which there are so many cares and contentions: and though it may be proper, to adjust with exactness every thing respecting them, lest we bequeath discord to our posterity; yet soon a burying place will be all that the amplest patrimony can afford us.—How poor then are they, who have no other riches! and how miserable is a death-bed to those, who have no well-grounded hope of good, but dreadful apprehensions of evil, and nothing but evil for ever! Let us then fear being put off with a portion in this world, or with a hypocritical religion and a presumptuous hope, which will at last leave us in despair. Rather, whatever we lose or go without, let us "choose that good part, which shall never be taken from us;" and then poverty, pain, reproach, and death itself, will be as so many favourable gales, to waft us to the haven of eternal bliss.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XLIX. V. 1, 2. All Jacob's sons were still living; and now at his command they collected round his bed, perhaps with their children, to hear his dying words. The repetition of this call might intimate his desire, that they should keep together, and live in harmony as one family, without intermingling with the Egyptians.—This dying address to them should not at all be considered as the expression of his private affection, or resentment, or partiality; but as the language of the Holy Spirit, declaring the purpose of God, respecting the character, circumstances, and situation of the several tribes descended from them, in the *last times*, or in *after ages*: for the prophecy evidently looks forward beyond the coming of Christ, and some of it seems to be yet unaccomplished. In this and in some other passages, such as Noah's prophecy, (*Notes*, ix. 24—27;) and Moses blessing the tribes, (*Notes*, Deut. xxxiii;) there is so large an extent of prediction comprised in a few words, that brevity will allow us to adduce but a small part of what might properly be said, by way of elucidating them. In many instances, we have only the scriptural history to proceed upon, if we attempt to illustrate the prophecy by its accomplishment: and this mentions but little concerning several of the tribes. Had we a more particular account of the distinguishing character, situation, and success of each tribe, we should probably

c Ps. xxxiv. 11. hear, ye sons of Jacob; and <sup>e</sup> hearken  
Prov. i. 8, 9. iv. unto Israel your father.  
1—4. xxiii. 22.

d xxix. 32. xviii. 3 Reuben, thou art <sup>d</sup> my first-born,  
18 Num. i. 20. my might, and the beginning of my  
1 Chr. v. 8. strength, the excellency of dignity, and  
e Deut. xxi. 17. the excellency of power.  
Ps. lxxviii. 51.  
ex. 36.

f Jam. i. 6—8. 2 Pet. ii. 14. iii. 16.

g Heb. do not thou excel. 4 'Unstable as water, \* thou shalt  
g xxxv. 22. Deut. not excel, <sup>g</sup> because thou watest up to  
xxvii. 20. 1 Chr. thy father's bed; then defilest thou it:  
v. 1. <sup>h</sup> he went up to my couch.  
h Or, my couch is gone.

i xxix. 33. 34. 5 ¶ <sup>h</sup> Simeon and Levi are brethren:  
xxiv. 25—31.  
Prov. xviii. 9.

\* instruments of cruelty are in their habitations.

6 'O my soul, \* come not thou into their <sup>i</sup> secret; unto their assembly, mine <sup>m</sup> honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew <sup>n</sup> a man, and in their self-will they <sup>o</sup> digged down a wall.

7 Cursed <sup>o</sup> be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: <sup>p</sup> I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.

Or, their swords are weapons of violence. xxxiv. 25.

i Judg. v. 21. Ps. xlii. 5. 11. xliii. 5. ciii. 1. Jer. iv. 19. Luke xii. 19.

k xxxiv. 30. Ps. xxvi. 4, 5. xxviii. 3. xciv. 20. 21. cxxxix. 19. Prov. 1. 11.

l Deut. xxvii. 24. Ps. lxiv. 2.

m Ps. xvi. 9. xxx. 12. lvi. 8.

n xxxiv. 25, 26.

o Or, houghed oren.

p 2 Sam. xiii. 22—28. Prov. xxvi. 24, 25. xxvii. 3.

p Josh. xix. 1—9. xxi. 1 Chr. iv. 24—31.

perceive a more striking exactness in all these predictions, than we now discern in any of them.

V. 3, 4. Reuben, being Jacob's eldest son, might expect the precedency: as "the excellency of dignity, and the "excellency of power," the larger portion of the inheritance, and the principal authority among his brethren, properly belonged to him. But he had incurred a forfeiture; and therefore his father, as it were, arrayed him with the insignia of royalty, that he might the more solemnly and judicially degrade him.—The word rendered *unstable*, seems to denote especially a haughty, arrogant disposition, which, like swelling waters, overflows or breaks through all restraints, and renders a man altogether unworthy of confidence, and unfit for useful services. Or it may mean an inconstant spirit, which turns this way or the other, at the impulse of every temptation, as water driven by the wind.—(Marg. Ref.)—Some think the word means *licentious*, but that is not clear. It is used in the following passages, and not elsewhere: *Judg.* ix. 4. *Jer.* xxiii. 32. *Zeph.* iii. 4.—Probably an insolent self-preference, on account of his primogeniture, concurred in emboldening Reuben to commit incest with Bilhah, his father's concubine, as in some respects laying a claim to the inheritance. (2 *Sam.* xvi. 21. 1 *Kings* ii. 17. 21, 22.) But, by that very action, he forfeited all the privileges of the distinction which so elated him. Reuben's incest had been committed forty years before, and probably was repented of, and pardoned as to its eternal punishment: yet, being a crime of so infamous a nature, it was on this occasion remembered, and his tribe was degraded on account of it; to testify not only Jacob's, but the Lord's, abhorrence of such abominable practices, for a warning to the Israelites, and to others in all future ages. Thus children actually do suffer for their parents' crimes in this world: but this is for wise, equitable, and merciful reasons; namely, to warn them not to imitate their sins, lest they both be punished themselves, and entail misery on their beloved offspring.—The descendants of Reuben seem to have resembled him in character; and, according to this prediction, his tribe never had the pre-eminence in any respect: nor is any mention made in the subsequent history, of either judge, king, prophet, or renowned person, descended from Reuben; except of Dathan and Abiram, who, according to the character here described, proudly rebelled against Moses and against God; and of Adina, one of David's captains. (1 *Chr.* xi. 42.)

V. 5—7. Simeon and Levi, the next in seniority, were degraded also, and with still deeper abhorrence of the crime which they had committed. They were *brethren*,

not only descended from the same parents, but as being of the same fierce and untractable disposition. The swords, those "instruments of cruelty" with which they massacred the Shechemites, remained in their houses, as monuments of their odious crime; or rather, "Their compacts are the "instruments of cruelty:" for thus the clause may be rendered, perhaps more properly than it is either in the text, or in the margin of our version. They made a treacherous agreement with the Shechemites, in order to execute their fierce and bloody revenge. (Notes, xxxiv. 14—28.)—Perhaps Jacob had been suspected of allowing their treacherous revenge, but he here entered his dying protest against it.—'No,' says he, 'my soul would have abhorred so villainous a project; and had I been admitted into their secret, I would have immediately divulged it.' His honour also was intimately connected with that of his religion, and the glory of God: he therefore adds, 'Let it never be imputed to me, that I was one of this scandalous confederacy: it would not only be a disgrace to my character; but it would discredit the worship of JEHOVAH, in future ages and in distant nations, were it said, that Israel, "who had power with God and prevailed," was guilty of such a crime. Let then Simeon and Levi, though my own sons, bear the blame; and let the degraded state of their tribes still proclaim my abhorrence, yea, my God's abhorrence, of their wickedness.'—In their rage against Shechem, they slew him; but they scorned to lay hands on him alone, and therefore slew Hamor his father, and many others with him. (*Esth.* iii. 6.) And they were too *self-willed* and headstrong, either to ask or take any wholesome counsel; but proceeded likewise to desolate and plunder the city, and, as some render it, to "hough the "oxen," or to maim and treat cruelly the innocent animals.—Jacob therefore execrated, and called on all men to detest, their fierce anger and cruel wrath. He did not, however, curse them; nay, he is said to have *blessed* all his sons, but he pronounced a prophetick sentence upon them in the name of God, that they should be divided from each other, and one part of their descendants from the rest, in Jacob and Israel: for, though degraded from the pre-eminence, they would share in the land promised to his posterity, in the ordinances of God, and in the benefits of the covenant made with their fathers.—Accordingly, the tribe of Simeon had only a portion within the lot of Judah, where being straitened, part of them went in quest of new settlements, and were thus divided in Jacob. Tradition also reports, that numbers of this tribe were dispersed among the other tribes, as instructors of children, for their

8 ¶ Judah, thou art he whom thy  
brethren shall praise; thy hand shall  
be in the neck of thine enemies: thy

father's children shall bow down before thee.

9 Judah is a lion's whelp; from the  
prey, my son, thou art gone up; he  
stooped down, he couched as a lion,

support. The sentence in Levi's case was not reversed, but converted into a blessing, in consequence of the service which his descendants performed, in their zeal against the worshippers of the golden calf; (Notes, Ex. xxxii. 27—29. Deut. xxxiii. 9, 10:) so that being consecrated to God, as the priestly tribe, they were honourably and profitably divided and scattered in that character throughout Israel.—But the tribe of Simeon, being deeply criminal in the matter of Baal-peor, were not so favoured. (Num. xxv. 14. Note, Num. xxvi. 14.)

V. 8, 9. "Judah" signifies *Praise*.—Leah thus called her son, as expressing her admiring gratitude to God for his goodness; but Jacob alluded to the name, with reference to Judah himself. (xxix. 35.) There was nothing praise-worthy in the former part of Judah's life: but he acted most nobly and disinterestedly, in his conduct before Joseph respecting Benjamin, and was entitled to the praises of all his brethren. (Notes, xlv. 18—34.) Yet Judah personally was not so much intended as his descendants, especially Christ, whom all his brethren shall praise for ever.—This clause implies, that the other tribes would deem it an honour to stand related to that of Judah; and that Judah personally would be applauded by them, as well as his tribe distinguished among them. Had Jacob been influenced by human passions, he would probably have set Judah aside, as he had his elder brethren; in order to confer the privileges of primogeniture exclusively on his beloved Joseph, the son of his beloved Rachel, to whom, as the single wife whom he intended to marry, this precedence might be supposed due: but he spake by the Spirit of prophecy, as the events predicted completely demonstrate. Under this guidance he foretold, that the descendants of Judah would be victorious over their enemies, and rule over their brethren of the other tribes, as their willing subjects.—Their character also, as courageous, but not ferocious; victorious, but not tyrannical; willing to live in peace, yet terrible to those who provoked them; is represented under the well known emblem of the lion, who rules over the beasts of the forest; and of the *lioness*, as the word (נָרִי) rendered *old lion* may signify, and who is still fiercer when enraged.—Now all this has certainly been fulfilled in the most circumstantial manner, even to this present day.—In every age the tribe of Judah was more honoured than any of the other tribes; unless, perhaps, some may think a few years of Saul's reign an exception. The Lord assigned it the precedence in the encampments of Israel in the wilderness; (Note, Num. ii. 3;) and in presenting the oblations at the sanctuary. (Num. vii. 12.) It had the first lot in Canaan, even in preference to Ephraim, Joshua's own tribe. (Josh. xv.) After Joshua's death, "the children of Israel asked the Lord, saying, "Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them? And the Lord said, Judah shall go up." (Judg. i. 1, 2.) Othniel, the first judge, was of this tribe, and Caleb also, who almost equalled Joshua in reputation.—At length the Lord chose David, of the tribe

of Judah, to rule over his people; and made a covenant with him concerning the perpetuity of the kingdom in his family, which evidently prefigured the everlasting kingdom of Christ. Accordingly, David and his son Solomon ruled over all Israel, with great prosperity and renown; Judah was praised and had in honour; "his hand was in the neck of his enemies, and his father's children bowed down to him.—He was a lion's whelp; he went up from the prey; he stooped, he couched down as a lion, and as a lioness; who shall rouse him up?"—After Solomon's death, this glory was in some degree eclipsed by the revolt of the ten tribes. Yet the kingdom of Judah, for above 400 years, was governed by his descendants in lineal succession. The tribe of Benjamin and that of Levi, with numbers from the other tribes, united themselves to Judah, from whom the whole kingdom was called Judah; and the land was distinguished as the land of Judah. This kingdom was far more prosperous than that of the ten tribes. Above half of their kings were pious men, and many of them very zealous in the cause of God; their reigns were remarkably long in proportion; and consequently religion prospered much more in Judah than in Israel. While their pious princes adhered to the worship of God, their most powerful and haughty foes were intimidated, or subdued: and even when the nation, for idolatry, was given up for a time into the hands of their assailants, they soon returned to the Lord, and were restored and prospered. During the last contest with the Chaldeans, their power and courage were very conspicuous, in the long struggle which they made against the victorious and potent Nebuchadnezzar.—After the captivity, the Jews alone, as a nation, returned; while the Israelites were either finally scattered, or incorporated with them. From this period all the remainder of Jacob's descendants have been called from Judah, Jews or Judeans, and the distinction of tribes gradually fell into disuse; and this is the name by which they are at this day known all over the earth: a most remarkable event, that the people should neither be called after Abraham, nor Isaac, nor Jacob, nor one of his three elder sons; but from Judah, his fourth son. Thus it is manifest, that Judah has been unspeakably more known and celebrated than any other of Jacob's sons; his brethren have praised and honoured him; they have bowed down to him, and have preserved their most valued distinctions, by standing related to him and bearing his name.—His has been, in all respects, the conquering and the ruling tribe, though more especially distinguished by giving birth to Christ, the Lord of all and the King of glory.—Indeed, the power and reputation of the Jews after the captivity, never equalled their preceding eminence: yet the stand which they made against the Syrian kings, especially the successes of the Maccabees, (who, though Levites, were closely united with Judah,) against Antiochus Epiphanes, and afterwards against the Roman generals, especially before the last destruction of Jerusalem, proves that they were very powerful and formidable. Many of the other

and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?

\* Num. xxiv. 17.  
Jer. xxx. 21 Ez.  
xix. 11. i. l. Zech.  
x. 11.

10 The sceptre shall not depart

from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and

y Num. xxi. 18  
Is. lx. 7. cviii. 8  
z Deut. xxviii. 67.  
a Is. ix. 6. xi. 1.  
bxi. 11. Jer. xxiii. 6. Dan. ix. 25. Matt. i. 21. xxi. 9. Luke i. 32, 33. John ix. 7. xviii. 31. xix. 12 16

tribes joined with them, and frequently possessed authority, and headed their armies; but the body of the people descended from Judah, and the whole was called by his name. And though Jerusalem was situated in the lot of Benjamin, yet the tribe of Judah inhabited part of that city: the throne of David and his descendants was placed in Jerusalem; there the family of Judah ruled over their brethren; and thither the other tribes resorted to the courts of justice, as well as for the worship of God. It is therefore undeniable that events, even to this day, during more than 3000 years, have, with astonishing exactness, corresponded to this ancient prediction, in a manner which no human sagacity could have foreseen or conjectured.

V. 10. The word here translated "sceptre," properly signifies a rod or staff; though sometimes it is rendered a tribe: and it simply denotes the exercise of dominion or authority, of which the rod or sceptre was the badge. Judah was at this time merely the head of a family; for Israel, properly speaking, was no more divided into tribes, than governed by kings: but it was thus prophetically intimated that Judah would shortly acquire authority, not only as a distinct tribe, but likewise over his brethren.—The word rendered "lawgiver," in general signifies a ruler or judge; and implies, that rulers and magistrates, descended from Judah, or called by his name, would succeed each other for a length of time. This authority in Judah, however assailed, or changed as to external form, should not finally depart till SHILOH came, on whom the legislative and judicial authority would devolve; and in this, compared with the preceding part of the prophecy, it is implied, that the regal dominion would be exercised by SHILOH however previously interrupted: for as Shiloh, to whom "the gathering of the people would be," was to descend from Judah; the meaning evidently is, that the authority would remain with Judah, till he came, whose right it was, and with him it would thenceforth remain for ever. 'As to the time of his coming, it is foretold clearly, that it should be before the sceptre and lawgiver should depart from Judah, or about that time. And it is at least hinted that it would not be long before that departing of civil policy from Judah; and that it would be after its departure from the other tribes: for if it was to continue with them, as well as with Judah, till Shiloh came, the patriarch's words would not be suitable to the obvious design of them.' *Maclaurin*. We have seen how the sceptre and the authority remained with Judah till the captivity.—Even in Babylon the Jews seem to have been under some internal government, exercised by the family of David. After their return from Babylon, Zerubbabel, of David's race, was their leader; and the tribe of Judah, and those who incorporated with them, had regular magistrates and rulers from among themselves, under the kings of Persia and Syria, and afterwards under the Romans.—The Sanhedrim, constituted in great measure of the tribe of Judah, and the other courts dependent on it, possessed great authority till the coming of Christ, according to the concurrent testimony of ancient writers. The tribe of Judah likewise was preserved distinct, and could trace

back its genealogies without difficulty. In all respects, the sceptre, though gradually enfeebled, did not depart; nor was the exercise of legislative and judicial authority, though interrupted, finally suspended, till after that event.—The word SHILOH may mean, *He who is sent*, or *The Seed*, or *the Peaceable*, or *Prosperous One*; but all allow that the Messiah was intended, who was sent into the world, as the promised Seed, to be "the Prince of Peace." Till his coming, Judah possessed considerable authority: but shortly after his crucifixion, this authority was vastly abridged; and within that generation, according to his express predictions, Jerusalem was destroyed, the whole civil and ecclesiastical state was subverted, and all distinctions among the poor harassed remnant were confounded; they were scattered abroad over the face of the earth; and to this day, after almost 1800 years, they have been more destitute of sceptre and lawgiver, than even during the Babylonish captivity. This consideration so perplexed a learned Jew, above 700 years ago, that he wrote thus to his friend: 'I would fain learn from thee, out of the testimonies of the law, and the prophets, and other Scriptures, why the Jews are thus smitten in this captivity wherein we are; which may be properly called, the PERPETUAL ANGER OF GOD, because it hath no end. For it is now above 1000 years since we were carried captive by Titus; and yet our fathers who worshipped idols, killed the prophets, and cast the law behind their back, were only punished with a seventy years' captivity, and then brought home again; but now there is no end of our calamities, nor do the prophets promise any.' *S. Moraccanus, in Bp. Patrick*.—This enquiry must press the Jews, if they duly consider it, more and more every century. Compared with the astonishing prophecy before us, it undeniably shews that SHILOH is come; that JESUS the Son of Mary was he; and that the Jews filled up the measure of their national guilt by crucifying Him, and have ever since been left, as wretched outcasts dispersed through the nations, to be a living demonstration, that "the Scriptures cannot be broken."—The inspired Patriarch added, "To him shall the gathering of the people be."—If we understand this of Judah, its exact accomplishment has been already shewn. The other tribes gathered to that of Judah, during their encampments in the wilderness; they collected themselves as one body to make David king; and afterward they came from all the other tribes, to attend his courts, and form his armies, and those of his son Solomon. After the revolt of Jeroboam and Israel, vast multitudes from other tribes left their possessions to join themselves to Judah. The people gathered to Judah, both in serving under the kings of David's race, attending on the courts of justice, and even in celebrating their solemn feasts. After the captivity, many out of the other tribes joined the Jews, and were gradually incorporated among them; and the whole nation has ever since been called after Judah.—But the clause seems more immediately to refer to SHILOH. After his coming, when the sceptre departed from Judah, the gathering both of Jews and Gentiles was to Him, as their Prince and Saviour. It has continued to be so even

unto him *shall* <sup>b</sup> the gathering of the people be.

11 Binding <sup>c</sup> his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes.

12 <sup>d</sup> His eyes *shall be* red with wine, and his teeth white with milk.

13 ¶ <sup>e</sup> Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea: and he *shall be* for an haven of ships; and his border *shall be* unto Zidon.

to this present time; and we are taught to expect that this will be the case, more and more, till "the earth shall be filled with his glory;" and that the very Jews, now without prince or sceptre, will ere long be gathered to him as his willing people. (*Note, Hos. iii. 4, 5.*) But, "when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered *all nations*." And, finally, the unnumbered millions of the redeemed shall be gathered to him into his heavenly kingdom, to behold his glory, and to rejoice in his love for ever.—Some render the clause, "To him shall the obedience of the people be:" and if this translation should be preferred, it may easily be seen, that the accomplishment in all respects has answered the prediction in this sense, as well as in the other. Indeed, for what purpose did the people gather either to Judah, to David and his royal race, or to Jesus Christ, but in order to submit to them, and render them willing, loyal, and cordial obedience?—Before the coming of Christ, the Jews, under their greatest difficulties, had a government of their own: but since that time, they have had none; except as Christ, of the tribe of Judah, is the Prince of Peace and the King of Glory, to whom both Jews and Gentiles are required to yield obedience. The actual success of the Gospel, and the vast multitudes who have, through many revolving centuries, bowed in willing subjection to the Saviour's authority, is as striking an accomplishment of this part of the prophecy, as the present state of the Jews is of the other.

V. 11, 12. These verses relate to the lot of Judah in Canaan, and the advantages which they would enjoy, along with the other tribes, until the coming of SHILOH. It was foretold, that Judah's inheritance should abound in vines so strong, that they would tie their young asses to them, and so fruitful, that their garments would be stained with the juice of the grape.—They would have plenty of wine for exhilaration, which would sometimes be abused in intemperance, so that their eyes would be "red with wine;" and "their teeth white with milk," with which also their lot should abound, the pasture-ground being very fertile and luxuriant.—We have seen much of the preceding prophecy applied to Christ, the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," terrible to his obstinate foes, but merciful to those who submit: and we may also observe that he is "the true Vine;" that wine is the appointed symbol of "his blood, which is drink indeed," as shed for sinners and applied in faith; and that all the blessings of his

14 ¶ <sup>f</sup> Issachar is a strong ass, couch-  
ing down between two burdens.

15 And he saw that <sup>g</sup> rest *was* good, and the land that *it was* pleasant; and <sup>h</sup> bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute.

16 ¶ Dan <sup>i</sup> shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel.

17 Dan <sup>j</sup> shall be a serpent by the way, <sup>k</sup> an adder in the path; that biteth the horse-heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.

xxx. 18. Deut. xxxiii. 18. Josh. xix. 17—23. Judg. v. 19. x. 1. 1 Chr. xii. 32. k Josh. xiv. 15. Judg. iii. 11. 2 Sam. vii. 1. l Ps. lxxxi. 6. Ez. xxix. 18. Matt. xxiii. 4.

m xxx. 6. Num. x. 25. Deut. xxxiii. 22. Judg. xii. 1. 24. 25. xv. 20. xviii. 1, 2. n Judg. xiv. xv. xvi. 22—30. xviii. 22—31. 1 Chr. xii. 35. Heb. an arrow-snake.

gospel, are "wine and milk, without money and without price," to which every thirsty soul is welcome.

V. 13. According to this prediction, the tribe of Zebulun had a portion assigned to it, which extended nearly, if not entirely, from the sea of Galilee to the Mediterranean sea, on which some think, it had sea-ports. The maritime situation in which this tribe was placed, tended greatly to enrich it, both by fisheries and commerce; (*Note, Deut. xxxiii. 18, 19;*) and its inheritance reached to the borders of that country, of which Zidon was the capital.—As the land of Canaan was long after this divided by lot, it was the more surprising, that Jacob should thus exactly describe the situation of the tribes. Zebulun was younger than Issachar, yet Jacob mentions him first; and accordingly his inheritance was first allotted to him. (*Josh. xix. 10—17.*)

V. 14, 15. Issachar is described under the emblem of a strong ass, as Judah had been under that of a fierce lion. This implied that the tribe of Issachar would be industrious and unambitious; bearing labour or tribute peaceably, of which burdens others grievously complained. The expression, "couching down between two burdens," is variously interpreted; but it certainly denotes a quiet, persevering industry. He was sensible that rest, not from labour, but from war and contention, was profitable; and, being satisfied with the pleasantness of a remote part of the country, he little intermeddled with the affairs of the state, or of war; or with maritime affairs as Zebulun did.—Accordingly, this tribe is seldom mentioned in the subsequent history. There is, however, one remarkable exception. (*1 Chr. xii. 32.*)

V. 16, 17. Dan signifies *judgment*: and Jacob foretold that, though he was the son of one of his concubines, and the first of them whom he mentions, he should be the head of a separate tribe, and have a share in publick affairs; even as if he had been descended from Leah or Rachel.—What follows is a sketch of the character of the Danites, as subtle and mischievous, like serpents and vipers; and of their success in stratagems: and the propriety of these emblems would probably appear to us far more striking, if we knew their history.—Samson was of this tribe, who unexpectedly buried the Philistines in the ruins of the temple of Dagon; as the viper, which lies on the sandy road, causes the horse to throw his rider: and indeed all his previous successes had been obtained in the same unexpected and extraordinary manner. The tribe of Dan, in general, seems to have excelled more in stratagems than in open war.

18 I have <sup>o</sup>waited for thy salvation,  
 O LORD.  
 19 ¶ <sup>p</sup>Gad, a troop shall overcome  
 him: but he shall overcome at the  
 last  
 20 ¶ <sup>q</sup>Out of <sup>o</sup>Asher his bread *shall*  
*be fat*, and he shall yield royal dainties.  
 21 ¶ <sup>r</sup>Naphtali *is* a hind let loose:  
 he giveth goodly words.  
 22 ¶ <sup>s</sup>Joseph *is* <sup>a</sup>a fruitful bough,  
*even* a fruitful bough by a well; *whose*  
*branches run over the wall.*  
 23 The <sup>t</sup>archers have sorely grieved  
 him, and shot *at him*, and hated him.  
 24 But <sup>u</sup>his bow abode in strength,  
 and the arms of his hands <sup>v</sup>were made

strong, by the hands of <sup>w</sup>the mighty  
 God of Jacob: (from thence is <sup>x</sup>the  
 shepherd, <sup>y</sup>the stone of Israel:)

25 *Even* by <sup>b</sup>the God of thy father,  
 who shall help thee, and by <sup>c</sup>the  
 Almighty, who shall bless thee, with  
<sup>d</sup> blessings of heaven above, blessings  
 of the deep that lieth under, blessings  
 of the breasts and of the womb.

26 The blessings of thy father <sup>e</sup>have  
 prevailed above the blessings of my  
 progenitors, unto the utmost bound  
 of the <sup>f</sup>everlasting hills: they shall be  
 on the head of Joseph, and on the  
 crown of the head of him that <sup>g</sup>was  
 separate from his brethren.

V. 18. Many expositors imagine, that Jacob here meant to offer up his prayers, with reference to the conflicts and victories which he had predicted: but it is far more natural to suppose, that being exhausted with speaking to his sons, he here paused, and spake unto the Lord, by way of refreshing his spirits in the recollection of the near approach of that complete salvation, for which he had so long waited. (Note, xlviii. 16.) Mr. Henry on the passage observes, 'That the pious ejaculations of lively devotion may sometimes appear incoherent, but ought never to be censured as impertinent.'—'Old age is the time for "the patience of hope" to bear its richest fruits: and a pleasant thing it is to see this and other graces in full bloom, while the powers of nature are falling into decay.' Fuller.

V. 19. Gad signifies *a troop*; and both the character and situation of this tribe are here described. The Gadites were renowned for valour: (1 Chron. xii. 8:) and, having their inheritance beyond Jordan eastward, they lay open to incursions from troops of Ammonites, Moabites, Syrians, and others, by whom doubtless they were frequently annoyed: but they maintained their ground, gained decisive victories, and under David and his posterity they subjugated their enemies.—This blessing aptly describes a Christian's conflict: he is overcome in many combats, but is more than conqueror in the final event of the war.

V. 20. Asher signifies *blessed*; and Jacob, by the Spirit of prophecy, assigned him a plentiful country, yielding abundance for himself and others; even royal dainties, to supply the table of kings, at home and abroad. His inheritance bordered on Carmel, which was fruitful to a proverb. (Josh. xix. 24—26. Is. xxxv. 2.)

V. 21. This may be considered as a sketch of the character of this tribe. Unlike the laborious ox and ass; affecting ease and liberty; insinuating and affectionate; active but volatile; more noted for dispatch, than for steady labour and perseverance; and more disposed to exult in national blessings, than to fight in defence of them; like the hind which flees from the enemy, not like the lion who faces and overcomes him; like the suppliant, who with goodly words craves mercy, not like the warrior who disdains to ask or even accept of quarter; yet in this way maintaining his ground, as the hind stands firm even on the craggy and steep rocks.—Barak and many of his

soldiers were of this tribe, and, though at last they fought successfully, at first they were very timorous. I recollect no other warriors of this tribe. (Notes, Judg. iv. v.)

V. 22—26. Part of what Jacob says concerning his beloved Joseph is historical, and relates to his past life, much however is prophetic.—He is here called "a fruitful bough," or young tree planted by the water-side: he had no more than two sons, yet from them sprang two very numerous tribes; but his prosperity was preceded by base injuries and heavy afflictions. "The archers," or such as were most skilful in the use of the bow, "had sorely grieved him, shot at him, and hated him." His brethren pursued him with unrelenting envy and enmity, and spared his life only to sell him for a slave. Potiphar's wife tempted and then slandered him; Potiphar condemned and imprisoned him; and though we do not read of it, it is a singular case indeed, if some of the Egyptians did not revile and envy him. This part may likewise be considered as prophetic of the terrible wars, which his descendants waged, especially with the kingdom of Judah.—His weapons, however, in this warfare failed him not, as a broken or weakened bow would have done: and his hands and arms, notwithstanding the most fatiguing exertions, were strengthened to use them by the power of the God of Jacob; who in providence outwardly protected and prospered him, and by his Spirit endued him inwardly with such strength of faith and of grace, as produced invincible courage, resolution, and perseverance: and thus he was enabled to stand his ground, and to repel every attack of his enemies. His life was preserved, his reputation was cleared, his integrity remained unimpeached: when he rose superior to all opposition, his brethren sued to him, and became dependent on him; and all his enemies bowed before him and sought his favour. By the divine assistance and blessing, and through all these trials and troubles, he at length became "the shepherd of Israel," to sustain his father and family, and to take care of them with all their flocks and herds; and "the stone of Israel," the foundation and strong support of their interests. In these respects, as in many other things, he was a remarkable type of the good Shepherd, and tried Corner-Stone, of the whole church of God.—Indeed, though the royal dignity, and the honour of being the progenitor of Christ, were

b xxxv. 18. Deut.  
xxviii. 12.

1 Judg. ii. 15—29.

xx. 1 Num. xi. 4

—11. xv. xv.

Acts vii. 3. ix.

1. Phil. iii. 5.

Jer. x. 6. Ez.

xxii. 25. 27. Zeph. iii. 3.

Matt. vii. 15. x. 16

Acts xx. 29

1 Num. xxiii. 24.

Ezra. viii. 11.

Ez. xxxix. 10.

Zech. xiv. 1—7

27 ¶ Benjamin shall <sup>h</sup>raven as <sup>a</sup>a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and <sup>l</sup>at night he shall divide the spoil.

28 ¶ All these <sup>m</sup>are the twelve tribes of Israel: and this <sup>is it</sup> that their father spake unto them, and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them.

m Ex. xxxiii. 21.  
1 Kings xviii. 31.  
Acts xxvi. 7.  
Jain. i. 1. Rev.  
vii. 4.

conferred on Judah, yet Joseph was the especial type of the Saviour among Jacob's sons; and all that is here spoken of him ought to be considered as descriptive of the great Antitype. He too was greatly grieved, shot at, and hated; but his bow abode in strength: and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, he will not fail nor be discouraged, till his enemies are put under his footstool, and his brethren are brought to be with him where he is, to behold and share his glory.—Thus Joseph, being helped by the God of his father Jacob, was personally, and in his posterity, triumphant over all his enemies.—It was also predicted, that God would bless his posterity with a temperate climate, a fruitful soil, the treasures that are dug from the bowels of the earth, a numerous and healthful progeny, and extensive and durable blessings of every kind; being like the mountains, which shall endure as long as the earth itself, and as precious as their most desirable productions. All these benefits were typical of the vast and everlasting blessings, that are conferred upon the spiritual seed of Christ.—Thus Jacob blessed *all his sons*, more particularly, copiously, and clearly, than Abraham and Isaac had done: the promises also drew nearer to their accomplishment, and his Seed were multiplying very fast. But especially he blessed Joseph, “who was *separated* from his brethren,” not only as sold by them into Egypt, but as possessing eminent dignity, and as far more excellent than they. The words may be rendered, “a Nazarite from among his brethren,” one devoted unto God; and the expression, “on the crown of the head,” may refer to the Nazarite's vow, which seems to have subsisted before the giving of the law, and only to have been regulated by it. (Notes, Num. vi.) In this also, he was a type of Him, who “was holy, undefiled, and separate from sinners.”—If we compare this prophecy with that contained in the preceding chapter, we shall readily perceive, that, according to the words of the dying patriarch, Ephraim and Manasseh would be the heads of two distinct tribes in Israel, and that the descendants of Ephraim would be more numerous, powerful, and renowned, than those of Manasseh.—This accordingly took place in after ages. No one of Jacob's other sons was the progenitor of two distinct tribes; yet each of these was as numerous and illustrious as any of the other tribes of Israel, Judah excepted.—When the Israelites were first numbered in the wilderness, the descendants of Joseph amounted to 72200, and those of Judah to 74600, which was a vast proportion out of 600000.—At the second numbering, they amounted to 85900, or 9400 more than Judah. At this period, Ephraim was so decreased, as to be above 20000 less than Manasseh: yet, when Moses blessed them just afterwards, he confirmed Jacob's prophecy, saying, “They are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh;” and it is evident from the whole history, that the Ephraimites were shortly increased to an immense multitude, and in all respects exceeded the Manassites. For while the two divisions of Manasseh, on each side Jordan, belonged to

the kingdom of Israel, the political influence of Ephraim so vastly preponderated, that the whole kingdom was called Ephraim, as distinguished from Judah, during the whole term of its continuance.—It is well known, that Joshua, the conqueror of Canaan, was an Ephraimite; but, instead of taking measures to advance his own tribe, he rejected the application of both Ephraim and Manasseh, when they requested a larger inheritance, because they “were a great people, and the Lord had blessed them hitherto.” (Josh. xvii. 14—18.) In the days of Jephthah, the Gileadites slew 42000 Ephraimites at once, which might have been supposed sufficient to annihilate their political importance; yet they were so increased, that it seems to have had no effect in that respect; and the prophecy was evidently and undeniably fulfilled. In short, through revolving centuries to this day, the names of Judah and Joseph have been far more celebrated, than those of Jacob's other sons; which in the *history*, as well as in this *prophecy* are comparatively obscure. The tribes of Judah and Ephraim have eclipsed all the other tribes, by giving names to the two grand divisions of the nation; and Ephraim has been far more illustrious than Manasseh. This is precisely what might have been supposed, even on a cursory reading of these chapters as *prophecy*: and how can it be accounted for, that events, through remote futurity, should so accord to this ancient book, if it had not been divinely inspired? Let those who deny or doubt its divine inspiration solve this difficulty if they are able.

V. 27. According to the emblem here used, the character of this tribe would be *fierceness* and *cruelty*; which especially appears in the history of the Levite's concubine; when after the wickedness was committed, the Benjamites singly withstood all the other tribes, and had the advantage in two battles; nor did they yield till almost entirely destroyed. (Notes, Judg. xix. xx.) Ehud, the second judge, and Saul the first king, were of this tribe.—In the former part of the history, we read frequently of the Benjamites as a warlike people; and in the latter times they joined themselves to the tribe of Judah, and thus divided the spoil, and shared with them in their privileges.—Paul was of this tribe, who, as it were, in the morning of his life, *ravened as a wolf*, and devoured the prey in persecuting the Christians; but in the evening of his days, as a preacher of the gospel, he shared the blessings with Judah's Lion, assisted in his victories, and thus divided the spoil.—Benjamin was peculiarly dear to Jacob, yet little is spoken of him in this blessing; and there is nothing of the tender and fervent affection, which marks the blessing pronounced on Joseph: for Jacob spake by the Spirit of prophecy.—The tribe of Benjamin did not join itself to the descendants of his brother Joseph; but to those of Judah.

V. 28. *Every one, &c.]* That is, according to the blessing, which God intended in after times to bestow upon them.—Though some of Jacob's sons were reprov'd and disgraced, yet none of them were excluded (as Ishmael and

29 And he charged them, and said unto them, I am to be <sup>a</sup>gathered unto my people; <sup>b</sup>bury me with my fathers, in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite,

30 In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre in the land of Canaan, <sup>c</sup>which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite, for a possession of a burying-place.

31 There <sup>d</sup>they buried Abraham and

Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife: and there I buried Leah.

32 The purchase of the field, and of the cave that is therein, was from the children of Heth.

33 And when Jacob had <sup>e</sup>made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, <sup>f</sup>and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.

Esau had been) from the promised land, and the peculiar privileges of Abraham's seed; and when we compare their situation with the Gentile nations, it clearly appears that they were all indeed blessed with most invaluable blessings.

V. 29, 30. Jacob charged all his sons in this matter, as he had done Joseph before. One design seems to have been, to draw off their thoughts from Egypt, to weaken their attachment to that country, and to lead them to fix their hearts upon Canaan, as their promised inheritance.

V. 31. By burying Leah, and wishing to be buried himself, not where his beloved Rachel lay, but where Abraham and Isaac lay, Jacob expressed his faith in the God of Abraham and Isaac, and his desire of having his portion with them beyond the grave. (Notes, xxiii.) Of Leah's death and burial, nothing further is recorded.

V. 33. Thus Jacob, having been enabled to finish all for which he wished to live, lay down and died with the utmost serenity and composure.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

##### V. 1—7.

The gracious consolations and aids of the Holy Spirit can make men forget pain, raise them above the feeling of an exhausted frame, and enable them to speak on a death-bed, with pleasure to themselves and profit to others. But views into futurity, except as they respect the felicity of heaven, would afford us little satisfaction. Had not Jacob looked forward to the coming of SHILOH, and "waited for his salvation," he could have rejoiced but little in these prophetic benedictions of his family, with respect merely to this present world: so vain is the best state of earthly bliss!—Whatever therefore tends to draw off our affections from things below, and raise them to things above; whatever tends to cement our union with the people of God, and to disunite us from the world; must be good for us. And such in general is the tendency of the admonitions, and even rebukes, of pious parents, especially at the close of life, and when mixed with prayers for their children's welfare.—Sins long since committed, if not washed away in the blood of Christ, will at last rise up against us to our condemnation: and, even when repented of and pardoned, we may be reminded of them, by the correction of our merciful Father, the rebukes of kind friends, and the upbraidings of unkind enemies; and in many ways be made to bear the reproach, and to "possess the iniquities of our youth," in our circumstances, constitutions, and reputations. We should therefore remember them for our humiliation, and that we may bear such rebukes with patience and meekness: for if our violations

of the divine law do not exclude us from heaven, we shall have great cause for thankfulness; and if we be truly penitent, our very sufferings will be converted into blessings to ourselves and others.—Those who are of eminence in the profession of religion, should be peculiarly stedfast in protesting against the wickedness of other professors; and in wiping away every suspicion of conniving at their sins, though it should leave infamy upon their nearest relations: for it is far better that they should bear the reproach, than that it should rest upon the gospel.—Revenge or sensual pleasure may be sweet at the time, but will leave a lasting sting behind: such men as are *unstable*, insolent, and arrogant, will never be eminent either in the world, or in the church: and they who are self-willed, commonly make themselves and others miserable.

##### V. 8—33.

In severely animadverting on the sins of atrocious criminals, we must take care neither to condemn whole families or collective bodies indiscriminately, nor to magnify every offence into a crime of deep malignity. Notwithstanding defects, some persons merit our commendation: and though all are not of the same disposition or alike prosperous, God dispensing to men variously as he pleases; yet he blesses all with many unmerited mercies; and especially those who live under his ordinances, and enjoy the means of grace.—But praise is chiefly due to him who sprang from Judah, in whom the most opposite excellencies harmonize. As "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," he will terribly avenge upon his enemies his slighted love; and, as "the Lamb of God," "by the sacrifice of himself" "he taketh away the sin of the world." He stretches forth his sceptre of grace from the mercy-seat, and invites us perishing sinners to draw near, and accept of his salvation, that we may not feel the stroke of his iron rod: and "if his wrath be kindled, yea, but a little, blessed are all they who trust in him." Assuredly, the Messenger of Peace is come, and unbelieving Jews without sceptre or governor are his unwilling witnesses.—But may they and the fulness of the Gentiles be gathered unto him, and with us enjoy blessings, incomparably better than the richest fruit of the vine and the corn-field, and all royal dainties; than treasures dug from mines, gained by commerce, or seized by conquest; blessings more firmly secured, than the foundations of the hills, and more durable than creation itself; even everlasting felicity. With the earnest of this happiness comforting our hearts, "his yoke will be easy, and his burden light;" nor will the hardest service, or the heaviest tribute, which

## CHAP. L.

Jacob mourned for, and embalmed, 1—3. Joseph requests Pharaoh that he may go and bury his father, and obtains leave, 4—6. Jacob is buried in Machpelah, 7—13. Joseph and his brethren return to Egypt; their suspicious fears of him; and his kindness to them, 14—21. Joseph's age, posterity, prophecy, and charge concerning his bones; his death, and interment, 22—26.

**AND** Joseph <sup>a</sup>fell upon his father's face, and <sup>b</sup>wept upon him, and kissed him.

2 And Joseph commanded his servants the physicians to embalm his father: and the physicians <sup>c</sup>embalmed Israel.

3 And forty days were fulfilled for him, (for so are fulfilled the days of those which are embalmed;) and the Egyptians <sup>d</sup>mourned for him <sup>e</sup>threescore and ten days.

4 And when <sup>f</sup>the days of his mourning were past, <sup>g</sup>Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have

found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying,

5 My father <sup>h</sup>made me swear, say-  
ing, <sup>i</sup>Lo, I die: in my grave which <sup>j</sup>I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou <sup>k</sup>bury me. Now therefore <sup>l</sup>let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again.

6 And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, according as he made thee swear.

7 And Joseph went up to bury his father: <sup>m</sup>and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt.

8 And all the house of Joseph and his brethren, and his father's house: <sup>n</sup>only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen.

9 And there went up with him both <sup>o</sup>chariots and horsemen: and it was a very great company.

V. 4. The days of publick mourning, or, as we should say, court-mourning, were past; but the mourning of Joseph and his brethren could not be supposed to terminate till after the funeral (10).—Perhaps it was not allowed to come into the presence of the king in mourning: (*Note, Esth. iv. 2*;) or Joseph wished to make his request to Pharaoh with all the modesty and decorum possible; and, in sending his message by the courtiers, he at once shewed his respect to him and to them.

V. 5. Joseph did not choose to appear weary of application to business, or negligent of the interests of Egypt and of Pharaoh, in thus requesting leave of absence: he was therefore careful to represent the matter, not so much as his own inclination, as the dying request of his father, who was so earnest in it, that he laid him under the solemn obligation of an oath, to bury him in Canaan.—The cave at Machpelah seems to have been large, with many separate burying places in it; so that Jacob, in addition to those before prepared, had previously formed one for the reception of his body at his decease.

V. 6. The king would not have Joseph violate an oath for his sake.—‘Such heathen kings will rise up in judgment against those Christian princes, who make a jest of their oaths.’ *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 7.—Perhaps it would be difficult to find any funeral, either in ancient or modern times, more distinguished by the numerous attendance of great and eminent persons than this of Jacob: yet he was neither monarch, nor conqueror, nor lawgiver; but a plain shepherd to the end of his days!—As this distinguished honour was conferred on Jacob, principally for the sake of his son, it shews in what esteem Joseph was held in Egypt: and serves to prove that, whatever modern adversaries may say

<sup>a</sup> xvi. 4.

<sup>b</sup> xiii. 2. 2 Kings xiii. 14. Mark v. 28, 39. John xi. 35, 38. Acts viii. 2. 1 Thes. iv. 18.

<sup>c</sup> 26. 2 Chr. xvi. 14. Matt. xxvi. 12. Luke xxiv. 1. John xix. 39, 40.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. wept. Num. xx. 29. Deut. xxxiv. 8.

<sup>e</sup> 10.

<sup>f</sup> Esth. iv. 2.

<sup>g</sup> xiv. 29—31.

<sup>h</sup> 24. xlviii. 21. Deut. iv. 22.

<sup>i</sup> 1 Sam. xiv. 43. 2 Chr. xvi. 14.

<sup>j</sup> 1s. xxii. 16. Matt. xxvii. 60.

<sup>k</sup> iii. 19. Job xxx. 28. Ec. xii. 7.

<sup>l</sup> Matt. viii. 21, 22. Luke ix. 59, 60.

<sup>m</sup> xiv. 16.

<sup>n</sup> Ex. x. 8, 9. Num. xxxii. 24—27.

<sup>o</sup> xli. 43. xlii. 29. Ex. xiv. 7. 17. 28. 2 Kings xviii. 24. Cant. i. 9.

## NOTES.

CHAP. L. V. 2, 3. The Egyptians were eminent for the art of preserving dead bodies from putrefaction, by the skilful use of spices and drugs. Several of these bodies remain to this day, and are called Egyptian Mummies, being preserved as great curiosities; and some of them have probably continued in this state above 2000 years.—The same persons, who were consulted as physicians for the living, embalmed the dead bodies; and at least forty days were requisite to complete the process. These physicians were generally retained as servants, in the courts of princes, and in the families of great men; and Joseph, in his high station, had several of them in his household. As therefore the custom was not sinful, and as in the case of Jacob's body, which was to be buried at a distance, it was very expedient; Joseph complied with it on this occasion: and for similar reasons the survivors afterwards embalmed his body (26).

10 And they came to the threshing-floor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father <sup>7</sup>seven days.

p 4. 1 Sam. xxxi.  
13. Job ii. 13.

11 And when the inhabitants of the land, <sup>9</sup>the Canaanites, saw the mourning in the floor of Atad, they said, This is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians; wherefore the name of it was called <sup>\*</sup>Abel-mizraim, which is beyond Jordan.

q 15-19. xiii. 7.  
xxiv. 3. xxxiv. 36.

\* That is, The mourning of the Egyptians.  
Deut. iii. 25. 27.  
xi. 30.  
xlvii. 29-31.  
xlix. 29-32.  
Acts vii. 16.

12 And his sons did unto him <sup>\*</sup>according as he commanded them.

r xxiii. 16-18.  
2 Kings xxi. 18.

13 For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in <sup>†</sup>the cave of the field of Machpelah; which Abraham bought with the field for a possession of a burying-place, of Ephron the Hittite, before Mamre.

14 And Joseph returned into Egypt, he and his brethren, and all that went up with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father.

15 ¶ And when Joseph's brethren

saw that <sup>u</sup>their father was dead, they said, <sup>x</sup>Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him.

u xxvii. 41, 42.  
x xiii. 17. Lev. xxvi. 36.

16 And they <sup>†</sup>sent a messenger unto <sup>†</sup>Joseph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying,

† Heb. charged

17 So shall ye say unto Joseph, <sup>y</sup>Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for <sup>z</sup>they did unto thee evil: and now we pray thee forgive the trespass of the <sup>a</sup>servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph <sup>b</sup>wept when they spake unto him.

y Matt. vi. 12. 14. xviii. 35.  
Luke xvii. 3. 4.  
Eph. iv. 32. Col. iii. 13.  
z 20. Job xxxiii. 27, 28. Prov. xxviii. 13. Jam. v. 16.  
a xxxii. 42. xlix. 25. Matt. xxv. 40. Philem. 8.  
b xlii. 21-24. xlv. 4, 5, 8.

18 And his brethren also went and <sup>c</sup>fell down before his face: and they said, Behold, we <sup>be</sup>thy servants.

c xxxvii. 7-11.

19 And Joseph said unto them, <sup>d</sup>Fear not: <sup>e</sup>for am I in the place of God?

d Matt. xiv. 27. Luke xxiv. 37, 38.  
e xxx. 2. Deut. xxxii. 35. Job xxxiv. 29. Rom. xii. 19. Heb. x. 30.

20 But as for you, <sup>f</sup>'ye thought evil against me; <sup>g</sup>but <sup>h</sup>God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as <sup>it is</sup>this day, to save much people alive.

f xxxvii. 4. 18-20.  
g xlv. 5-8. Ps. lxxvii. 10. cv. 16. 17. Is. x. 7. Acts ii. 23. iii. 13-15. 26. Rom. viii. 28.  
h xlv. 10, 11. xlvii. 12. Matt. v. 44. Rom. xii. 20, 21.

21 Now therefore fear ye not: <sup>h</sup>I

of his conduct, he was considered at the time, as the great benefactor and deliverer of the country.

V. 10, 11. Moses wrote or revised his history on the east side of Jordan; and therefore in his five books, *beyond Jordan* means *west-ward* of Jordan: in other parts of Scripture it generally means *east-ward*.—During seven days Jacob's sons performed solemn funeral obsequies, as it seems, before they came to the cave of Machpelah; perhaps because the place which they chose was more convenient for the encampment of so large a company. The inhabitants of Canaan naturally called them all Egyptians, as coming out of Egypt; though some of them must know to whom the sepulchre belonged.

V. 14. Various motives concurred to induce the descendants of Jacob to continue in Egypt, notwithstanding Abraham's prophetic vision of their bondage there. Some might forget it, or disregard it if remembered; others might submit, and not deem themselves allowed to move without command from God; while fear, interest, love of ease and plenty, and similar inducements, would concur in detaining them, and effecting the purpose of God. At this time, however, Joseph had engaged to return; he could not have done otherwise without the greatest impropriety and ingratitude; and both he and his brethren had left their families and possessions in Egypt, to which they must return. (Ex. x. 9-11. 24.)

V. 15-18. Joseph's brethren perhaps supposed, that tenderness to Jacob had hitherto restrained him from inflicting punishment on them, which they were conscious they had merited: and judging of him from the general temper of human nature, they apprehended, that he would

now avenge himself on them; and, not being able to resist or flee away, they attempted to soften him by intreaties. A deep conviction of their criminality, in their conduct to him, rendered them unreasonably suspicious; but their fears and submissions were calculated still more to humble and soften them, as well as to accomplish the purposes of God.—They first sent messengers to Joseph; but afterwards they were encouraged to go in person. They did not say, "*our* father," but more pathetically, "*thy* father." They urged the dying words of Jacob, who doubtless had given them some injunction to this purpose, that he might render them more deeply sensible of their guilt; and they pleaded with Joseph for pardon, in the character of the servants of Jacob's God. This shews with what care and prudence they had concerted the business; and we need not wonder that Joseph was greatly affected, at witnessing this most exact accomplishment of his dreams.

V. 19. It belongs to God to execute vengeance, and Joseph did not intend to usurp his prerogative. Thus he instructed his brethren, not to fear him, but to fear God; to humble themselves before God, and to seek *his* forgiveness.

V. 20. Joseph's brethren, in selling him to the Ishmaelites, had acted with extreme malice and wickedness; and they intended that he should live and die a destitute slave. But God, in permitting it, "*meant it unto good*" to Joseph, to Jacob, to his brethren, to their families, to Egypt, to Canaan, and to the neighbouring nations; nor can we number up all the important purposes answered by it, to the church and to the world; or calculate how many important events depended on it, through all succeeding

will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.

\* Heb. to their hearts xxxiv. 3. Is. xl. 2. marg.

22 ¶ And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years.

1 Num. xxxii. 33. Josh. xvii. 1. Job xlii. 16. p. cxxviii. 6. † Heb. born.

23 And Joseph saw Ephraim's children, of the third generation: the children also of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were † brought up upon Joseph's knees.

k xxx. 3.

24 And Joseph said unto his bre-

generations.—The same is observable in many other instances in Scripture; and we cannot possibly account for the dispensations of Providence, without admitting, that God leaves evil men and evil spirits to themselves to commit wickedness, as far as he intends to over-rule it for good, but no further. They are influenced only by a desire of gratifying their own wicked and hateful passions, and are therefore justly condemned; but He, in omniscience and infinite wisdom, purposing most extensive and durable good, is on that very account worthy of all adoration and praise.

V. 22. *An hundred and ten years.*] Joseph survived Jacob about fifty-four years, and probably continued in authority to the last.

V. 23. *Upon Joseph's knees.*] Thus he expressed his affection, and the pleasure which he took in them.

V. 24—26. “By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.” He fully expected that the promise of God would be verified, and desired to have his lot beyond the grave with the Israelites, and not with the Egyptians. It is probable, that he required, not only his brethren, but the chief persons in their several families, to take this oath: yet he did not order his body to be carried directly to Canaan for burial, but to remain in Egypt until God should visit them. It was therefore embalmed, and kept in a coffin in Egypt, most likely by the Israelites; and this circumstance would keep alive the expectation of a speedy departure from Egypt, and preserve Canaan continually in their mind. It would also tend to attach Joseph's posterity to their brethren, and to prevent them from incorporating with the Egyptians.—It is not expressly said, how long each of the other sons of Jacob lived, or where they were buried; but it is generally thought that their bones likewise were carried to Canaan by the Israelites: (*Note, Acts vii. 15, 16.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

Though our pious friends have lived to a good old age, and we are confident that they are gone to glory, we may well regret our own loss, and should pay respect to their memory by lamenting for them: for grace does not destroy natural affection; but purifies, moderates, and regulates, all our passions.—Others, besides relatives, have cause to mourn the death of eminent believers: for as their prayers, example, and influence were a publick benefit, so is their death a publick loss. But alas! such mournings in general are a mere compliment; and men are scarcely

thren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land, unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

1 xxi. 1. Ex. iv. 31. m xv. 14—16. xxvi. 3. xxxv. 12. xlvii. 4. Ex. iii. 16, 17.

25 And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.

n xlvii. 29—31.

o Ex. xlii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 32. Acts xli. 16. Heb. xi. 22. p. xlvii. 9. 28. Josh. xxiv. 29. q 3.

26 So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

in earnest about any thing, but the pursuits of ambition, wealth, or pleasure.—The attention paid to the dead, though commonly the effect of custom or superstition, should result from faith in the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body. Our deceased friends still live, and we shall meet again; though separated from the body, a re-union shall certainly take place. Therefore we commit the body, with decent respect, unto the ground, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life of all true believers; and whatever our hopes or fears may be, God is the only infallible Judge, who are, and who are not, true believers.—We ought scrupulously to observe the last will and dying requests of our deceased friends; and much more should we most religiously reverence the oath of God. But, in the most exact attention to necessary affairs, we should consult in what manner to do them; that we may give as little umbrage as possible, and interfere with other duties no more than cannot be avoided.

V. 15—26.

“There are many devices in the heart of man, but the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand:” and while men are often influenced by the worst of motives, God, by means of them, effects his own most righteous purposes.—How guilt dismays the heart in times of danger! It would however, be well, if it excited us to as diligent and humble endeavours to obtain forgiveness from God, as it often does to appease the displeasure of man, and to avert temporal calamities.—True religion will teach us, not only to forgive those who are conscious of having injured us, and whom we have in our power; but effectually, by kind actions as well as words, to obviate their fears, assure them of our forgiveness, and exhort them to seek pardon from him to whom vengeance belongs.—But the kindest friends, and the most durable of our earthly comforts must die: let us then look off even from Joseph, that we may look unto Jesus, who ever liveth to bless those who trust in him. Notwithstanding former crimes, and present unbelieving injurious suspicions, he acknowledges for his brother every humble sinner, who supplicates his mercy; and as such he will comfort his heart, provide for his wants, and receive him to glory. Let us then, seek his favour, rely on his mercy, and submit to his will; and when we come to die, give him charge of both soul and body: so shall we find him faithful and “able to keep that which we have committed to him,” until the great decisive day, so that “when Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, we shall also appear with him in glory.”

## THE SECOND BOOK OF MOSES,

CALLED

## EXODUS.

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IN the Hebrew Bible this book is called *SHEMOTH*, or, *Names*, from the clause (וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹתָם) with which it begins : but the Translators of the Old Testament, into that Greek Version called the Septuagint, entitled it *EXODUS*, or *The Departure* : because the departure of Israel out of Egypt is the grand subject recorded in it. A general view is indeed given of the circumstances of the Israelites in Egypt, from the death of Joseph to that event, which took place about a hundred and forty-four years after ; but the sacred historian dwells very fully on all the particulars, which made way for this grand catastrophe, and which attended or immediately followed it. The subject is introduced by Moses with an account of his own parentage, birth, perilous exposure, marvellous preservation, education in Pharaoh's court, espousing the cause of his enslaved brethren, fleeing into Midian, living there as a shepherd, and at length being expressly commissioned and instructed by *JEHOVAH*, to lead Israel out of Egypt. He then records the miraculous plagues, by which proud Pharaoh was compelled to liberate the enslaved Israelites, and the manner in which the Red Sea was divided, and they were led through it as on dry land ; while Pharaoh and his army were overwhelmed by its waters, and perished. We are next informed, how *JEHOVAH* miraculously conducted his people in the wilderness, notwithstanding their murmurings and rebellions ; and how he spake the *moral* law to them from the fiery summit of Sinai, and delivered many parts of the *judicial* and *ceremonial* law to Moses ; entered into covenant with the nation, appointed the Aaronick priesthood, commanded the erection of a Tabernacle, and instituted his worship among them ; notwithstanding the interruption of these gracious plans, by the idolatry of the golden calf.—It is worthy of peculiar notice, that the events recorded in this book, are constantly referred to both in the Old and New Testament, as matters of undoubted certainty and notoriety, and with many express quotations from it, both by the sacred historians, in the Psalms, by the prophets, and by our Lord and his apostles : and this, in such language, as implies most evidently, not only that they regarded this narrative as the genuine work of “ Moses, the servant of the LORD,” but as *divinely inspired* ; so that the miracles recorded are constantly referred to, as actually wrought by a divine power, to prove the laws promulgated and the doctrines established, to be the oracles of God himself. The Reader, by consulting the marginal references, may easily satisfy himself that this remark is well grounded.—This book likewise contains some prophecies, which were fulfilled before or soon after the death of Moses, and also others which were verified in after ages : especially that which is given in these words, “ Neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God, thrice every year ;” which the whole history shews to have been exactly accomplished. (*Note*, xxxiv. 24.) Indeed the Types, with which it abounds more than any book in Scripture, were real prophecies ; the exact accomplishment of which after 1490 years, in the great Antitype, is a divine attestation that this book was written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.—Learned men have also sufficiently shewn, that many of those fables, with which ancient profane history uniformly begins, were nothing more than distorted traditions of those events which Moses plainly relates, blended with various imaginations suited to the corrupt taste of mankind ; and that pagan writers had heard some reports of the transactions, of which we have here an authentick history.—Having therefore so firm ground for our confidence, that the narrative before us is the infallible word of God ; let us read it with reverence and attention, and we shall find it replete with most important instruction, as to the real nature and effect of true religion.

## CHAP. I.

The names of Jacob's sons, 1—5. The death of that generation, and the vast increase of their posterity, 6, 7. The politick, but vain attempts of the king of Egypt to check their increase, 8—14. His cruel orders to the midwives, and their pious disobedience accepted by the Lord, 15—21. Pharaoh commands his subjects to destroy the male infants, 22.

**NOW** \*these *are* the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt, every man and his household came with Jacob.

<sup>a</sup> vi. 14—16. Gen. xxxix. 32—35. xxx. 1—21. xxxv. 18. 23—26. xli. 8—26. xlix. 3—27. 1 Chr. ii. 1, 2. Rev. vii. 4—8.

2 Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah,  
3 Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin,  
4 Dan, and Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

5 And all the souls that came out of the \*loins of Jacob, were <sup>b</sup>seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt *al-ready*.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. thigh. Gen. xvi. 26. Judg. viii. 30. <sup>b</sup> Marg. Gen. xli. 26. 27. Deut. x. 22.

6 And \*Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation.

<sup>c</sup> Gen. i. 26. Acts ii. 14—16. <sup>d</sup> Gen. i. 20. 28. ix. 1. xii. 2. xiii. 16. xv. 5. xvii. 16. xxii. 17. xxvii. 4. xxviii. 14. xxxix. 11. xli. 3. Deut. xxvi. 5.

7 And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding

mighty; and the land was filled with them.

8 ¶ Now there arose up \*a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.

<sup>e</sup> Ec. ii. 18, 19. ix. 15. Acts vii. 9.

9 And he said unto his people, Behold, 'the people of the children of Israel *are* more and mightier than we.

<sup>f</sup> Ps. cv. 24, 25. Prov. xiv. 28.

10 \*Come on, let us deal <sup>h</sup>wisely with them: lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land.

<sup>g</sup> Ps. x. 2. lxxxiii. 3, 4. Prov. i. 11. h Job. 13. Prov. xvi. 25. xxi. 30. Acts vii. 19. 1 Cor. iii. 18—20. Jam. iii. 15—18.

11 Therefore they did set over them task-masters, 'to afflict them with their <sup>k</sup>'burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure-cities, Pithom and 'Raamses.

<sup>i</sup> iii. 7. Gen. xv. 13. Deut. xxvi. 6. k ii. 11. v. 4, 5. Ps. lxxxvi. 6. l Gen. xlvii. 11. m Heb. And as they afflicted them, so they multiplied.

12 'But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were <sup>m</sup>'grieved because of the children of Israel.

<sup>n</sup> Job v. 2. Prov. xxvii. 4. John xii. 19. Acts iv. 2—4. v. 26—33.

13 And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour.

## NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 5. Notes, Gen. xli. 27. Acts vii. 14.

V. 7. The energetick expressions of this verse, being varied and accumulated, and some of them taken from the immensely rapid increase of insects, and of fishes, or other aquatick animals, are admirably suited to excite the reader's attention, to the unparalleled multiplication of the Israelites in Egypt, according to the repeated promises of God to their ancestors; and also to shew that they were as remarkably strong and healthy. It is computed, that the number of the Israelites was doubled every fourteen years, from the going down of Jacob and his family into Egypt, until the Exodus. Thus their multitude and power became so great, that they became very formidable to the Egyptians.

V. 8. This must have been some years after Joseph's death, perhaps not less than sixty. Whether this king sprang from another family, or was a descendant of Joseph's patron, is not certain; but having no personal knowledge of Joseph, he had no regard to his memory, esteem for his excellency, or sense of the benefits which Egypt had received from him: and therefore he preferred his own supposed political interests to the claims of honour and gratitude, after the too general maxims of kings and rulers.

V. 9, 10. Pharaoh took occasion, from the great increase of the Israelites, compared with that of the Egyptians, to excite suspicions of them in his subjects, and thus to cover his intentions of enslaving them. As if he had said, 'In order to keep them under, let us begin without delay, or they will become too powerful.'—For when he afterwards expressed his apprehension, lest they should "get them up out of the land," he discovered, that he feared nothing but missing his opportunity of subjugating

them, and of enriching himself by their labours.—He had probably heard, that the Israelites sometimes spoke of an approaching season, when they should leave Egypt, to take possession of their promised inheritance; and this would the more excite his fear of losing such a number of useful subjects.—There are several intimations in Scripture, that the Israelites generally conformed to the idolatry of the Egyptians, for which they were thus chastised by them. (Josh. xxiv. 14. Ez. xx. 7, 8. xxxiii. 8.)

V. 11. Various labours seem to have been exacted of the Israelites, as a kind of tax, but in a degree which reduced them to slavery; and the *task-masters* were Egyptians, appointed over them by publick authority, to enforce these iniquitous exactions.—By this policy the Egyptians seem to have intended not only to enrich themselves, but to break the spirits of the Israelites, that they might not affect liberty, or aspire after dominion; and also to prevent their *too rapid increase*, by embittering domestic life.—The cities which they builded, were either intended (after the pattern which Joseph had set them) for granaries to lay up corn in store against a year of scarcity; or they were fortified places. They were however useful works, and as Israel's toil saved both the labour and the purses of the Egyptians, we may be sure these would favour the oppression.

V. 12. It exceedingly chagrined the Egyptians to find their schemes prove abortive; and excited alarms in their minds, lest in process of time the Israelites should resent and revenge the inhuman treatment which they had received. Thus Egypt's persecution could not prevent Israel's increase, but Israel's increase could disturb Egypt's comfort; for such is the warfare betwixt the Seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent.

n ii. 23. vi. 9.  
Num. xx. 26.  
Deut. iv. 20.  
Ruth i. 20.  
o Ps lxxvii.  
Nah iii. 14.

p 13. v. 7-21.  
Lev. xxv. 43-46.  
53. i. s. xiv. 6. ii.  
23. iii. 5. lvi. 6.  
Jer. L. 33, 34.  
Mic. iii. 2.

q 22. Rev. xii. 4.

r Gen. xx. 11.  
xiii. 18. Neh. v.  
15. Prov. xvi. 6.  
Dan. iii. 16-18.  
vi. 13. Hos. v.  
11. Mic. vi. 16.  
Matt. x. 28.  
Acts iv. 19. v.  
29.

14 And they made <sup>a</sup> their lives bitter with hard bondage, <sup>o</sup> in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field; all their service wherein they made them serve, <sup>p</sup> was with rigour.

15 ¶ And the king of Egypt spake to the Hebrew midwives, (of which the name of one was Shiphras, and the name of the other Puah:)

16 And he said, When ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see *them* upon the stools; if it be a son, <sup>q</sup> then ye shall kill him, but if it be a daughter, then she shall live.

17 But the midwives <sup>r</sup> feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men-children alive.

18 And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, <sup>s</sup> Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men-children alive? Ec. vii. 4.

19 And the midwives <sup>t</sup> said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women *are* not as the Egyptian women: for they *are* lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them. Josh. ii. 4.  
2 Sam. xvii. 19, 20.

20 Therefore <sup>u</sup> God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied and waxed very mighty. Ps. xli. 1, 2  
Prov. xi. 18. Ec.  
viii. 12. Is. iii.  
10. Heb. vi. 10.

21 And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he <sup>v</sup> made them houses. x 1 Sam. ii. 36.  
2 Sam. vii. 11-13.  
27-29.  
1 Kings ii. 24.  
xi. 38. Ps. cxxvii.  
1.

22 And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, <sup>y</sup> Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive. y vii. 19-21. Acts  
viii. 19. Rev.  
xvi. 4-6.

V. 14. *In the field.*] That is, in cultivating the ground, digging trenches to convey the waters of the Nile, carrying out the dung to manure the land, and other mean and laborious services.—The Egyptians treated the Israelites with rigour, both in the excess of their labours, and the severity of their punishments.—Many have supposed, that, besides the useful works here mentioned, the Israelites were employed in building those enormous piles called the pyramids, which remain to this day, and probably will continue till the end of the world; monuments, not so much of the greatness and wisdom, as of the folly, caprice, exorbitant power, and cruel tyranny, of the monarchs who projected them. It cannot indeed be denied, that the skill, by which they were planned, equals the vastness of the labour with which they were completed: but then, it is evident that they never could be useful, in any degree adequate to the toil and expense with which they were erected. The supposition, however, is entirely groundless: for the Israelites were employed in making bricks, while it is well known that the pyramids were built of hewn stone.—But whatever were the works, in which the Israelites were compelled to serve; the Egyptians could give as *good reasons* for thus cruelly oppressing them, as any at this day can urge in favour of the detestable *slave-trade*: for all the arguments adduced on the subject, when fairly weighed, mean nothing more, than that without this oppression, men could not amass so large estates, nor gratify their sensual appetites with such refined excess.

V. 15—17. These midwives, who feared God, seem to have been Hebrew women, and not Egyptians, appointed to this office, as some have conjectured.—Pharaoh might think that he could awe or bribe them into compliance, even to so inhuman and treacherous a conduct towards their own nation: for princes are not often refused in such cases. We may consider these two as the chief of the midwives, whose conduct would influence that of the others; for there must have been many more.—Pharaoh and his servants did not fear female slaves, however numerous, out accounted them their riches.

V. 19. Through the peculiar blessing of God, we may

suppose, that this was generally the case; yet not so but that the midwives might have had many opportunities of murdering the infants, had they been so disposed.—Provided we do not speak falsehood, the strictest veracity does not at all times require us to speak all that we know, though our silence should lead men into error; provided such error be no injury to them, or to others: and silence must still more evidently be allowable, when it prevents the commission of sin.—When, however, a measure of infirmity or error undesignedly attends the conduct of those, who uprightly fear God, and aim to do his will; he graciously *pardons* what is defective, and *recompenses* what is good: for in this case, there is no intention of “doing evil that good may come.”

V. 21. God rewarded the midwives, for their concurrence in the increase and prosperity of Israel, by the increase and prosperity of their own families.

V. 22. Probably Pharaoh proposed considerable rewards for these services.—Thus the land would be filled with mercenary informers and murderers: numbers of infants would doubtless be slain in the arms, and before the eyes, of their distressed and almost distracted mothers; and had not he, who says to the swelling ocean, “Hitherto shalt thou go and no further,” undertaken for the increase of Israel, they must have been desolated.—Pharaoh at this time, (as Herod did long after,) proved his relation to that great dragon, who sought to destroy the man-child as soon as it was born. (Rev. xii. 4.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—7.

The very titles of these first two books in the Bible remind us, that the history of man is little more than a narrative of his beginning, and of his departure. Thus one generation is swept away after another, and nothing remains except the names of a very few, and some of them covered with infamy! Happy they, whose names are written in the book of life; and enrolled there as true Israelites, and heirs of Heaven!—How soon may the sun of prosperity be darkened, by the deepest cloud of adversity;

## CHAP. II.

Moses is born, and exposed in an ark among the flags, 1—4. He is found by Pharaoh's daughter, 5, 6; who employs his own mother to nurse him, and brings him up as her son, 7—10. He visits his brethren, slays an Egyptian who had injured one of them, and flees into Midian, 11—15. The priest of Midian entertains him, and gives him his daughter, of whom Gershom is born, 16—22. The king of Egypt dies, and the Lord regards the cry of the Israelites, 23—25.

a vi. 16—20. Num.  
xxvi. 59. 1 Chr.  
vi. 1—3. xxiii.  
12—14.

**AND** there went a man <sup>a</sup> of the house of Levi, and took *to wife* a daughter of Levi.

and the place of our refuge become the scene of our misery! our best friends succeeded by enemies, and our best services repaid with ingratitude! We should therefore trust the Lord alone: for as nothing can hasten the accomplishment of his purpose, before the appointed time; so nothing can retard it, when that season arrives.—For the space of above two hundred years, while Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their families, lived at liberty, in peace, and in prosperity and affluence, they only increased to seventy persons: but afterwards in about the same number of years, under galling oppression and cruel bondage, they multiplied into a large nation! Nor did their most rapid increase commence, till after the death of Joseph, their chief friend; for God will secure to himself the glory of fulfilling his own promises. Thus was the Christian church more especially increased after the death of Jesus; and thus hath vital religion, in all ages, most prospered under the pressure of severe persecutions. By this the Lord covers his enemies with confusion, and teaches his people “not to fear them who kill the body, and after that have “no more that they can do.”

V. 8—22.

It is an old practice of “the accuser of the brethren” and his servants, to vindicate their cruel treatment of God’s people, by aspersing their characters, pretending to suspect them of bad designs, or averring that their increase would be dangerous to the state: they therefore should endeavour, by well-doing and patient suffering, to confute such calumnies, and prove themselves quiet and useful members of society. But though we may suffer unjustly from men, God is *just* in all that he inflicts upon us by their hands: and it is a singular favour to be kept from sinful compliances, or conformity to the world, even by severe corrections.—The word of God frequently calls *that* deceit, injustice, cruelty, yea folly, which men account acting “wisely;” for such “wisdom is earthly, sensual, “devilish,” and such politicians are eventually “taken in “their own craftiness.”—There is no degree of treachery and inhumanity, to which the spirit of persecution will not prompt; and they who are actuated by it, seldom fail of finding instruments as destitute of honour and conscience as themselves. But if they meet with those who truly *fear God*, neither bribes nor terrors will prevail upon them to sin against him; and he will plead their cause, and recompense their conscientious disobedience to the unlawful commands of men.—But as we see, in this history, the

2 And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when <sup>b</sup> she saw him that he *was* a goodly *child*, she hid him three months.

b Acts vii. 20.  
Heb. xi. 23.

3 And when <sup>c</sup> she could not longer hide him, she took for him “an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it <sup>e</sup> with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid *it* in the flags by the river’s brink.

c 1. 22. Matt. ii.  
18. 16. Acts vii.  
19.  
d 1a. xviii. 2.  
e Gen. vi. 14. xi.  
3. xiv. 10.

4 And <sup>f</sup> his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him.

f xv. 20. Num. xii.  
1—15. xx. 1. xxvi.  
80. Mic. vi. 4.

church of God groaning under persecution; so we may, by viewing the object in another light, see the miserable condition of Satan’s wretched bond-slaves, who are so enslaved to their lusts that they never can deliver themselves, however miserable or affrighted, until the Lord sends them redemption by his word and powerful grace. Nor should we here forget, that this enemy, who by Pharaoh aimed to destroy the church in its very infancy, is equally busy to stifle the first risings of serious reflections in the heart of man; and thence to “take away the seed “of the word, lest we should believe and be saved;” and lest these feeble beginnings should increase, and we grow strong enough to renounce his service. Let them therefore who would escape, “take more earnest heed to the “things which they hear;” be afraid of sinning against the testimony of their consciences; and without delay cry fervently to the Lord for deliverance, and continue to pray with persevering constancy.

## NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 2. Miriam, Moses’s sister, must have been at least ten years older than he, as it is evident from the history in this chapter: and Aaron was three years older than Moses: but it does not appear that his preservation was attended with any peculiar difficulty; and from this we may infer, with some degree of probability at least, that the last bloody edict was not then enacted. Aaron was born eighty-three years before the Exodus, and Joseph died about a hundred and forty-five years before that event: the edict therefore could not be passed less than sixty-two years after the death of Joseph. But it is not known, how long that prince, “who knew not Joseph,” had reigned before the edict was made.—Moses when born appeared to be a goodly child; and the notice taken of this in several places, indicates that something extraordinary was observed in him, which was considered as an intimation of his future greatness. His mother therefore hid him three months, which the apostle informs us was done in faith. (*Heb. xi. 23.*) Either she had some peculiar assurance given her of his preservation, or believing in general the promises of deliverance to Israel, she was encouraged to conceal her infant, in dependence on God, though perhaps at the hazard of her own life.

V. 3, 4. It is probable, that the mother of Moses had received some intimation, that she was discovered, and expected that the executioners would come and murder the child in the house before her eyes. She therefore took for

5 And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash *herself* at the river, and her maidens walked along by the river's side: and <sup>g</sup> when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it.

<sup>g</sup> 1 Kings xvii. 6.  
Ps. xvi. l. lxxvi.  
10. Prov. xxi. 1.  
Jon. i. 17. ii. 10

6 And when she had opened *it* she saw the child: and behold the babe wept. And <sup>h</sup> she had compassion on him, and said, This *is one* of the Hebrews' children.

<sup>h</sup> 1 Kings viii. 50.  
Neh. i. 11. Ps.  
cvi. 46. Acts vii.  
21.

7 Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go, and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?

8 And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, <sup>i</sup> Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother.

<sup>i</sup> Ps. xxvii. 10. Is.  
xvi. 3, 4. Ez.  
xvi. 8.

9 And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away and nurse it

for me, and I will give *thee* thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it.

10 And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, <sup>k</sup> and he became her son. And she called his name <sup>\*</sup> Moses: and she said, <sup>l</sup> Because I drew him out of the water.

<sup>k</sup> Gen. xlviii. 5.  
Acts vii. 21, 22  
Gal. iv. 5. 1 John  
iii. 1.  
<sup>l</sup> That is, *Drown*  
*out*.

11 ¶ And it came to pass in those days, when <sup>m</sup> Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their <sup>n</sup> burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren.

<sup>l</sup> Gen. iv. 25. xvi.  
11. 1 Sam. i. 20.  
Matt. i. 21.  
B. C. 1533.

12 And <sup>o</sup> he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that *there was* no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand.

<sup>m</sup> Acts vii. 23.  
Heb. xi. 24—26.

<sup>n</sup> i. 11. iii. 7. v. 9  
—14. Is. lviii. 6.  
Matt. xi. 28  
Luke iv. 18.

<sup>o</sup> Acts vii. 24—26.

him an ark, or a small basket, formed of rushes, and made water-proof, by being coated with a kind of bitumen and pitch within and without. (Note, Is. xviii. 2.) Expecting some providential interposition in his behalf, and under the secret guidance of the Lord, she placed Moses in this ark, concealed it among the flags on the side of the river, and set his sister to watch it. This expedient did not seem likely to answer for any time; as the infant must at length have perished, or been devoured by the crocodiles with which the Nile abounds, if Pharaoh's servants had not found him. But she acted in faith, and the Lord answered her expectation.—Perhaps she intended to take him home in the evening, if nothing had intervened; and to carry him out again in the morning, so that if sought after he might not be found.

V. 5—9. Had any other persons found the exposed infant, they would scarcely have dared to preserve its life, even if they had been disposed to do so: but Pharaoh's daughter, with her attendants, passing near that part of the river, in going to some convenient place for bathing, (which was customary, not only for refreshment, but as a religious observance,) she discovered the ark, and sent for it. The beautiful babe weeping excited her compassion, so that she determined to bring him up: and when his sister, (probably after some delay, and observing that the company was at a loss how to proceed,) offered to fetch a Hebrew woman to nurse the child, she was sent for one: thus his own mother was employed to nurse him, and well rewarded for her pains!—The manner in which the great Ruler of the world accomplishes his secret purposes, without at all interfering with the free agency of his rational creatures, by imperceptibly leading them, in following their own inclinations and judgments, to such measures as coincide with his plans, is very observable in all these circumstances.—With what admiring joy and gratitude must Moses's mother have engaged in her delightful office! And how must she have adored the hand of God, in so marvellously answering, and far exceeding, her believing expectations!—A great variety of traditions are handed down to us concerning these events: but as there is no certainty in any

of them, and they are neither interesting nor edifying, they may very properly be omitted. The narration as we have it is beautifully simple and concise.

V. 10. After Moses had continued a proper time with his mother, (from whom he no doubt learnt whose son he was, and received the general principles of true religion,) he was educated and provided for, as the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter. Tradition reports that she was Pharaoh's only child, and had no offspring of her own, and that Moses was looked upon as presumptive heir to the crown; but all this is very doubtful.—We know however from better authority, that “he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.” He was certainly much trusted and employed; and in Egypt he acquired those accomplishments, which were afterwards requisite for him, in the important services of standing before Pharaoh, and governing Israel.

V. 11, 12. (Note, Heb. xi. 24—26.) During forty years Moses seems to have lived as an Egyptian, and as men of high rank generally do, and not particularly to have regarded his oppressed brethren; but at this time “it came into his heart to visit them,” under a firm persuasion that “God by his hand would deliver them,” and supposing they would thus understand it. He likewise deliberately purposed to renounce the honours, wealth, and pleasures of his rank among the Egyptians; to cast his lot among Abraham's seed, and to participate in their privileges, especially their relation to the promised Saviour; for the sake of which he was willing to share in the reproach and affliction which they endured as the people of God. We suppose that his mother had informed him of his real descent, and he would naturally feel an attachment to his people: but he was now made a partaker of that “faith which overcomes the world;” and, supremely valuing the blessings of the new covenant through the Redeemer, he was willing, not only to risk, but to renounce and suffer all for his sake; assured that Israel was the people of God, and that the promises made to them would certainly be accomplished. He therefore went out to seek an opportunity of delivering Israel: perhaps he intended openly to

13 And when he went out the second day, behold, two men of the Hebrews strove together: <sup>a</sup>and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?

14 And he said, <sup>a</sup>Who made thee <sup>a</sup>a prince and a judge over us? Intendest thou to kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian? And <sup>a</sup>Moses feared, and said, Surely this thing is known.

15 Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses <sup>a</sup>fled from the face of Pharaoh; and dwelt in the land of <sup>a</sup>Midian; and <sup>a</sup>sat down by a well.

16 Now the <sup>a</sup>priest of Midian had seven daughters: and <sup>a</sup>they came and drew <sup>a</sup>water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock.

17 And <sup>a</sup>the shepherds came and drove them away: but Moses stood up and helped them, and watered their flock.

18 And when they came to <sup>a</sup>Reuel their father he said, How <sup>a</sup>is it that you are come so soon to day?

19 And they said, <sup>a</sup>An Egyptian

delivered us out of the hand of the shepherds, <sup>b</sup>and also drew <sup>b</sup>water <sup>b</sup>enough for us, and watered the flock.

20 And he said unto his daughters, And where <sup>a</sup>is he? Why <sup>a</sup>is it that ye have left the man? <sup>c</sup>Call him that he may eat bread.

21 And Moses was <sup>a</sup>content to dwell with the man: and he gave Moses <sup>a</sup>Zipporah his daughter.

22 And she bare <sup>a</sup>him a son, and he called his name Gershom: <sup>a</sup>for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land.

23 And it came to pass <sup>a</sup>in process of time, that <sup>a</sup>the king of Egypt died; and the children of Israel <sup>a</sup>sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried; and their <sup>a</sup>cry came up unto God, by reason of the bondage.

24 And <sup>a</sup>God heard their groaning, and God <sup>a</sup>remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.

25 And God <sup>a</sup>looked upon the children of Israel, and God <sup>a</sup>had respect unto <sup>a</sup>them.

<sup>p</sup> Cor. vi. 7, 8.

<sup>q</sup> Gen. xix. 9.  
xxxvii. 8—11.  
19, 20. Num.  
xvi. 8. 13. Ps. ii.  
2—6. Matt. xxi.  
28. Luke xii. 14.  
xix. 14, 27. Acts  
vii. 26—28, 35.  
<sup>r</sup> Heb. a man, a  
prince.  
<sup>r</sup> Prov. xix. 12  
xxix. 25.

<sup>s</sup> iv. 19. 1 Kings  
xix. 1—8. 13, 14.  
Jer. xxvi. 21—  
23. Matt. x. 23.  
Acts vii. 29.  
<sup>t</sup> Gen. xxv. 2, 4.  
<sup>u</sup> Gen. xxiv. 11.  
xxix. 2. John iv.  
6.  
<sup>v</sup> Or, prince. Gen.  
xiv. 18. xli. 45.  
Marg.  
<sup>x</sup> Gen. xxiv. 14—  
20. xxix. 6—10.  
1 Sam. ix. 11.  
<sup>y</sup> Gen. xxi. 25.  
xxvii. 15—22.

<sup>z</sup> iii. 1. iv. 18.  
xviii. 1—12  
Jethro. Num. x  
29. Raguel.

<sup>a</sup> Gen. i. 11.

<sup>c</sup> Gen. xxiv. 31—  
33. xxix. 13.  
xxxi. 64. xliii.  
25.

<sup>d</sup> 10. Gen. xxxi.  
38—40. Phil. iv.  
11, 12. 1 Tim.  
vi. 6. Heb. xi  
25. xiii. 5. Jam  
i. 10.

<sup>e</sup> iv. 20—25. xviii  
2—6. Num. xii  
1.

<sup>f</sup> 10. xviii. 3. Acts  
vii. 29. Heb. xl  
13.

<sup>g</sup> vii. 7. Acts vii.  
30.

<sup>h</sup> iv. 19. Matt. ii.  
19, 20. Acts xii.  
23, 24.

<sup>i</sup> Gen. xvi. 11.  
Num. xx. 16.  
Deut. xxvi. 7.

<sup>k</sup> iii. 5.  
iii. 7—9. xxii.  
22—27. Gen. iv.  
10. xviii. 20, 21.  
Deut. xxiv. 15.

<sup>l</sup> v. 7. Jam. v.  
4.

<sup>m</sup> vi. 5. Judg. ii.  
18. Ps. lxxix. 11.  
cii. 20.

<sup>n</sup> Gen. xv. 14—18.  
xxvi. 3. xli. 4.  
Neh. ix. 8, 9.  
Ps. cv. 8—11. 42.  
cvi. 46. Luke i.  
72, 73.

<sup>o</sup> iv. 31. 1 Sam. i.  
11. 2 Sam. xvi.  
12. Job xxxiii.  
27. Luke i. 25.

<sup>p</sup> Heb. knew. iii.  
7. Pa. i. 6. Matt.  
vii. 23.

join their interests, expecting that they would cordially welcome him, and concur with him in suitable measures; and, considering himself as acting under a divine commission, in defence of the oppressed, he took an opportunity of executing just punishment on one cruel oppressor. In this he seems to have acted rather prematurely; for the spirits of the Israelites were sunk, their dispositions become servile, and faith and hope were almost extinguished among them.

V. 13—15. When Moses had entered on the execution of his design, he seems to have intended daily to proceed in it: but he was discouraged by finding that his brethren, in their quarrels with each other, were no more disposed to submit to his authority or award, than the Egyptians were; and discovering that his conduct, in slaying the Egyptian, was known, he was aware that the Egyptians would deeply resent it. Perceiving also that the Israelites would not stand by him, and learning soon after that the king sought to slay him, his faith and courage failed him, and he too hastily concluded, that his only safety lay in leaving the country.—Thus the deliverance of Israel was delayed forty years, because they rejected their deliverer. In the mean time Egypt filled up, and Canaan was filling up, the measure of their iniquities; the Israelites were rapidly increasing; and Moses was learning to endure hardship, to exercise faith, patience, and meekness; and to walk with God in the lowly and retired life of a shepherd.

V. 16. *Priest.* Or *prince.* (*Marg.*) Probably Reuel (18.) was prince of a small district upon the eastern shore

of the Red Sea; and, still retaining among his people some knowledge of the true God, and regard to his worship, he acted also as a priest over them. The Midianites were the descendants of Abraham by Keturah. (*Gen. xxv. 2.*)

V. 17. Perhaps these shepherds were the servants of some other neighbouring person, who was rich in flocks and herds.—The scarcity of water, in those hot and sandy regions, gave occasion to these contentions.

V. 21. *Content.*] This was a singular example of one, brought up as Moses had been, submitting cheerfully to so laborious a business, and to be a servant also in that employment. Yet without doubt these forty years were the happiest of his life.—The events of a long period are here very briefly touched on.—Probably Moses had lived a considerable time with Reuel, before he gave him his daughter; or else he was long married before Zipporah had any children; for after forty years one of his sons seems to have been very young. (*iv. 25.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—10.

We should take occasion from reading of the cruel scenes, which these Hebrew parents witnessed, and the bitter sorrows which they felt, to be thankful that we can bring up our children with security and comfort. Still however they are exposed to so many perils, that the heart of a tender parent must often heave with anxious sighs about them: except as enabled, by the prayer of faith, to commit them to the care of the Almighty; and to use all means for their welfare, temporal and spiritual,

## CHAP. III.

Moses feeds the flock of Jethro, 1 God appears to him in a flame of fire in a bush; and sends him to deliver Israel, 2—12. Moses enquires, and is told, the name of God, 13, 14. He is instructed what to speak to Israel, and to Pharaoh, whose decided oppo-

sition is foretold, 15—19; and is assured that at last the people shall leave Egypt greatly enriched, 20—22

Now Moses <sup>a</sup> kept the flock of Jethro <sup>b</sup> his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the

<sup>a</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 70—72. Am. i. 1 vii. 14. Matt. iv. 13. Luke ii. 6. ii. 16. xviii. 1—6. Num. x. 29. Judg. iv. 11.

in dependence upon his providence and grace. Then, indeed, we are prepared for every event: for if the Lord have any service for them to perform, he will preserve their lives; though in the midst of dangers; and surely every Christian parent would rather resign the dearest infant to death, than wish it to live wicked, mischievous, and miserable. And methinks our gracious God says to the believer, when presenting his infant-offspring to him in baptism, or pouring out his prayers in its behalf: "Take home this child, and bring it up for me, and "I will pay thee thy wages." In obedience then to his command and in expectation of his blessing, let us bring up our children "in the nurture and admonition of the "Lord," and cheerfully leave the event with him.—Even among the blood-thirsty Egyptians, we meet with a beautiful example of humanity, which will rise up in judgment against numbers, who live under the light of revelation, and are called Christians; but who are so far from compassionating the children of others, that they are indolently and negligently cruel to their own offspring!—They who carefully watch the conduct of God's providence, experience many signal interpositions in their favour, which excite their admiration and gratitude, strengthen their faith, and encourage their hope for the future, and thus well recompense their attention. They frequently find their wants supplied, perhaps even from their very enemies, and their sharpest trials end most comfortably: and God takes care in his providence to qualify both them, and their's, for whatever service or situation he intends for them. For he very often furnishes the minds of those whom he means to employ, even while inattentive to religion, with those acquisitions of knowledge, which afterwards prove very useful in fitting them for the services to which they are appointed; but which they would neither have had leisure nor inclination to attain, had they previously minded "the one thing needful."

## V. 11—25.

How powerful a principle is true faith! How it overcomes the love of the world and the fear of the cross, even when they oppose it with their utmost force! The favour of God, an interest in Christ, and an inheritance among his people, are the pre-eminent objects of every believer's desire: this, joined to the love of Christ and attachment to his cause, prepares him for making every requisite sacrifice; and that faith which refuses to do this is not genuine.—But they, who boldly enter upon services for God, must not only expect fierce opposition from his avowed enemies; but great discouragement from the lukewarmness, contempt, cowardice, and ingratitude of his professed servants. And while contentions among brethren disgrace and weaken the common cause of religion; he that would "set them at one again," however gently, must expect to be reproached, as taking too much upon him: and this perhaps by both parties, but assuredly by

VOL. I.

the party which is most in the wrong, and which is always the most impatient of controul. These disappointments, however, help to correct the forwardness and self-sufficiency of hasty zeal, and to prepare men for their work in its due season.—But our impatience is apt to interpret delays, as denials; to yield to discouragement, when we should only be humbled; and from rash impetuosity to sink into unbelieving negligence: and perhaps it requires stronger faith, to be contented in obscurity and neglect, cheerfully to labour without any prospect of applause, and patiently to prepare and wait for future opportunities of service, without despondency; than to face danger, out-brave reproach, and suffer persecution in some eminent sphere of usefulness.—The providence of God will find a refuge, and raise up friends, for his people; communion with him sweetens every solitude and trial; and it is our wisdom to inure ourselves to self-denial, that we may be fit for whatever is before us.—To assist the weak, and vindicate the oppressed, to shew kindness and use hospitality, and requite those who have been serviceable to us, are always becoming; nor is modest diligence, in any business useful or lawful, a disgrace to the daughters either of a prince or a priest.—When assistance appears to us most distant, and deliverance most improbable, they are often near at hand. To God all things are easy, and his whole plan lies before him: he remembers his holy covenant; and, for the purposes of his own glory, he will appear for his people, notwithstanding their sins. Even their groans, extorted by oppression, have a share of his compassionate attention; and in the darkest night of affliction, when they begin to cry to him, the day of deliverance will speedily dawn.—Finally, if Satan's work ceases not, for want of a succession of instruments; the Lord in answer to our prayers, will certainly furnish labourers for his harvest, in all ages, unto the end of the world.

## NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. Some expositors are of opinion, that Reuel, or Raguel, was grandfather to Zipporah, that Jethro was her father, and that Hobab, afterwards mentioned, was her brother: others suppose that Reuel was her father, and that Jethro was her brother, and *brother-in-law* to Moses, which the word may signify: but the Septuagint use the names Reuel and Jethro, indiscriminately, for the father-in-law of Moses. (ii. 18. Num. x. 29.)—Horeb was called "the mountain of God" by way of anticipation; as Moses wrote for those, who knew it by that title after the law had there been given.—Sinai and Horeb are supposed to be two summits of a mountain, which had the same base. It was situated in the *interior parts* of the desert, at some considerable distance from Jethro's habitation; and probably Moses led the flock thither for better pasturage. 'Moses was taken from the 'sheep-fold, (as David in after times,) to be ruler of 'God's people: 'for as hunting of wild beasts,' says Philo,

Z

back-side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, *even* to <sup>4</sup> Horeb.

2 And the <sup>5</sup> Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and behold, the bush <sup>6</sup> burned with fire, and the bush *was* not consumed.

3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, <sup>7</sup> and see this great sight; why the bush is not burnt.

4 And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, <sup>8</sup> Moses, Moses. And he said, Here *am* I.

5 And he said, <sup>9</sup> Draw not nigh

hither: <sup>10</sup> put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest *is* holy ground.

6 Moreover he said, <sup>11</sup> I *am* the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses <sup>12</sup> hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.

7 And the LORD said, <sup>13</sup> I have surely seen the affliction of my people which *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry, by reason of their task-masters: for I know their sorrows.

8 And <sup>14</sup> I am come down to <sup>15</sup> deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that

c 5. xviii. 5. x.x.  
8. 11. Kings  
xix. 8.  
d xvii. 6. Deut. i  
6. iv. 10. Ps. cvi  
19. Mal. iv. 4.  
e 4. 6. Gen. xvi. 7  
—12. xxi. 15.  
16. xxi. 16.  
Deut. xxxiii. 16.  
Is. lxiii. 9. Hos.  
xii. 4. 5. Mal. iii  
1. Acts vii. 30—  
35.  
f Gen. xv. 13—17.  
Deut. iv. 20. Ps.  
lxxv. 12. Is. xlii.  
2. Dan. iii. 27.  
2 Cor. i. 8—10.  
g Ps. cxi. 2—4.  
Acts vii. 31.

h Gen. xxii. 1. 11.  
xlv. 2. 1 Sam.  
iii. 10. Acts ix.  
4. x. 3. 13.  
i xix. 12. 21. Lev.  
x. 3. Heb. xii.  
20.

k Gen. xxviii. 16.  
17. Josh. v. 15.  
Ec. v. 1. Acts vii.  
33.

l 5. Gen. xvii. 7.  
k xxviii. 13  
1 Kings xviii. 36.  
Matt. xxii. 32.  
Acts vii. 32.

m Gen. xvii. 3.  
1 Kings xix. 13.  
Job xli. 5. 6. Is.  
vi. 1—5. Dan. x.  
7. 8. Matt. xxi.  
6. Heb. xii. 21.  
Rev. i. 17.  
n ii. 25. Gen. xxix.  
32. 1 Sam. ix. 16.  
Ps. cvi. 44. Is.  
lxiii. 9. Heb. iv.  
15.

o Gen. xi. 5. xviii.  
21. Ps. xviii. 9.  
Is. lxiv. 1. John  
iii. 13. vi. 38.  
p vi. 8—8. Gen.  
xv. 14. l. 24.

“is proper to men of a martial genius, and fits men to be captains and generals of armies: so the feeding of sheep is the best exercise and preparation for a kingdom, and the gentle government of mankind.” *Bp. Patrick.*—These governors were also types of the “Good Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep.”

V. 2. This Angel is afterwards called JEHOVAH, and God (4. 6).—“God called to him out of the midst of the bush;” and he said, “I AM THAT I AM.” With what propriety can this language be used, in a revelation expressly intended to instruct men in the knowledge and worship of the true God, and to withdraw them from idolatry of every kind; if we do not allow the doctrine of the coequality and deity of the Son of God, and that he is the Speaker in this place?—Fire is a scriptural emblem of the divine holiness and justice; of that vengeance which, in his righteous indignation, God inflicts on sinners; of the afflictions and trials by which he proves and purifies his people, whether immediately, or by instruments; and even of that baptism of the Holy Ghost, by which the dross of sinful affections is consumed, and the soul transformed into its own nature and image. (*Note, Matt. iii. 11, 12.*)—This fire was seen in a bush, not in a cedar. A bramble or thorn bush is prickly, and of little use except for fuel, but easily and speedily burnt; yet the bush was not consumed. The emblem was primarily intended to describe the state of Israel in Egypt; their meanness and unworthiness, their extreme distress, and their marvellous preservation by the power and presence of God: but Israel was in this a type of the Church, exposed to persecution; and of a believer, grievously harassed by temptations and afflictions. It has also been thought, that the fire in the bush represented the manner in which the law would be given from the adjacent mountain; the nature of that law as given to sinners; and the deliverance of the people from the destruction to which they were thus exposed.—The name *Sinai* seems derived from the word (סני) rendered *a bush*, either with reference to this bush, or to the bushes which grew upon it.

V. 4, 5. No appearance of the Lord is recorded since Jacob’s descent into Egypt, above two hundred years before; and Moses, when addressed by name, must have been as much surprised by what he heard, as by what he

saw.—He might reverently at a distance contemplate the object before him, for his instruction and encouragement; but he must not presume to gratify his curiosity, by a nearer approach, or by particular examination. He was also directed to put off his shoes, as an external token of humble reverence; for the spot became holy ground by this vision of the Almighty, and should thus be regarded by him. Probably, this was, at that time and in those countries, a customary expression of reverence and veneration. (*Note, Josh. v. 13—15.*)—It is supposed by many learned men, that the priests officiated barefoot in the tabernacle and temple: but we meet with no express command enjoining it.

V. 6. JEHOVAH was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, being the Object of their worship, confidence, love, and obedience; and their Salvation, Portion, and everlasting Felicity in body and soul. But this declaration was intended, to remind the Israelites of the promises made to their fathers, especially with reference to the land of Canaan: for JEHOVAH was the God of Israel, as a nation; and not the God of the Ishmaelites and Midianites, though descended from Abraham, or of the Edomites, though descended from Isaac. Amram, Moses’s father, is also supposed to be personally included, as a believing descendant of Abraham.

V. 7. “I have surely seen,” or, “Seeing I have seen,” (that is, with attention and compassion,) “the afflictions of my people.”—Notwithstanding the ignorance, idolatry, and wickedness of the Israelites, the Lord acknowledged them as his people, because of their relation to Abraham, because they constituted the visible Church, and because there was a remnant of true believers among them.—The severity of the task-masters extorted their bitter cries, which in most of them were merely the expression of distress, not of faith; the prayer of nature, not of grace: yet the Lord noticed and pitied their sorrows. Perhaps they almost universally despaired of deliverance; and Moses, having been forty years a shepherd, probably expected and desired nothing more, than to live and die in that situation, and had given up all thoughts of delivering Israel: yet then the very time was come.

V. 8. *Come down.*] This was spoken after the manner

q xlii. 5. xxxiii. 2, 3. Gen. xv. 18. Num. xlii. 27. xiv. 7. 8. Deut. i. 7. 25. viii. 7—9. xl. 9. xxvi. 9—15. Neh. ix. 25. Jer. xl. 5. xxxii. 22. Ez. xx. 6  
 r Gen. xv. 18—21. Deut. vii. 1. Josh. ix. 1. Neh. ix. 8.

9 Now therefore behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me:

'and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

10 Come now therefore, 'and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

11 And Moses said unto God, 'Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh,

and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

12 And he said, 'Certainly I will be with thee; and this *shall* be a 'token unto thee, that I have sent thee; when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, 'ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

13 ¶ And Moses said unto God, Behold, *when* I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, 'What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: And he said, Thus shalt

of men, and expressed with energy the intent of JEHOVAH's appearance to Moses. (*Marg. Ref. o*)

V. 11. Moses had before deemed himself in a measure competent to this service, which he had some intimations that he was to perform; and he set about it probably with undue haste, and not without some improper dependence on his rank, influence, and reputation among the Egyptians: but now, when he was unspeakably better qualified with heavenly wisdom, experience, patience, meekness, steadfastness, humility, and piety; and was, without competition, the most proper person on earth for it; he was also become conscious of his insufficiency! This was in a great measure the effect of increasing knowledge of God and of himself: but there was also a deep sense of the vast difficulty of the business, not without some culpable fear of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, and of contempt and opposition from Israel. Before, self-confidence mingled with, and assumed the appearance of, strong faith and great zeal: but now, some degree of sinful distrust of God was associated with deep humility; and induced him timidly to shift, as well as humbly to decline, the important service.—So very defective are the strongest graces, and the best duties, of the most eminent saints!

V. 12. *Certainly I, &c.*] All objections, expressed or implied, were thus answered at once: 'As I send thee, I will certainly go with thee; and then all thy insufficiency, and all possible difficulties, can form no hindrance at all.' (*Note, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.*)—The token annexed was made not to *sense*, but to *faith*; and therefore the sign was consequent to the event confirmed by it: as if God had said, 'I promise to meet thee and Israel at this mountain: this promise is thy assurance of success: depend on my power and faithfulness, and go fetch them forth nothing doubting.' (*Marg. Ref.*)—It was also a private *token* to Moses, and not intended as a *sign* to Israel or to Pharaoh.

V. 13. Moses had seen enough in Egypt, forty years before, to convince him of his people's ignorance and ungodliness; and he was not sanguine in his expectations of finding them more favourably disposed towards him, than they had been. He was therefore afraid, that they would scarcely understand much less believe him, when he spake to them of "the God of their fathers." He had before been scornfully asked, "Who made thee a ruler

"and a judge over us?" and he was not prepared to answer the question: therefore he desired at this time, to have fuller instructions and better authenticated credentials. The patriarchs had received revelations from God; but Moses seems to have been the first, after the deluge, who was expressly sent to speak to others in his name.

V. 14. I AM THAT I AM, (or, I WILL BE THAT I WILL BE,) signifies, *I am he that exists*; and implies, self-existence, independence, unchangeableness, incomprehensibility, eternity, and consummate perfection. "I am, and there is none else beside me." All else have their being from God, and are entirely dependent on him.—There is a majestic simplicity and an expressive dignity in this language, which disgraces beneath contempt the high-sounding, pompous titles, which mortals have been proud to arrogate to themselves.—JEHOVAH, (a name of similar signification,) thus distinguished himself from the idols of the nations, which are nothing in the world; and from all creatures, which have only a derived, dependent, mutable, existence, in him and from him. Thus he proposed himself as the only Object of his people's worship, the sure Foundation of their hopes, and the all-sufficient Fountain of their felicity. I AM THAT I AM. Not *I was*, but *I am*, and *will be*. With him the past, the present, and the future are all one, as alike open to the view of his omniscience.—Let us not here forget him, whom the apostle declares to be "The same yesterday, to day, and for ever:" whom another apostle introduces saying, "I am Alpha, and Omega, the first, and the last;" and who, dwelling in human flesh, said, with a noble disregard to the rules of human language, "Before Abraham was I AM." This evident assumption of the title, I AM THAT I AM, the unbelieving Jews at that day fully understood, and for it attempted to stone him; though modern unbelievers cannot or will not perceive it! There is no doubt, however, but the Speaker is the same in both places; for "no man hath seen God, at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—When the Lord subjoined "I AM," or HE THAT EXISTS, (ὁ ὢν, Sept.) "hath sent me unto you," it was intended to give authority to the message, and to ensure the accomplishment of his purpose, by his incomprehensible power and perfection.

thou say unto the children of Israel, <sup>a</sup> I AM hath sent me unto you.

15 And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, <sup>b</sup> The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: <sup>c</sup> this is my name for ever, and this is my <sup>d</sup> memorial unto all generations.

16 Go and gather the <sup>e</sup> elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely <sup>f</sup> visited you, and <sup>g</sup> seen that which is done to you in Egypt.

17 And I have said, <sup>h</sup> I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt, <sup>i</sup> unto the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.

18 And <sup>j</sup> they shall hearken to thy voice: <sup>k</sup> and thou shalt come, thou and

the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, <sup>l</sup> The LORD God of the Hebrews hath <sup>m</sup> met with us; and now let us go, we beseech thee, <sup>n</sup> three days' journey into the wilderness, <sup>o</sup> that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.

19 And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, <sup>p</sup> no, not by a mighty hand.

20 And I will <sup>q</sup> stretch out my hand, and <sup>r</sup> smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and <sup>s</sup> after that he will let you go.

21 And I <sup>t</sup> will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that when ye go, ye shall not go empty.

22 But <sup>u</sup> every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put <sup>v</sup> them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall <sup>w</sup> spoil <sup>x</sup> the Egyptians.

struction.—The Israelites were directed to *borrow*, or rather to *ask*, of the Egyptians, their richest furniture and ornaments: and he who is the great Proprietor of all things, and giveth to all men as he pleases, seeing the Egyptians enriched by oppressing the Israelites, thus constrained them to refund, and to pay them the wages which their labour justly deserved. (Notes, xi. 2, 3. xii. 35, 36. Gen. xxxi. 10—16.)—The word *borrow* suggests the idea of *fraud* in the transaction; which the original word does not imply. It means to *ask*, whether as a gift, or a loan.—A great part of this gold and silver was afterwards used in building and furnishing the tabernacle.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—6.

When the Lord exercises the faith and patience of his servants, they should rest assured, that he acts in wisdom, faithfulness, and mercy; and that when the best time is come, their expectation shall be abundantly answered: but such is the human heart, that the best of men generally need preparing, by a long course of humiliating discipline, for behaving, when greatly prospered, in a manner honourable to God and religion. It is therefore “good that a man should both hope, and *quietly* wait for the salvation of the LORD.” But quietness and patience must be distinguished from indolence: for the LORD always requires his servants to be employed, and meets them at their employments; and the meanest honest labour is more reputable to the greatest characters, than inactivity.—The discoveries of himself, which God vouchsafes us, in his holy word and in his works, should be regarded with reverent

a vi. 3. Ps. lxxviii.  
4 ac. 2. Is. xlv.  
6. Matt. xxviii.  
20. xxviii. 20.  
John viii. 58.  
Heb. xiii. 8.  
Rev. i. 4. 8. 17.  
b 6. iv. 5. Gen.  
xxviii. 7. 8. Deut.  
i. 11. 35. iv. 1.  
2 Chr. xxviii. 9.  
Matt. xxii. 32.  
Acts vii. 32.  
c Ps. cxxxv. 13.

d Ps. cii. 12 Hos.  
xii. 5.

e iv. 29. xviii. 12.  
xxiv. 11. Gen.  
i. 7. Matt. xxvi.  
8. Acts xi. 30.  
xv. 17. 1 Pet. v.  
1.

f iv. 31. Gen. xxi.  
i. 1. 24. Luke i.  
68. xix. 44. Acts  
xv. 14. 1 Pet. ii.  
12.  
g Gen. xv. 13—21.  
xvii. 4.

h See on 8

i iv. 31. 2 Chr.  
xxx. 12. Ps. cx.  
3.  
k v. 1—3.

l vii. 16. ix. 1. 17.  
x. 3.  
m iv. 24. v. 3.  
Num. xxiii. 3.  
4. 15, 16. Is. lxiv.  
5.  
n viii. 27.  
o 12. vii. 16. viii.  
25—28. x. 24—  
28.

\* Or, but by a  
strong hand. vi.  
1. Ps. cxxxvi.  
11, 12. Is. lxiii.  
12.

p vi. 6. vii. 5. ix.  
15. Ez. xx. 33.  
vii. 3. xl. 9.  
q Deut. iv. 34 vi.  
22. Neh. ix. 10.  
Pa. cv. 27. cvi.  
22. cxxxv. 8. 9.  
Is. xix. 22. Jer.  
xxxii. 20, 21.  
Acts vii. 36.

r xi. 8. xii. 31. 39.  
s xi. 3. xii. 36.  
Gen. xxxix. 21.  
Neh. i. 11. Pa.  
cvi. 46. Prov.  
xvi. 7. Acts viii.  
10.

t xi. 2. xii. 35.  
Gen. xv. 14.

u Job xxvii. 16.  
17. Prov. xiii.  
22. Is. xxxiii. 1.  
Ez. xxxiv. 10.  
+ Or, Egypt.

V. 15. The title of JEHOVAH, the God of Abraham, &c. would remind the Israelites of his relations and engagements to them, as the descendants of these illustrious patriarchs.—The Lord had before declared his *name*, as signifying eternal self-existence; and he here adds his *covenant-relation* to the seed of Abraham, as the perpetual *memorial* of his former mercies, and security of future blessings to his Church. The title “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” is the same to us, under the Christian dispensation, as the Name here expressed was to Israel.

V. 18. Such a willingness to be delivered, as would induce the Israelites to use the means, encounter the difficulties, and face the dangers, requisite for that purpose, was so contrary to their dispirited and desponding frame of mind, that it could only be effected by the powerful influence of God upon their hearts: but he here engaged to Moses, that he would thus prepare them in due time, to concur decidedly in his efforts for their deliverance.—The *Elders* seem to have been the more aged and distinguished persons in the several tribes and families; but it does not appear that they were invested with any authority.

V. 19, 20. The Lord, when he engaged for Israel's willingness, warned Moses of Pharaoh's obstinate and final unwillingness, that he might know what to expect.—Pharaoh reluctantly consented, when under the terror of imminent destruction; but he retracted that consent, and perished in opposing Israel's departure.

V. 21, 22. The circumstances, in which the Egyptians were placed, were over-ruled to induce multitudes of them to favour Israel; while others were hardened to their de-

## CHAP. IV.

The Lord assures Moses of his effectual assistance, by miraculous signs and gracious promises, 1—12; and is angry at his backwardness to the service; yet appoints Aaron to assist him, 13—17. Moses leaves Jethro, and sets out in his journey; and is charged with a message to Pharaoh, 18—23. He is rebuked by the way; Zipporah circumcises her son: Aaron

meets Moses, and they are welcomed by the Israelites, 24—31.

AND Moses answered, and said, But behold, "they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee." a 31 ii. 14. 18. 18. Acts vii. 25.

attention, at an equal distance from contemptuous indifference, and bold curiosity.—Whatever stands in relation to God is consecrated and made holy; and though "bodily exercise profiteth little," yet it is proper to express our inward reverence and adoration by such external tokens, as are customary and significant. A decent exterior behaviour indeed may be hypocritical; but the neglect of it betrays a heart, not properly impressed with awe of the majesty and purity of God, nor suitably humbled under the sense of its own meanness and unworthiness: and the condescending kindness of the Lord should not abate, but increase, this holy awe.—In accommodation to our infirmities, God very graciously condescends to address our senses, as well as understandings: and by the *burning bush* he teaches us many useful lessons. We need not tremble for the Church of God in its lowest estate, though it appear contemptible to the carnal eye, and seem ready to be consumed by the flames of persecution; for the Lord is in the bush, and it cannot be injured. Never was bush so honourable as that in which JEHOVAH dwelt, though it was on fire: and since the Son of God dwelt in frail human nature, and passed through the hottest fire of Satan's temptations, of the world's hatred, and of the wrath of God for our sins; we need not be apprehensive about any poor burning bush, in which JEHOVAH dwells. This is the privilege and security of every true Christian, with whom, when afflicted and tempted, we should sympathize; but we need not be anxious about the event.—While men are strengthened to maintain the conflict, and to persevere in the path of duty, they are not deserted by God, whatever their fears or feelings may be; nor can the fire, however hot, consume any thing but the dross of remaining sinful inclinations.—But let the mere professor of the gospel tremble, even when exempt from temptation, opposition, or conflict; these he escapes because he "walks according to the course of this world," with which he will be condemned. And let the careless and presumptuous sinner also take warning; for he is proper fuel for the fire of God's vengeance, which will burn for ever, but never consume those who finally sink under it.

## V. 7—12.

Oppressors and prosperous tyrants should remember, that however they may elude or out-brave human justice, and however God may defer to take vengeance, yet all their crimes are noted in his book; that their measure of iniquity is filling up; and they will speedily be made to disgorge the prey which they have ravenously devoured, and to experience the vengeance of the Almighty; unless repentance and fruits meet for repentance prevent their doom. (Luke xix. 8, 9).—And let the oppressed recollect, that God is their peculiar Patron; that he counts their sighs and groans; and if he answers the mere cry of distress,

"shall he not avenge his own elect, who cry day and night to him, though he bear long with them? Yea, he will avenge them speedily." But when he comes to avenge his people on their oppressors, "will he find faith on the earth?" Alas, "hope deferred maketh the heart sick:" and though true faith will not totally fail; yet at such times it will often be very feeble, and expectations even of promised blessings extremely languid.

## V. 13—22.

Let us be careful not to distrust and dishonour the power, faithfulness, and love of God. He is the great I AM; "a thousand years with him are but as one day:" he remembers his holy covenant; he deals with his people according to the abundance of his mercies; he forgives the multitude of their transgressions; and he sends deliverance in its appointed season.—When God employs any one in his service, he will certainly go with him: but "before honour is humility;" and success is frequently delayed or denied, to instruments otherwise qualified, because they do not possess a humble spirit.—Yet nothing good is unalloyed in man, and the most unaffected humility may prove an occasion to irresolution, or reluctance to the work which the Lord requires of us.—They who would be useful, must depend upon God to make their endeavours acceptable to their brethren; especially where such benefits are intended, as require men to exert themselves, to endure hardship, and to face danger: and, if we go in this dependence, he will secure our success with some; while we deliver our message to all, "whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear."—But in Pharaoh's tyranny, and Israel's oppression, we see a picture of the sinner's miserable and abject submission: however galled with the yoke of Satan, he still drudges on, till the Lord sends redemption. With the invitations of his gospel, he communicates the life-giving, drawing, and teaching influences of his Spirit; and thus men are made willing to seek and strive for deliverance: then Satan loses his power to retain them; they come forth with all they have and are, and consecrate the whole to the glory of God and the service of his Church.

## NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—5. The Lord had expressly assured Moses, that the people should hearken to him, (iii. 18,) so that his objection was unreasonable, and a proof that his faith was wavering. Yet it was proper he should be informed, that the Lord would authenticate his commission by miracles, both to Israel and to Pharaoh.—The rod in his hand was probably a common staff, or shepherd's crook; but it was now consecrated to God, to be the token of his presence and operation, and was therefore afterwards

2 And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod.

3 And he said, Cast it on the ground; and he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent: and Moses fled from before it.

4 And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand.

5 That they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.

6 And the Lord said furthermore unto him, Put now thine hand into thy bosom; and he put his hand into his bosom; and when he took it out, behold, his hand was leprous as snow.

7 And he said, Put thine hand into thy bosom again: and he put his hand into his bosom again, and plucked it out of his bosom, and behold, it was turned again as his other flesh.

8 And it shall come to pass, if they

will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign.

9 And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs, neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land: and the water which thou takest out of the river, shall become blood upon the dry land.

10 And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

11 And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord?

12 Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

13 And he said, O my Lord, send I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send.

14 And the anger of the Lord was

b 17. 20. Lev. xxvii. 32. Ps. cx. 2. Is. xl. 4. Mic. vii. 14.  
c vii. 10—15. Am. v. 19.

d Ps. xci. 13. Mark xvi. 18. Luke x. 19. Acts xxviii. 3—6.  
e John ii. 5.

f 1. iii. 16. xix. 9. John v. 26. xl. 15. 42. xx. 31.  
g iii. 15.

h Num. xii. 10. 2 Kings v. 27.

i 2 Kings v. 14. Matt. viii. 3.

k 30, 31. Is. xxviii. 10. John xii. 37.

1 Deut. xxxii. 30. 2 Kings v. 7. Job v. 18.

\* Heb. shall be, and shall be.

m i. 22. vii. 19—25. Matt. vii. 2. John. ii. 8—11. Rev. xvi. 3—6.

† Heb. a man of words. 1 Cor. ii. 1—4. 2 Cor. x. 10. xi. 3.

‡ Heb. since yesterday, nor since the third day. n vi. 12. Jer. i. 6. Acts vii. 22.

o Ps. li. 15. xciv. 9. Is. xxxv. 5, 6. Ez. iii. 26, 27. xxxiii. 22.

p Is. xlii. 2. 1. 4. Jer. i. 9. Matt. x. 19, 20. Mark xiii. 11. Luke xii. 11, 12. xxi. 14, 15. Eph. vi. 19.

q 1 Kings xix. 4. Jer. xx. 9. Ez. iii. 14, 15. Jon. i. 3.

† Or, shouldst. r Luke ix. 59, 60. Acts xv. 38. Phil. ii. 21.

called "the rod of God." When waved by the hand of Moses or Aaron, it was a token to Israel of guidance, encouragement, and protection; but to Egypt, it was the appointed token of desolating judgments, like the mortal bite of the most poisonous serpent.—In this it was also a type of the gospel, "the rod of the Redeemer's strength" (Ps. cx. 2), which is a savour of life to some and of death to others.—Though Moses was greatly affrighted at the serpent thus miraculously produced, which seems to have been very formidable; yet his faith was so far strengthened by the sign, that he ventured at God's command to seize it by the tail, and it again became a harmless rod. This was intended to shew him, that the performance of a similar miracle before his people, would convince them that the Lord had sent him.

V. 6, 7. This sign denoted, that God could easily remove Israel's sin, though they were unclean as the leprous hand; that he could employ Moses's ministry, though feeble and unworthy in itself, and by him inflict his plagues on Egypt, or remove them as he pleased; and that he could effect the deliverance of his people by the most unlikely means, notwithstanding the most powerful opposition.—It is very probable that the absurd story, mentioned by Josephus, of Moses and the Israelites being driven out of Egypt, because infected with leprosy, was derived from some distorted tradition of this miraculous sign.

V. 10. Moses supposed that great eloquence would be requisite, both to persuade Israel, and to plead before Pha-

raoh: and he objected, that in the Egyptian court he had, at all former times, been defective in the gift of a ready and graceful elocution; and that even since the Lord had spoken to him, he had experienced no alteration in this respect. We read, however, that he "was mighty in words" as well as deeds: and so was St. Paul, though he affected no eloquence, and was deemed by some "in speech contemptible." They both could speak with energy and to the purpose, though not with the enticing words and delusive charms of human oratory.

*Slow of speech.* ἰσχυροφωνος. Sept.—Of a slender voice, or speaking with hesitation and interruptions of voice.

V. 11, 12. The Lord alone originally gave to Adam and his posterity the inexplicable power of articulate speech; and he is the sole Author of the disparity, which subsists among men in these and other endowments: could he not therefore easily remove from Moses this impediment, if he saw that a more fluent and graceful utterance was requisite for him?—It may be useful to compare JEHOVAH's promise to Moses, with our Lord's words to his disciples, "I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay, or resist." Can any but God "give a mouth and wisdom?" (Note, Luke xxi. 12—19.)

V. 13. 'Send by any one else, only excuse me as incompetent.' (Notes, Is. vi. 5—8.)

V. 14. Moses's unbelief, and reluctance to engage in this arduous and dangerous service, excited the divine displeasure; which probably was shewn by some sensible

kindled against Moses; and he said, *Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also behold, 'he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart.*

15 And thou shalt speak unto him; and put words in his mouth: "and I will be with thy mouth and with his mouth, and 'will teach you what ye shall do.

16 And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, *even* 'he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

17 And thou shalt take 'this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs.

18 ¶ And Moses went and returned to 'Jethro his father-in-law, and said unto him, 'Let me go, I pray thee, and return unto my brethren, which *are* in Egypt, 'and see whether they be yet

alive. And Jethro said to Moses, 'Go in peace.

19 And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: 'for all the men are dead which sought thy life.

20 And Moses took his wife, and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt. And Moses took 'the rod of God in his hand.

21 And the LORD said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but 'I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.

22 And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, 'Israel is my son, *even* my first-born.

23 And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, 'I will slay thy son, *even* thy first-born.

27. 1 Sam. x. 1  
-7. Mark xiv.  
19-19. 2 Cor.  
ii. 13. vii. 6, 7.  
1 Thes. iii. 6, 7.

t vil. 1, 2. 2 Sam.  
xiv. 3. 1s. ii. 16.  
lix. 21.  
u Num. xxii. 38.  
xxiii. 5. 12. 16.  
Deut. xxviii. 18.  
Matt. xxviii. 20.  
1 Cor. xi. 23. xv.  
1.

x Deut. v. 31.

y vii. 1, 2. John x.  
34, 36.

z vii. 9. 19.

• Heb. Jether.  
See on ill. 1.  
a 1 Tim. vi. 1.

b Gen. xlv. 3. Acts  
xv. 36.

token, perhaps by the fire in the bush becoming more vehement: yet the Lord did not supersede his commission; but in condescension to his weakness, and perhaps also as a gentle rebuke, he assigned him an assistant, who should share the danger, the burden, and the honour. Thus Christ sent out his disciples by two and two; and several of them were brethren.—We are not informed, in what station Aaron had hitherto lived: but he seems to have enjoyed many advantages of education, probably by means of Moses; and he had become remarkable for eloquence. Perhaps this might occasion his being called "*Aaron the Levite*," as a person of eminence among the descendants of Levi.—The Lord had revealed himself to Aaron, at the same time as he did to Moses, and had directed him to meet him (27). This remarkable concurrence would encourage both of them.

V. 15. *With his mouth.*] Though Aaron was eloquent, yet he could not speak to any good purpose without the teaching and assistance of the Lord.

V. 16. Moses, though the younger brother, was the superior in this commission: the word of God came first to him; and he dictated to Aaron what he should speak, as God put his words into the mouth of his prophets.

V. 18. Moses, now resolved to obey the heavenly vision, intimated to Jethro, (who had behaved with great kindness,) that he was about to leave him, as one who asked his permission to visit his afflicted brethren: (*Gen. xxxi. 30*;) but it does not appear that he informed him of the particulars. Thus he parted amicably from him, and the mutual affection between them was not interrupted.—The intercourse between nations was at that time very difficult; and the peculiar circumstances in which Moses was placed, might preclude him from enquiring after, or learning, the condition of his brethren.

c 1 Sam. i. 17.  
Luke vii. 50.  
Acts xvi. 36.

d ii. 15. 23. Matt.  
ii. 20.

e xvii. 9. Num.  
xx. 8, 9.

f vii. 8. 13. ix. 12.  
35. x. 1. 20. xiv.  
8. Gen. vi. 8.  
Deut. ii. 30-33.  
36. Josh. xi. 20.  
1 Kings xxii. 22.  
1s. vi. 10. lxiii.  
17. John xii. 40.  
Rom. i. 28. ix.  
18. xi. 8-10.  
2 Cor. ii. 16.  
2 Thes. ii. 10-12.  
1 Pet. ii. 8.  
g xix. 5, 6. Deut.  
xiv. 1. Jer. xxxi.  
9. Hos. xi. 1.  
Rom. ix. 4.  
Heb. xii. 23.  
h xi. 5. xii. 29. Ps.  
lxxxviii. 51. cv.  
36. cxxxv. 8.

V. 19. This revelation to Moses in Midian seems to have been distinct from that at Horeb.—A secret dread of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, as incensed against him for his former conduct, was one cause of his reluctance: and it does not appear that the Lord informed him that his enemies were dead, till he had first set about obeying his command.

V. 21. *Harden.*] God never communicates "hardness," or wickedness, to the heart of man, by a positive act; "for he cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man." But, when provoked by atrocious crimes, he gives a person up to his own heart's lusts; he permits Satan to entice, deceive, and blind him; and he takes off those providential restraints, by which many are kept from wickedness, because they have not opportunity or power to commit it, or dare not through fear or shame. When a man is thus left, commands, warnings, judgments, and deliverances, every truth in Scripture and every dispensation of Providence, prove the occasion of increasing obduracy and insensibility, pride and presumption.—By this general declaration, Moses was taught to expect and prepare for difficulty and opposition; and the subsequent history will give an abundant opportunity of stating the several stages by which Pharaoh's obduracy was induced, and the import of the several words made use of, in this remarkable instance and illustration of the Lord's dealing with obstinate sinners.

V. 22, 23. Israel was despised by the Egyptians as a contemptible people; but was honoured of God, being near and dear to him as a child is to his father, and as having that pre-eminence among the nations, which the first-born has among the brethren. Pharaoh therefore might be assured, that God would defend, avenge, deliver, and provide for Israel: and that if he attempted to retain in bond-

24 ¶ And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that <sup>1</sup>the LORD met him, and <sup>k</sup>sought to kill him.

25 Then Zipporah took <sup>1</sup>a sharp stone, and cut off the fore-skin of her son, and <sup>†</sup>cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband *art* thou to me.

26 So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband *thou art*, because of the circumcision.

27 ¶ And the LORD said to Aaron, <sup>m</sup>Go into the wilderness to meet Moses. And he went and met him in <sup>n</sup>the mount of God, and kissed him.

28 And Moses <sup>o</sup>told Aaron all the

words of the LORD, who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him.

29 And Moses and Aaron went, and <sup>p</sup>gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel.

30 And Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses, and <sup>q</sup>did the signs in the sight of the people.

31 And the people <sup>r</sup>'believed: and when they heard that the LORD had <sup>s</sup>'visited the children of Israel, and that he had <sup>t</sup>'looked upon their affliction, then they <sup>u</sup>'bowed their heads and worshipped.

i iii. 18. Num. xii. 22, 23.  
1 Chr. xxi. 16.  
Hos. xiii. 8.  
k Gen. xvii. 14.  
Lev. x. 3 1 Kings xiii. 24.  
† Josh. v. 2, 3.  
Or, knife.  
† Heb. made touch.

m 14-16. Acts x. 5, 6, 20.  
n iii. 1. xix. 3. xx. 18. xxiv. 15-17.  
1 Kings xix. 8.  
o Jon. iii. 2. Matt xxi. 29.

p iii. 16. xxiv. 11

r iii. 18. Ps. cxi. 12, 13. Luke vii. 13.

s See on iii. 16.  
t ii. 25. iii. 7.  
u xii. 27. Gen. xxix. 20. 2 Chr. xx. 18.

age that people, who stood related to JEHOVAH, as his first-born son, and forbade them to worship and serve him; he must expect to feel the effects of omnipotent indignation, which would at length slay his eldest son, with all the first-born in the land of Egypt.—True believers are “the church of the first-born, whose names are written in “heaven:” and though rulers are entitled to honour and civil obedience from them, they have no right to prohibit them from serving God, according to the dictates of their conscience; and they may expect severe rebukes if they attempt it.

V. 24—26. Either the Lord appeared to his servant, by some external token of his presence, as if about immediately to slay him; or, as some suppose, he inflicted on him a sudden and very dangerous disease. Moses seems, however, to have understood, that he was rebuked for neglecting to circumcise his son; probably from regard to Zipporah who was averse to it. It is supposed that circumcision was in use among the Midianites, as descended from Abraham; and that Zipporah had merely induced Moses to defer the performance of it beyond the appointed time, on account of the journey, or on some other pretence. But he was raised up for an extraordinary service, and it was proper he should set an example of exact obedience in his own conduct, and therefore he was thus sharply rebuked.—As he was either under great perturbation of mind, or dangerously ill, Zipporah immediately circumcised her son, with a knife made of a sharp flint, such knives being common in some countries: and this may intimate the haste in which the rite was performed.—The words which she spake, when she laid the fore-skin of her son at the feet of Moses, are differently understood: some think that she rashly reproached both him and his religion, which required this bloody ordinance; but others are of opinion, that she spake in great affection, as having anew espoused him, by circumcising her son; seeing the blood shed in that rite had been the means of restoring him to her again. For when it had been performed, the Lord delivered Moses and allowed him to prosecute his journey.—It is probable that on this occasion Zipporah returned to Jethro for a time. (Note, xviii. 1—5.) Some render the clause, “So he let him go,” *so she left him*, as referring to this: but the translation cannot be supported,

as the Hebrew text now stands; both words being masculine.

V. 27. The Lord had directed Aaron to meet his brother in the wilderness.—Moses seems to have been retarded by his family-concerns, while Aaron made great haste; and thus he met Moses almost as soon as he had set out upon his journey, which would be a great encouragement to him. Probably, they had not seen or heard of each other for a long time before.

V. 30. Signs.] Moses gave the people this proof of his divine mission, to ensure their concurrence, before he applied to Pharaoh in their behalf.—It is supposed that Moses performed the miraculous signs, while Aaron delivered the message of God to the people (15—17).—“And he did “the signs, &c.”

V. 31. Thus the Elders of Israel acknowledged JEHOVAH as the true God, and the God of their fathers, and Moses as his messenger for their deliverance; and they testified their gratitude and expectation, in an act of solemn worship.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—17.

How indisposed are men to believe the testimony of God! Whether he denounce vengeance upon obstinate offenders, or promise acceptance, assistance, and salvation to the returning sinner, they are always prone to question his veracity; and to act as if his word could not absolutely be depended on, or was not likely to be accomplished! Thus some are hardened in presumption, others sink into despondency, and others are discouraged and faint-hearted in all their endeavours.—But the Lord being slow to anger and of great mercy, deals not with us according to the multitude of our sins; else the strongest believer upon earth, instead of being saved by his faith, might be righteously condemned for his unbelief.—When we shrink from trouble and self-denial, or the reproach or danger of any service; self-love soon suggests some excuse, which appears sufficient to us, however trivial it may be in the judgment of others: and it is no uncommon case for those, who have been rebuked for rashness and precipitation, afterwards to become timidly negligent of their evident duty. But let unbelief, sloth, and cow-

## CHAP. V.

Moses and Aaron deliver their message to Pharaoh, who disdainfully rejects it, 1—5. He increases the task of the Israelites, allows them no straw, and silences their complaints, 6—19. They despond and murmur, and Moses complains to the Lord, 20—23.

ardice, start ever so many objections, against our doing the duty of that station to which it hath pleased God to call us; his word furnishes us with answers to them all: and the assurance of his assistance and protection should in every case fully satisfy our minds.—When God gives revelations of new truths, or introduces new dispensations, materially differing from all which have preceded, he always sets his seal to them, and enables his servants to authenticate their mission by some conclusive sign: but they, who are employed to enforce the old authenticated revelation, need not such testimonials; as both their character and doctrines must be tried by the oracles of God, to which they appeal.—The miracles, which he enabled his servants of old to perform, were not doubtful and equivocal, nor merely effects of power to excite wonder; but they were expressive of his justice and goodness, and instructive tokens of his favour to his people, and vengeance on his enemies.—He does not always make it appear, that he hath furnished men for services, till they are actually called to engage in them; but we may depend on him to qualify us for whatever he commands us to do. All knowledge, wisdom, and utterance, with every good gift, are derived from him: but many endowments are supposed needful or useful in the publick service of God and his church, which he pours contempt upon, as mere tinsel; worthless, if not pernicious. Such are all the *studied* and *affected* arts of human oratory, which the great apostle would not condescend to employ, “that the faith” of the people “should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in “the power of God.” Yet to this day they are highly valued by most professed Christians and many true Christians; and many seem to think that little or nothing can be done without them. (Notes, 1 Cor. ii. 1—5.)—Even when the Lord is displeased with the sins of his servants, he condescends to their infirmities: and in arduous undertakings, it is a great favour to have helpers, who cordially unite with us; though they should share, or even eclipse, our reputation. But while we censure Moses for shrinking from this dangerous service, let us ask our own hearts, whether we are not neglecting such duties, as are unspeakably more easy and less perilous.

V. 18—31.

In obeying the commands of the Lord our God, we should take care to give no needless offence, and always be ready to give up our own inclinations, rather than prejudice our friends and relatives: yet after all, we shall frequently be constrained to cross the humours, endure the reproaches, and forego the comforts, of our nearest connexions, if we determine not to deviate in any thing from our known duty.—Even sinful omissions will draw upon us severe rebukes: and to neglect the seals and pledges of the new covenant is a sin of no small aggravation; being more replete with contempt of God, and ingratitude

VOL. I.

AND afterwards Moses and Aaron<sup>a</sup> went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold<sup>b</sup> a feast unto me in the wilderness.

2 And Pharaoh said, Who is the

for his distinguished mercies, than professed Christians generally suppose.—They, who are employed in calling others to trust and obey God, should be careful themselves to set an example of implicit confidence and obedience; and if they, in any remarkable instance, fail of this, they will surely experience some very painful effects from their misconduct. Yet when they are zealous and repent, and attend to their duty, the Lord will return to them in mercy.—The reproaches cast upon religion and its conscientious professors, redound to the lasting disgrace of those who vented them: none can provoke God more, than those, who by terrors or temptations deter or entice his children from his service; nor are scarcely any more in danger of being given up to judicial hardness of heart, than cruel tyrants and persecuting oppressors.—It frequently happens that less difficulty is found, than was expected, in such undertakings as are according to the will of God, and for his glory; and that many are inclined to concur in them, from whom we looked for opposition. Let us then arise and attempt our proper work, and the Lord will be with us and prosper us.—But if Israel welcomed the tidings of temporal deliverance, and worshipped the Lord: how should we welcome the glad tidings of eternal redemption, embrace it in faith, and adore the Redeemer! and “how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?”

## NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1. Moses and Aaron, having obtained the concurrence of the people, requested an audience of Pharaoh; and were admitted to him as the representatives of the nation, probably accompanied by some of the elders. (iii. 18.) But when introduced, they delivered to him a message from “JEHOVAH, the God of Israel.”—This is the first time this title is given to the Lord, with respect to Israel as a nation; though Jacob erected an altar to *El-Elohe-Israel*, to God, the God of Israel, referring to the name which he had just before received. (Note, Gen. xxxiii. 20.)—In the name of JEHOVAH, who thus honoured Israel in his low enslaved condition, Moses and Aaron demanded, that the people should be allowed to hold a sacred feast, according to the observances of their religion: and as they could not perform this solemn service in Egypt, surrounded by those who held their sacrifices in abomination; they required permission to retire to a distance into the wilderness, where their worship would not be liable to interruption, and could give no umbrage to the Egyptians.

V. 2. Pharaoh had probably heard some general report of JEHOVAH, as claiming by his servants to be the only “living and true God,” the Creator and Governor of the whole earth: but he and his predecessors had long tyrannized over his professed worshippers; and as they seemed to have derived so little advantage from his favour, he concluded that he had as little to fear from his wrath. He therefore treated the message delivered to him with con-

LORD that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? 'I know not the LORD, \*neither will I let Israel go.

d 1 Sam. ii. 12.  
John xvi. 8.  
Rom. i. 26.  
2 Thes. i. 8.  
e iii. 19. Jer. xlv.  
16, 17.

3 And they said, The God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the LORD our God; 'lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword.

f 2 Kings xvii. 25.  
2 Chr. xxx. 8.  
Ezra vii. 23.  
Zech. xiv. 16-19.

4 And the king of Egypt said unto them, 'Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? get you unto your burdens.

g Jer. xxxviii. 4.  
Am. vii. 10.  
Luke xxiii. 2.  
Acts xvi. 20, 21.  
xxiv. 5.

5 And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now *are* <sup>h</sup>many, and ye make them rest from their burdens.

h i. 9-11. Prov. xiv. 28.

6 And Pharaoh commanded the same day <sup>i</sup>the task-masters of the people, and their officers, saying,

i 10, 13, 15, 19. Prov. xii. 10.

7 Ye shall no more give the people

straw to make brick, as heretofore: let them go and gather straw for themselves.

8 And the tale of the bricks which they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them; ye shall not diminish *ought* thereof: for they *be* idle; therefore they cry, saying, Let us go *and* sacrifice to our God.

9 \* Let there more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein; and let them not regard <sup>k</sup>vain words.

Heb. Let the work be heavy upon the men.

k 2 Kings xviii. 20.  
Job xvi. 3. Zech. i. 6. Mal. iii. 14.  
Eph. v. 6.  
i. 11. Prov. xxix. 12.

10 ¶ And the <sup>l</sup>task-masters of the people went out, and their officers, and they spake to the people, saying, Thus saith Pharaoh, I will not give you straw.

11 Go ye, get you straw where ye can find it: yet not ought of your work shall be diminished.

12 So the people were scattered

temptuous indifference, ranking JEHOVAH among, or rather beneath, the gods of the nations, and especially the gods of Egypt.—His language is very emphatical; 'Shall I, who as king of Egypt lord it over Israel, obey the God of Israel? No, I scorn to regard him!'—Pharaoh had no knowledge of the Lord, and therefore he set him at defiance. 'Nor did he desire to know [him]; being so transported with anger, that he would not examine their commission, but only resolved he would not obey it.' *Bp. Patrick*. Israel was a numerous people, by whom the wealth of his subjects, and his own greatness, were exceedingly increased: and it would not consist with either his honour or interest, (to speak in the language of politicians,) thus to risk the depopulation of his kingdom. He had been accustomed to tyrannize over them: and shall he now *meanly*, on such a summons, consent to liberate them? But if he determined not to yield to this, he must crush their first attempts, and not allow them to feel their own strength, or at all to taste the sweets of liberty. Thus pride, ambition, covetousness, and worldly policy engaged him in the contest; and a point of honour, that is, an obstinate determination not to have it said he was overcome, hardened him to persist in it to his destruction.

V. 3. It may be supposed, that Moses and Aaron declared to Pharaoh some of the grand distinguishing particulars of their religion, and spake in general terms of the perfections and works of JEHOVAH. But it does not appear that, on this occasion, they either wrought any miracle, or threatened any punishment; but only stated the danger to which they themselves should be exposed, if they neglected to worship the LORD their God. This gentle and submissive application was suited to illustrate the character of the tyrannical oppressor; for as he disdained such a message, no wonder he raged when he more fully understood the commission, under which Moses and Aaron acted.

V. 4, 5. Pharaoh seems entirely to have disregarded all that had been said, concerning the appearance and com-

mandment of the Lord to Moses and Aaron supposing the whole plan to originate from ambitious, interested views, and that they abused the people's superstition to promote their own selfish designs.—He therefore ordered *them* to their burdens, as well as the elders who attended them; and it must be ascribed to a divine interposition, that he did not send them to a dungeon, or to execution; considering his character, and the nature of their message.—He also represented them as doing a publick injury to Egypt, and endangering the peace of the community, by taking so large a multitude off from their work, and putting thoughts of another kind into their minds.

V. 7. Some suppose that the straw was cut short, and mingled with the clay in making bricks; the nature of the clay, and the imperfection of their skill, requiring it: and others suppose that they burnt the bricks with it.—But in many places straw is now used in covering the clay before the bricks are formed, and covering the bricks before they are burnt, to defend them from the burning sun or heavy rains; and indeed something of this kind is indispensably necessary.

V. 8, 9. Though the fruits of Israel's industry were many and great, Pharaoh took it for granted, without examining, that the people were not fully employed: and too many of the rich and powerful imitate his example, and act in such matters upon report or conjecture, without enquiry. He therefore determined to fill their hands with work, that they might have somewhat else to think on, than such *vain* or *lying* words, as he supposed those of Moses and Aaron to be.

V. 12-14. A large proportion of the people being employed in gathering stubble, part of which they were constrained to fetch from a great distance; it was impossible that the rest could furnish the usual quantity of bricks. Yet the Egyptian task-masters, by Pharaoh's orders, insisted on this being done; and when for two days a deficiency was found, the Israelitish officers, whom the task-

abroad throughout all the land of Egypt, to gather stubble instead of straw.

13 And the task-masters hasted *them*, saying, Fulfil your works, *your* daily tasks, as when there was straw.

<sup>m</sup> Heb. a matter of a day in his day.

14 And the officers of the children of Israel, which Pharaoh's task-masters had set over them, were beaten, and demanded, Wherefore have ye not fulfilled your task in making brick, both yesterday and to-day, as heretofore?

15 ¶ Then the officers of the children of Israel came and cried unto Pharaoh, saying, Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy servants?

16 There is no straw given unto thy servants, and they say to us, Make brick: and behold, thy servants *are* beaten; but the fault *is* in thine own people.

<sup>m</sup> Matt. xxv. 8.  
<sup>n</sup> John vi. 27.  
<sup>2</sup> Thes. iii. 10, 11.

17 But he said, <sup>m</sup> Ye *are* idle, *ye are* idle: therefore ye say, Let us go, and do sacrifice to the LORD.

18 Go therefore now, and work:

for there shall no straw be given you,

<sup>n</sup> yet shall ye deliver the tale of bricks. <sup>n</sup> Ez. xviii. 18.  
Dan. ii. 9—13.

19 And the officers of the children of Israel did see *that they were* in <sup>o</sup> evil case, after it was said, Ye shall not diminish *ought* from your bricks of your daily task.

<sup>o</sup> Deut. xxxii. 26.  
Ec. iv. 1. v. 8.

20 And they met Moses and Aaron, who stood in the way, as they came forth from Pharaoh:

21 And they said unto them, <sup>p</sup> The LORD look upon you, and judge; because ye have made <sup>q</sup> our savour to

<sup>p</sup> vi. 9. Gen. xvi. 5.

<sup>q</sup> be abhorred in the eyes of Pharaoh, and in the eyes of his servants, to put a sword in their hand to slay us.

<sup>q</sup> Ec. x. 1. Jer. ii. 20. 2 Cor. i. 15, 16.  
<sup>†</sup> Heb. to stink.  
Gen. xxxiv. 30.  
1 Sam. xiii. 4.  
xxvii. 12. 2 Sam. x. 6. 1 Chr. xix. 6.

22 And Moses <sup>r</sup> returned unto the LORD, and said, Lord, Wherefore hast thou *so* evil entreated this people? <sup>s</sup> why is it *that* thou hast sent me?

<sup>r</sup> xvii. 4. 1 Sam xxx. 6. Jer. xii. 1.

23 For since I came to Pharaoh to speak <sup>t</sup> in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; <sup>u</sup> neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.

<sup>s</sup> Num. xi. 14, 15.  
1 Kings xix. 4.  
10. Jer. xx. 7.  
<sup>t</sup> Ps. cxviii. 26. Jer. xi. 21. John v. 43.  
<sup>†</sup> Heb. deliver, 'ing, thou hast not delivered. Is. xxv. 17, 18. xxviii. 16. Heb. x. 36, 37.

masters had placed over their brethren to superintend their labours, were severely beaten; and thus an attempt was made to drive them in their own defence, to join in this cruel oppression!

V. 15—23. It seems that the Israelitish officers were informed of Pharaoh's decision, by the Egyptian task-masters (6); and they might suspect that they had misrepresented his words: but their appeal to Pharaoh was answered in that cruel and sarcastical manner, which was calculated to break their spirits, or drive them to desperate measures; as well as to make them conclude, that all their hopes of deliverance from the Lord were groundless. As their prospects were very gloomy, and there is no reason to suppose that many of them were partakers of the courage and patience of faith, it is the less wonderful that they spoke sharply to Moses and Aaron; who, being deeply interested in the concerns of their brethren, were waiting to learn what answer they had received. It must have been a severe trial to them to find, that while Pharaoh reproached them for taking off the people from their work, the officers of Israel complained of them, as if they had intentionally set Pharaoh against them, and given him a pretence for putting them to death, as well as for increasing the burdens of Israel; and that they even called on God to plead their cause against them. Thus while the king of Egypt denied that the Lord had sent Moses and Aaron, the Israelites themselves overlooked the proofs, which they had witnessed of their divine commission!—Yet we may the less wonder at this, as even Moses, when thus tried, was led to murmur against the Lord, for honouring him with this important commission; to forget that he had been forewarned of Pharaoh's opposition; and almost to despair of success!

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—9.

The servants of God may be called into very perilous situations: but while they adhere to their instructions, they may "set their faces as a flint;" for he will bear them out against their most haughty and imperious enemies.—The reasonableness of the divine commands always leaves the disobedient without excuse. If we decline from the path of duty when comparatively easy, we shall never confine ourselves to it when greater self-denial is requisite; and if we refuse to devote a portion of our time and substance to the service of God, how shall we obey, should he call us to leave all, to take up our cross, to endure persecution, and to lay down our lives for his sake! Yet unless we are prepared for this, we cannot be Christ's disciples. But sinners are afraid of losing the pleasure or profit, which they derive or expect from transgression; not knowing that 'the service of God is perfect freedom,' a continual feast, and an enduring inheritance.—Without that knowledge of God, which is derived from faith and experience, there is no true fear or love of him: and therefore, they who know him not, habitually disobey him; and often insolently despise him, and presumptuously set him at defiance, when his precepts and denunciations interfere with their ambitious and worldly projects. But this ignorance of God is no excuse; as it arises not so much from want of information, as from men "*not liking*" to retain "God in their knowledge."—It is common for the irreligious to treat all the fears, hopes, conscientious scruples, and experiences of true believers, as superstition and enthusiasm; and to censure them as vain words and foolish fancies. It must indeed be allowed that there is much superstition and enthusiasm in the world: yet true religion

## CHAP. VI.

God encourages Moses, by his name JEHOVAH, and by promises; 1—8. Moses in vain attempts to encourage the Israelites; 9. He and Aaron are charged to go again unto Pharaoh, 10—13. The genealogy of Reuben and of Simeon; and of Levi the ancestor of Moses and Aaron, 14—25. The history is resumed, 26—30.

■ xiv 13. Num.  
xxiii. 23. Deut.  
xxviii. 39. 2 Kings  
vii. 2. 19. 2 Chr.  
xx. 17. Ps. xii.  
6.

**T**HEN the LORD said unto Moses,  
“Now shalt thou see what I will do to

cannot but be experimental; for it must produce its effects upon the judgment, heart, and conscience, before they can appear in the life and conversation. We should therefore learn to distinguish between “the precious and the “vile,” according to the standard of the Holy Scriptures.—It is very common for worldly people to condemn an attention to the ordinances of God, as *idleness*; and to consider all the time or money, which is expended in religion, as wasted to no purpose. To this day we find numbers disposed to exclaim against some of their neighbours, for spending a few hours, spared from business, in the service of God; crying out, “Ye are idle, ye are idle;” and yet they do not censure, or only with great lenity, those who allot twice the time to dissipation and intemperance! Thus is God despised among men, as if nothing could be so mis-employed, as that which is devoted to him! Nor is it to this day an obsolete device of Satan, to fill men’s hands with business, their heads with projects, and their hearts with cares, in order to divert them from the worship of God, and from attention to “the one thing needful.”

## V. 10—23.

The yoke of Satan and of sin is in itself immensely more dreadful, than that of cruel Pharaoh and his task-masters: and when sinners begin to feel their misery, and the Lord is preparing deliverance for them; the discoveries, which they continually make, of the strictness and spirituality of the divine law, the evil of sin, and the strength of their evil propensities, often concur with the temptations of the devil in urging them to conclude, that it is impossible to overcome their corrupt passions and evil habits; for these seem rather irritated than subdued by convictions, while they remain ignorant of the gospel. Then indeed they suppose themselves to be in an evil and a hopeless case; and are ready to wish, they had never attended to that doctrine which has thus disquieted them; nay, to quarrel with the instrument, as if *he* were the cause of their distress and misery! On this account, as well as others, they who desire to be honoured by God in any publick sphere of usefulness, should well count their cost; and not only expect to meet with opposition from the world, but to experience still more painful trials from the impatience, and even ingratitude and reproaches, of the very persons whose good they are earnestly seeking; and to be accused, not only of those crimes of which they are innocent, but, by men of different characters, of things directly contrary to each other. Such as *seem* to believe, will “in time of temptation fall away;” and they who *really* believe, under the

Pharaoh: for <sup>b</sup> with a strong hand shall he let them go, and with a strong hand shall he <sup>c</sup> drive them out of his land.

2 And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, “I am the LORD:

3 And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by *the name of* <sup>e</sup> God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them.

b iii 19, 20. Deut.  
iv. 34. Ps. lxxxix.  
13. cxxxvi. 12.  
Is. lxiii. 12. Ea.  
xx. 33, 34.  
c xl. 1. xii. 31—  
33, 39.  
d 6. 8. xiv 18. xx.  
2. Gen. xv. 7.  
Is. xlii. 8. xliii.  
11. 15. Jer. iv.  
24. Mai. iii. 6.  
e Gen. xvii. 1  
xxviii. 3. xxxv.  
11. xlviii. 3.  
f iii. 14. Gen. xii.  
7, 8. xiii. 18.  
xxii. 14. Ps.  
lxxviii. 4. JAH.  
lxxxiii. 18. Is.  
xlv. 6. Ili. 6, 6.  
John viii. 58.  
Rev. I. 4.

pressure of severe trials, often forget all they knew, and distress faithful ministers with their distrust, impatience, and peevish complaints. But indeed the ministers themselves, being conscious how they also dishonour and offend God, and admiring his forbearance and compassion to them, should learn to imitate him in bearing with their brethren. For the most faithful, on some occasions, not at first perceiving the fruits of their labours, or not duly understanding the Lord’s method of preparing sinners for the liberty and consolations of the gospel, by very humiliating and painful experiences; while they return to spread the case before God, are apt to discourage themselves, and impatiently to complain, that they are sent to no purpose, and that he doth not by them deliver the people at all: but this is their sin and their folly, of which at length they will be ashamed.—Let us not however close this chapter, without contrasting our mild and benign government, and the civil and religious liberty which we enjoy, with the cruel tyranny and oppression of Pharaoh: and, uniting gratitude to God and man for such blessings, let us pray for the continuance of them to us and to our posterity, and for the choicest blessings upon those, who are the instruments of God in them: and let us remember how much we are bound to live, (especially under such rulers,) in all godliness and honesty, and in quietness and conscientious submission.

## NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1. Moses found, that *his* interference had only rendered the condition of Israel worse than before; for Pharaoh set JEHOVAH at defiance, and the people were sinking in abject despondency. But at this crisis, the Lord declared that he would display his own power, and effect their deliverance himself, that he might have all the glory of it.—When Pharaoh felt the power of God’s indignation, he not only *consented* to Israel’s departure, but he and his people urged and hastened it: yet this consent was extorted by force, and was entirely contrary to Pharaoh’s habitual inclinations.—It is not said in what way the Lord spake unto Moses on each of these occasions; but we have reason to believe, that there was, in general, some personal appearance and an audible voice, like that with which the patriarchs had been favoured. (xxxiii. 11. Num. xii. 8.)

V. 2, 3. ‘I am,’ saith God, ‘that unchangeable, and all-perfect Being, who am known by the name JEHOVAH, and always act consistently with that name.’—The Lord was known to the patriarchs, as “God Almighty,” or the *all-sufficient* God, who possesses all wisdom, power, and

g Gen. vi. 18. xv. 18. xvii. 7. 13. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. 14. iv. 8.  
 h Gen. xv. 13. xvii. 8. xxiii. 4. xxvi. 3. Ps. cv. 12. Acts vii. 5.  
 i ii. 24. iii. 7. Ia. lxiii. 9.  
 k ii. 24. Gen. viii. 1. ix. 15. Ps. cv. 8. cvi. 45. Luke 1. 54. 72.  
 l See on 2. Ez. xx. 7-9.  
 m iii. 17. vii. 4. Deut. xxvii. 8. Ps. lxxxi. 6.  
 n xv. 13. Deut. vii. 8. xv. 15. 2 Kings xvii. 36. 1 Chr. xvii. 21. Neh. i. 10.  
 o xix. 5, 6. Gen. xvii. 7, 8. Deut. iv. 20. vii. 6. xiv. 2. xxvi. 18. 2 Sam. vii. 23. 24. Jer. xxxi. 33. Hos. i. 10. 1 Pet. ii. 10.  
 p xxix. 45, 46. Deut. xxxix. 13. Zech. xiii. 9. Matt. xxii. 32. Heb. xi. 16. Rev. xxi. 7.

4 And I have also <sup>e</sup>established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, <sup>h</sup>the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers.

5 And I have also heard the <sup>i</sup>'groaning of the children of Israel, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage: and <sup>k</sup>'I have remembered my covenant.

6 Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, <sup>l</sup>'I am the LORD, and <sup>m</sup>'I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage: and I will <sup>n</sup>'redeem you with a stretched-out arm, and with great judgments.

7 And I <sup>o</sup>'will take you to me for a people, and <sup>p</sup>'I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out

<sup>q</sup>'from under the burdens of the Egyptians. q Ps. lxxxi. 8.

8 And I will bring you in unto the land concerning the which I did <sup>r</sup>'swear r Heb. lift up my hand. Gen. xiv. 22. Deut. xxxii. 40. Ez. xx. 5, 6. 16. 28. 42. xxxvi. 7. xlvii. 14. to give it, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: <sup>s</sup>'I am the LORD.

9 And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they <sup>t</sup>'hearkened not unto Moses, for <sup>u</sup>'anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage. t xxvii. 13. Gen. xv. 18. xxii. 16. 17. xxvi. 3. xxviii. 13. xxxv. 12. See on 2.—Num. xxxiii. 19. 1 Sam. xv. 29. u v. 21. xiv. 12. t Heb. shortness, or, straits. Num. xxi. 4.

10 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

11 Go in, <sup>v</sup>"speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land. v 29. iii. 10. v. 1. 23. vii. 1.

12 And Moses spake before the LORD, saying, Behold <sup>w</sup>'the children of Israel have not hearkened unto me;

dominion, to contrive and effect the purposes of his love.—It is most probable, that the latter clause should be read with an interrogation: "And was I not known to them by my name JEHOVAH?" For Moses had constantly used the name JEHOVAH in the preceding history; the patriarchs built their altars, and "called upon the name of JEHOVAH;" Abraham called the place, where he was about to sacrifice Isaac, JEHOVAH-jireh; and God, speaking to Jacob in Bethel, saith, "I am JEHOVAH, the God of Abraham."—The intention of these words seems to have been this. Moses was discouraged, because the difficulties before him appeared insurmountable; but this was unreasonable: the same glorious God, who revealed himself to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as *Almighty*, and who pledged the honour of his name, for the accomplishment of the covenant which he made with them, that he would give to their posterity the land in which "they were strangers;" was indeed JEHOVAH, the self-existent, eternal, and unchangeable God, and was known to them by that name also. No difficulty therefore had arisen, or could arise, but what he foresaw when he made the promises; nor any, which his power was not able to remove. As if he had said, 'Remember, Moses, who it was that made the promises to the fathers; and assure thyself he is well able to fulfil them.'—Thus Jesus, who is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever," said to Martha over the grave of Lazarus, "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" referring to what he had said before, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." (John xi. 37-40.)—Some however think, that though the patriarchs knew the same JEHOVAH, they were not instructed in this meaning and application of it; and that this is the purport of the passage; especially as Moses was the first, as far as we know, who was sent with a message to others in the name of JEHOVAH, and enabled to confirm that message by publick and incontestable miracles.

V. 5-7. JEHOVAH, the righteous and compassionate Patron of the oppressed, and the covenanted Friend of

Israel, was absolutely engaged and determined to put forth his omnipotence, to rescue them from bondage; as a man stretches forth his arm and employs his whole force, to effect any thing about which he is in earnest. And as this had respect to the redemption of the promised Saviour, and would also be accomplished at the price of desolating Egypt; the deliverance was spoken of in language taken from the ransoming of slaves and captives. (Note, Is. xliii. 3, 4.) He therefore engaged to take them under his especial care and protection, and to maintain his truth and worship among them, while other nations were suffered to walk in their own ways.—"To know the LORD," is often used in Scripture, for that knowledge of the being, perfections, and omnipotent dominion of God over all his works, which is the effect of *experience*; whether of his mercy and love, or of his righteous vengeance. But, to know him as "the LORD our God," implies either a spiritual relation to him as our Friend and Father, or at least those religious advantages which are the outward signs and means of so great a blessing. Israel would know that he was the Lord, in the experience of his powerful and faithful loving kindness; and might thus discover that he was justly entitled to all that love and service which his law required.

V. 9. The people were so crushed by oppression, and so filled with anguish by their late distressing disappointment; that, perceiving no sensible tokens of approaching deliverance, but an increase of their oppressive burdens, they quite desponded, disregarded the message of God, and refused to make any further attempts.

For anguish of spirit.] Απο της ολιγοψυχίας, from *meanness, or dejection, of spirit*. Sept.—1 Thes. v. 14. Gr.

V. 12. Even Moses himself was so discouraged, that his faith almost entirely failed, and he was ready to give up the service as hopeless. He forgot that the Lord had engaged to deliver the people by a strong hand, and not by persuasive words; so that his *uncircumcised lips*, or want of eloquence, could not prevent his success.—*Uncircumcised* often denotes *unsuitableness* and *incapacity*, through

how then shall Pharaoh hear me, who *am* of <sup>r</sup> uncircumcised lips?

<sup>y</sup> 30. iv. 10. Lev. xxvi. 41. Deut. xxx. 6. 1a. vi. 5. Jer. i. 6. vi. 10. ix. 26. Acts vii. 51.  
<sup>z</sup> Num. xxvii. 19. 21. Deut. xxxi. 14. Pa. xci. 11. Matt. iv. 6. 1 Tim. i. 18. v. 21. vi. 13. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 2. iv. 1.

13 And the LORD spake unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and <sup>a</sup> gave them a charge unto the children of Israel, and unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

<sup>a</sup> 25. Josh. xiv. 1. xix. 51. 1 Chr. v. 24. vii. 2. 7. viii. 6.  
<sup>b</sup> Gen. xli. 9. xlix. 3. 4. Num. xxvi. 5, 6. 1 Chr. v. 3.  
<sup>c</sup> Num. xxvi. 7. Josh. xiii. 13. 23.  
<sup>d</sup> Gen. xli. 10. Num. xxvi. 12. 13. 1 Chr. iv. 24. Nemeel. Jarib. Zerah.

14 ¶ These *be* <sup>a</sup> the heads of their fathers' houses: <sup>b</sup> The sons of Reuben the first-born of Israel; Hanoch, and Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi: <sup>c</sup> these *be* the families of Reuben.

15 And the <sup>d</sup> sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman: these *are* the families of Simeon.

<sup>e</sup> Gen. xli. 11. Num. iii. 17. 1 Chr. vi. 1. 16.  
B. C. 1619.  
<sup>f</sup> 19. 20. Gen. xxxv. 28. xlvii. 28. 1. 21.

16 And these *are* the names of the <sup>e</sup> sons of Levi, according to their generations: Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari: and the years of the life of Levi *were* <sup>f</sup> an hundred thirty and seven years.

<sup>g</sup> Gen. xli. 11. Num. iii. 18. Shimeel. 1 Chr. vi. 17. xxiii. 7. Laadan. Shimeel.

17 The <sup>g</sup> sons of Gershon; Libni, and Shimi, according to their families.

<sup>h</sup> Num. iii. 19. Izhar. xxi. 57. 1 Chr. vi. 2. 18.  
<sup>i</sup> See on 16.

18 And the <sup>h</sup> sons of Kohath; Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel: <sup>i</sup> and the years of the life of Ko-

hath *were* an hundred thirty and three years.

19 And the <sup>k</sup> sons of Merari; Mahali, and Mushi: these *are* the families of Levi, according to their generations.

<sup>l</sup> 1. 2. Num. xxvi. 69.  
<sup>m</sup> See on 16.

20 And <sup>l</sup> Amram took him Jochebed his father's sister to wife; and she bare him Aaron and Moses: <sup>m</sup> and the years of the life of Amram *were* an hundred and thirty and seven years.

<sup>n</sup> 24. Num. xvi. 1. 82. xxvi. 10, 11. 1 Chr. vi. 37, 38.

21 And the sons of Izhar; <sup>n</sup> Korah, and Nepheg, and Zichri.

<sup>o</sup> Lev. x. 4. Num. iii. 30. B. C. 1530.

22 And the <sup>o</sup> sons of Uzziel; Mishael, and Elzaphan, and Zithri.

<sup>p</sup> Luke i. 5.  
<sup>q</sup> Num. i. 7. ii. 3. Ruth iv. 19, 20. 1 Chr. ii. 10. Matt. i. 4. xxiv. 1. 9. Lev. x. 1. 2. Num. iii. 2-4. xxvi. 60, 61. 1 Chr. vi. 3. xxiv. 1. 2. 21. Num. xvi. 1. 32. xxvi. 9-11. 1 Chr. vi. 22. 33. 37, 38. Pa. lxxxix. lxxxv. titles.

23 And Aaron took him <sup>p</sup> Elisheba, daughter of <sup>q</sup> Amminadab, sister of Naashon, to wife; and she bare him <sup>r</sup> Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.

24 And the sons of <sup>r</sup> Korah; Assir, and <sup>s</sup> Elkanah, and Abiasaph: these *are* the families of the Korhites.

<sup>t</sup> 1 Sam. i. 1. 1 Chr. vi. 23. 27, 28.  
<sup>u</sup> Num. xxv. 7-13. xxxi. 6. Josh. xxii. 13. 31, 32. Judg. xx. 28. Pa. cvi. 30, 31. v. 14.

25 And Eleazar Aaron's son took him *one* of the daughters of Putiel to wife; and she bare him <sup>u</sup> Phinehas: these *are* <sup>v</sup> the heads of the fathers of the Levites, according to their families.

some defect or impediment; as the carnal heart of man is entirely unsuited to the spiritual service of God, and the purposes of his glory. (*Marg. Ref. y.*)

V. 13. The Lord here absolutely commanded Moses and Aaron, without further objections or delays, to deliver his message to Israel; and also to Pharaoh, to whom they seem to have been directed to speak with more authority than before; and to denounce the vengeance of the Lord upon him if he proved refractory. Indeed, they were not only charged to attempt bringing Israel out of Egypt, but absolutely to effect it; and this charge was calculated to increase their faith, and raise their expectations.

V. 14—20. Before the historian proceeded with his narrative, he digressed from the subject, to give some account of the persons to whom this charge was given.—Reuben was the first-born, and accordingly is first mentioned, to mark the accomplishment of Jacob's prediction; seeing he was passed by, and the deliverer did not spring from him.—For the same reason Simeon also is mentioned, who was the next in seniority; yet the deliverer of Israel did not descend from him, but from Levi, the third son, who, though he had been disgraced, began now to be dignified. (*Notes, Gen. xlix. 3—7.*)—Levi, though older than Joseph, survived him above twenty years; and his son Kohath attained nearly, and his grandson Amram fully, to the same age. It is not recorded how long the other sons of Jacob lived. Moses was no more than a hundred and twenty when he died: yet his age was deemed extra-

ordinary; and he fixes the term of man's life to seventy or eighty years, (*Ps. xc. 10.*) which from about that time have in general been its appointed bounds.—According to the Septuagint and the Jewish traditions, Jochebed was cousin, not aunt to Amram: but this construction was probably put on the original word, to save the credit of Moses and Aaron; because the marriage of an aunt is afterwards forbidden. (*Lev. xviii. 12. 14.*) For the meaning of the word here used is fixed by another passage, in which it is said: "The name of Amram's wife was Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, whom her mother bare to <sup>v</sup> Levi in Egypt." Num. xxvi. 59. It is probable that Jochebed was born when Levi was old, and was as young as Amram.—The impartiality of the historian appears, in his recording that he was born of a marriage, which the law afterwards condemned as incestuous; and by his silence in other respects concerning his parents, though there is sufficient ground to conclude that they were pious persons.

V. 23—25. Elisheba is the same as Elisabeth. She was the sister of Naashon, or Nahshon, who was of the tribe of Judah, and an ancestor of Christ. Thus an alliance was formed betwixt the family of the priests and that of the kings; which might shadow forth him, who was both Priest and King in one Person.—It is observable that Moses in this place records nothing of his own descendants, who were left among the ordinary Levites; though he mentions such of the other branches of his

x 18. 20. Josh. 26 These are <sup>x</sup> that Aaron and Moses, to whom the Lord said, <sup>y</sup> Bring out the children of Israel from the land of Egypt according to their <sup>z</sup> armies.

z vii. 4. xii. 17. 61. xiii. 18. Num. xxxiii. 1. v. 1—3. vii. 10. b See on 20. xxxiii. 1.

27 These are they which <sup>a</sup> spake to Pharaoh king of Egypt, <sup>b</sup> to bring out the children of Israel from Egypt: these are that Moses and Aaron.

28 ¶ And it came to pass on the day

when the Lord spake unto Moses in the land of Egypt,

29 That the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, <sup>c</sup> I am the Lord: <sup>d</sup> speak thou unto Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say unto thee.

30 And Moses said before the Lord, Behold, I am of <sup>e</sup> uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?

family, as were afterwards in any way distinguished, and especially the descendants of Aaron, the priest of the Lord.

V. 26, 27. The transactions, which Moses was about to record, were exceedingly important in themselves, and in their consequences; and there could be no doubt that other nations and ages would hear the report of them. Accordingly, some traditions concerning them are found in many pagan writers: but they are greatly mis-stated; and especially the *parentages*, and even the *tribe*, of Moses are mistaken in them. It was therefore of great importance, in order to give the stamp of authenticity to his history, that a very particular and clear account should be given of the principal persons mentioned. This has frequently been done by other historians, who have on such occasions spoken of themselves in the third person; as Ezra, Daniel, and the apostle John: so that there is not the smallest reason for any objection, on this account, to these books having been written by Moses, according to the general testimony of all antiquity, sanctioned by the express attestations of our Lord himself. (*John v. 46, 47.*)

*Armies.* (26.) When the Israelites left Egypt, they marched in good order, without trepidation or confusion: and when the several tribes were regularly encamped, they appeared as so many armies prepared for battle, under the immediate conduct of the Lord of armies himself.

V. 28—30. Having stated the above particulars, the sacred writer resumes his narrative. (*Marg. Ref.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—8.

We are most likely to prosper in our endeavours to glorify God and serve our generation, when we are convinced by experience, that we can do nothing of ourselves: for when we can truly say, that our whole dependence is placed on the Lord, and "our expectation is only from him;" we are prepared to mark and to record his works of power and love, and to render him our tribute of adoring, thankful praise. He therefore previously proves and humbles those, whom he loves and employs, and brings them to *feel*, as well as acknowledge, their insufficiency: but, while he is thus mortifying their pride and ambition, Satan often takes the opportunity of tempting them to discontent, impatience, and discouragement; that "their hands may hang down and their knees wax feeble," and that they may be reluctant to the work assigned them. In such circumstances, they are apt to displease the Lord by unbelieving objections and hesitations; yet he graciously pities and pardons them, and obviates their discouragements. And nothing is more

effectual for this purpose, than discovering to them his immutable perfection, his incomprehensible wisdom and power, his uncontrollable dominion, his condescending compassion, love, and faithfulness; and his oath and covenant, by which he hath engaged to fulfil his largest promises to his church, and to every living member of it. Calling these things to remembrance, and recollecting his wonders of old, the drooping heart revives, faith recovers strength, larger expectations are formed; and the servant of God rises superior to despondency, and patiently proceeds in the work assigned him.

##### V. 9—30.

Our compassionate Lord regards our groanings under temporal calamities: but when the guilt and power of sin and temptation become our chief complaint, and extort the exclamation, "Oh, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?" he particularly notes it, and will certainly perform to us "the oath, which he sware unto ... Abraham, ... that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." *Luke i. 72—75.* When we find, that we cannot deliver ourselves, he will shew us what he can do; and, redeeming us by his strong hand and stretched-out arm, from the power of our enemies, he will take us to be his people, and will be our God. He will guard us safely all the way to that good land, where tears, groans, sins, and enemies are known no more for ever; and there he will give us everlasting felicity. But even these glorious and joyful assurances afford no consolation to the soul which is overwhelmed with present trouble, finds matters apparently grow worse, and has no sensible tokens of the divine favour.—For we are very prone to expect the continuance and increase of such dispensations, as we at present experience. Even universal observation of the mutability of human affairs does not prevent those in prosperity from expecting greater prosperity, and those in adversity from expecting deeper scenes of affliction: and this gives Satan an immense advantage, in attempting to buoy up some men in careless presumption, and to depress others in heartless despondency. If then we would be safe, and walk comfortably in such a world as this, "we must walk by faith, not by sight." For he, and he only, who habitually believes the testimony and relies on the promise of God, will find his heart prepared for humble watchfulness, patient hope, and cheerful submission: while frequent reflections on his own unworthiness, connected with lively prospects of heavenly felicity, tend to silence his complaints, animate his admiring love and gratitude, and ren-

## CHAP. VII.

The Lord encourages Moses and Aaron to go unto Pharaoh, 1—6. Their ages are noted, 7. Aaron casts down his rod, which becomes a serpent, and the magicians do the same; but their rods are swallowed up by Aaron's rod: yet Pharaoh's heart is hardened, 8—13. Another message is sent to Pharaoh, and the river is turned into blood, 14—23. The distress of the Egyptians, 24, 25

**AND** the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>a</sup> See, I have made thee <sup>b</sup> a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.

2 Thou shalt speak <sup>c</sup> all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land.

3 And <sup>d</sup> I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and <sup>e</sup> multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt.

4 But Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, <sup>f</sup> that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine <sup>g</sup> armies, and my people, the children

of Israel, out of the land of Egypt, <sup>h</sup> by great judgments.

5 And the Egyptians <sup>i</sup> shall know that I *am* the LORD, when <sup>j</sup> I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them.

6 And Moses and Aaron did <sup>k</sup> as the LORD commanded them, so did they.

7 And Moses *was* <sup>l</sup> fourscore years old, and Aaron fourscore and three years old, when they spake unto Pharaoh.

8 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, and unto Aaron, saying,

9 When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, <sup>m</sup> Shew a miracle for you: then thou shalt say unto Aaron, <sup>n</sup> Take thy rod and cast *it* before Pharaoh, and *it* shall become a serpent.

10 And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the LORD had commanded: and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and <sup>o</sup> it became a serpent.

h vi. 6. Prov. xix. 29. 1a. xxvi. 9. Ez. xiv. 21. xxv. 11. xxx. 14. 19. Rev. xv. 4. xvi. 7. xix. 2. viii. 10. 22. xiv. 4. 18. Ps. ix. 16. Ez. xxv. 17. xxviii. 22. xxxvi. 23. xxxix. 7. 22. See on iii. 20.

k 10. xii. 28. xxxix. 43. xl. 16. Gen. vi. 22. xxii. 18. John xv. 10. 14. Gen. xli. 46. Deut. xxxix. 5. xxxi. 2. xxxiv. 7. 18. xc. 10. Acts vii. 23. 30.

m 1a. vii. 11. John ii. 18. vi. 30. x. 38. n 10—12. iv. 2. 17. 20. ix. 23. x. 13.

o iv. 3. Am. ix. 3. Mark xvi. 18. Luke x. 19.

der him persevering and active in the duties of his place and station.

## NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1, 2. Moses, as the ambassador of JEHOVAH, representing him and speaking in his name, possessed and exercised an authority over Pharaoh, and laid injunctions, denounced threatenings, and called for judgments on him, with a power which Pharaoh, proud and great as he was, could not resist, and was unable to despise, or to endure. Thus Moses had a decided superiority over Pharaoh, and did not stand in awe of his authority, but made him tremble before him. All this seems to be implied in this strong expression, "I have made thee a god to Pharaoh:" and, in answer to Moses's objection that he was "of uncircumcised lips," he was assured that Aaron should deliver his message faithfully and properly to Pharaoh, and thus be "his prophet."—The last three verses of the foregoing chapter might be more conveniently placed at the beginning of this.

V. 3, 4. Notes, 13. iv. 21. vi. 26, 27.

V. 5. *Know.*] By the dreadful judgments inflicted on them, especially the destruction of all the first-born, the Egyptians had a full demonstration, that the God of Israel was the great JEHOVAH, "the Lord of the whole earth." (Note, vi. 5—7.)

V. 6, 7. At length Moses was delivered from his fears; and being strengthened in faith, he no longer objected, but went about his arduous work with undaunted courage, and proceeded in it with indefatigable perseverance; Aaron also heartily assisting him, in the same courage and con-

stancy of faith.—Being matured in years and experience, and venerable on that account, they were more proper to speak in the name of God, before Pharaoh and his courtiers, than younger men would have been.

V. 9, 10 It is here supposed, that extraordinary divine commissions should be attested by miracles: and, unless brought in proof of such doctrines, as evidently contradict the first grand principles of all religion, or of revealed truth in particular, they may be considered as the *seal of Heaven* affixed to the prophet's commission; so that open, undeniable, and repeated miracles are a divine attestation, in behalf of the person by whom they are wrought. (John iii. 2. v. 36. vi. 27. x. 38. xiv. 11. xv. 24.) And indeed it cannot be supposed that God will allow his seal to be so counterfeited, as to impose on the attentive, humble, and impartial enquirer; however he may leave the proud and prejudiced to be deceived by delusive appearances. There is likewise a vast difference between miracles wrought *publicly before enemies, in proof of a doctrine, which has got no establishment in the world*, and which by its very nature, and the circumstances of those who promulgate it, is never likely to succeed, unless the miracles are undeniable, so that the whole cause rests upon them; and miracles, supposed to have been performed in private, or among friends, in proof of a system already established, and supported by the wealthy, the powerful, and the learned, to whom it is the interest of others to pay court. All the miracles wrought by Moses and Aaron were of the former kind: and their success itself, in so extraordinary an undertaking, demonstrates, that they were wrought by the power of God.—Moses delivered the rod to Aaron, who in general gave the

11 Then Pharaoh also called the wise men, and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments.

12 For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods.

13 And he hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

14 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses,

Pharaoh's heart is hardened, he refuseth to let the people go.

15 Get thee unto Pharaoh in the morning; lo, he goeth out unto the water, and thou shalt stand by the river's brink, against he come: and the rod which was turned to a serpent shalt thou take in thine hand.

16 And thou shalt say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath sent me unto thee, saying, Let my people go, that they may serve me in

token for the performance of the miracles.—The command given to him by Moses before Pharaoh, implied a prediction of the miracle, which tended to render it the more undeniable.

*A serpent.*] *ῥα*, which the LXX render *δρακων*, a dragon, as also the plural in the twelfth verse *δρακοντες*. The word *ῥα* is used before, (iv. 3,) and is rendered by the LXX *εφί*.

V. 11, 12. No doubt Pharaoh and his servants were both astonished and alarmed, when they saw Aaron's rod become a terrible serpent before them. But as magicians and sorcerers were in high repute in Egypt, being called *wise men*, and supposed capable of performing very extraordinary things by their skill in the occult sciences; probably Pharaoh and his courtiers endeavoured to believe, that Moses and Aaron were nothing more than two great magicians, and that the sorcerers and magicians of Egypt were able to contend with them. Accordingly, some of the most renowned among them were called in, of whom we find Jannes and Jambres were the principal: (2 Tim. iii. 8:) and "they also did in like manner with their enchantments; for they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents."—No doubt many of these professors of sorcery, or magick, were expert in *legerdemain*, and imposed on the spectators by various artifices: yet they who reverence the Scriptures, will hardly deny, that many of them had a real intercourse with evil spirits, and by their help actually made discoveries, and produced effects, beyond the reach of human power or sagacity. It remains therefore to enquire into the fact here briefly recorded, what it was, and how performed. Some expositors consider it as merely an *illusion*, by which the magicians made the spectators think that they saw serpents when they did not. Others imagine, that the magicians had contrived to convey serpents thither, concealing their rods, to make it appear as if they were changed into serpents. Others think, that the power of Satan produced appearances like serpents, instead of the rods which were conveyed away. But some expositors are not satisfied with any of these interpretations, because it is expressly said, "they became serpents:" and "Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods." They therefore conclude, that the rods actually became real living serpents, and in that form were swallowed by the serpent, into which Aaron's rod was changed. We cannot indeed in general assign exact bounds to the power of evil spirits, who, when permitted, seem capable of any thing which created beings can do: yet, *creation*, in every instance, is commonly supposed to be exclusively the work of God. And on this ac-

count, they who adhere to the literal interpretation conclude, that while the magicians used their enchantments, expecting the interposition of the demons to whom they applied, the Lord himself was pleased to interpose, and to effect a real change of their rods into serpents; and, as they could not certainly know how far the power of their demons extended, they would naturally suppose that this was the effect of their enchantments.—Pharaoh was evidently seeking some pretence for disregarding the miracle which he had witnessed, and proudly disobeying the divine command; and it was the Lord's design to give him up to final obduracy. It does not therefore appear, that there is any thing, on this supposition, inconsistent with the divine perfections, or materially different from his dealings with other haughty and obstinate rebels in similar circumstances. (Notes, 1 Sam. xxviii. 11—19. 1 Kings xxii. 19—23. 2 Thes. ii. 5—12.)—But, however this may be determined, when "Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods;" that is, when the serpent, into which his rod had been changed, swallowed the serpents into which their rods had been changed; and when it again became a rod in Aaron's hand, but their rods were vanished, and were no more found; the event would have satisfied any impartial person, on which side the truth lay: and, had not a previous bias lain upon Pharaoh's mind, this must have convinced him that Moses and Aaron spake and acted by divine authority.

V. 13. *He hardened Pharaoh's heart.*] Or rather, "Pharaoh's heart was hardened;" for nothing is here said concerning any interposition of God in the case. The same words are afterwards rendered, "Pharaoh's heart was hardened" (22), and this accords with the subsequent words of God, "Pharaoh's heart is hardened" (14). "The heart of Pharaoh" became strong, presumptuous, unfeeling. (*καίσχυσεν*. Sept.) Probably, he had been at first alarmed and ready to yield: but he would now say, that the magicians had produced serpents also, and that Moses and Aaron were only greater adepts in magick than they; that JEHOVAH had no concern in it; and that there was no occasion to liberate the Israelites. Thus the effect produced, tended to embolden him in rebellion, and to fortify him against conviction. The Lord foresaw, and foretold, that this would be the case, and he formed his whole plan accordingly.

V. 15—20. Moses was the ambassador of JEHOVAH to Pharaoh, and Aaron was appointed to be his assistant: but Pharaoh haughtily rejected the embassy, and demanded their credentials; and he continued obstinate, after having witnessed a menacing but harmless miracle. Moses was

the wilderness: and behold, hitherto thou wouldest not hear.

17 Thus saith the LORD, In this <sup>a</sup> thou shalt know that I *am* the LORD: behold, I will smite with the rod that *is* in mine hand, upon the waters which *are* in the river, <sup>b</sup> and they shall be turned to blood.

18 And <sup>c</sup> the fish that *is* in the river shall die, and the river shall stink; and the Egyptians <sup>d</sup> shall loathe to drink of the water of the river.

19 And the LORD spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Take thy rod, and <sup>e</sup> stretch out thine hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all <sup>f</sup> their pools of water, that they may become blood: and *that* there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in *vessels* of wood, and in *vessels* of stone.

20 And Moses and Aaron did so, as the LORD commanded: and <sup>g</sup> he lifted up the rod and smote the waters that

were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants: and <sup>h</sup> all the waters that *were* in the river were turned to blood.

21 And <sup>i</sup> the fish that *was* in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river: and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.

22 And the <sup>j</sup> magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments: <sup>k</sup> and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, neither did he hearken unto them: as the LORD had said.

23 And Pharaoh turned and went into his house, <sup>l</sup> neither did he set his heart to this also.

24 And all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink: <sup>m</sup> for they could not drink of the water of the river.

25 And <sup>n</sup> seven days were fulfilled after that the LORD had smitten the river.

therefore sent to him the very next morning, with his rod in his hand, as denoting the authority by which he acted, and reminding Pharaoh of the preceding miracle.—Some suppose that Pharaoh went to pay his devotions to the river Nile, or to its supposed tutelary deity, and that Moses was directed to take that occasion of addressing him: for perhaps it was not, at this time, easy to find admittance to him in his palace.—Moses was commanded solemnly to renew to Pharaoh the demand, which he had before made in the name of JEHOVAH; and if he still answered, “I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go,” he must denounce the dreadful judgment on him and his people, of which smiting the river would be the signal. And, as the warning produced no effect, Moses delivered the rod to Aaron, who smote the river, and stretched out the rod over all the large collections of waters, which were directly converted into blood.—The vessels of wood and of stone, it is probable, were the cisterns, in which the Egyptians preserved the waters of the river: when the annual inundation took place, the water was, by various contrivances, conveyed even to those parts of the country, which were most distant from the river, and there kept in large reservoirs for use, till the next inundation. But this water also was turned into blood.

V. 21. The very sight of such immense quantities of entire blood must have been very horrible; the effects of such a change, distressing and calamitous beyond expression! The Egyptians gloried in the river Nile, by the inundations of which the whole country was enriched; and probably they even then adored it, as one of their principal deities: but now they could not look at it, without horror and dismay! They had cruelly cast the children of Israel into the river; and now the river itself was turned into

blood! A great part of their provisions consisted of fish; but now this was generally destroyed; their waters were useless or noxious; the most tremendous consequences might be apprehended from the continuance of this judgment, and it awfully foreboded all the desolations which followed.—The first miracle of Christ turned water into wine, the first plague upon Egypt turned all their water into blood. (Notes, and P. O. John ii. 1—11.)

V. 22, 23. The magicians should have attempted to remove the plague, and to remedy or prevent its fatal consequences, in order to make a fair trial of the efficacy of their art, in opposition to the miracles wrought by Moses: but they only amused Pharaoh, and increased the distress of Egypt, (either in reality or in appearance,) by imitating, or rather apeing, the surprising miracle of Moses; and by pretending at least to turn into blood some of the little water, which the mercy of God had spared. Yet this sufficed to embolden and harden Pharaoh's heart, and to prevent him from acknowledging the hand of God even in this judgment; which, probably, he attributed to the superior skill in magick, that Moses and Aaron had acquired: hoping at the same time, that by further study or new enchantments, his magicians would yet be able to contend with them. Being therefore indignant against Moses and Aaron, and bidding defiance to JEHOVAH, he seemed to be regardless of the distress of his subjects, and careless about the consequences!

V. 25. Seven days.] Thus long the awful calamity continued, and was then it seems removed: for the Lord would give respite to Egypt and to Pharaoh, and make way for other plagues; that his own power and justice, and the obstinacy of Pharaoh and his servants, might be more fully displayed.

## CHAP. VIII.

The plague of frogs is threatened and sent, 1—6; is imitated by the magicians, 7; and removed in answer to the prayer of Moses, made at Pharaoh's request, who yet hardened his heart, 8—15. The plague of lice, which the magicians could not imitate, 16—19. The plague of flies, 20—24; Pharaoh relents, the plague is removed, and his heart is hardened, 25—32.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

## V. 1—7.

When the Lord has humbled and proved his servants, and qualified them for their work, he will put honour upon them: and the least of those, who are entrusted with his message, and employed to speak in his name, are, in this delegated character, and while faithfully executing their office, superior to the greatest and haughtiest of those to whom they are sent. They ought therefore to speak with firmness and authority, without fear of the anger, respect of the persons, or desire of the favour, of those who are living in disobedience to God; and in this spirit the prisoner Paul may expect to make even Felix tremble.—But to deliver the message of God to proud persecuting tyrants, requires that strength of faith, that intrepid courage, and that meekness of wisdom, with which very few are endued: and we have cause to be not only satisfied, but thankful, that we are not called to such arduous services.—Indeed gravity, wisdom, experience, fortitude, patience, and meekness, are requisite for all those who, in any circumstances, speak in the name of God, and declare his truth and will: yet they who do not rashly intrude themselves, but are “allowed by him to be put in trust of the gospel,” need not be discouraged by a humble consciousness of their defects. Let them simply trust in his promised teaching and assistance, and observe his directions; and he will bear them out, and carry them through every service to which they are called.—If sinners will not attend to the message of grace and salvation, and so learn to *know* and love the Lord our God; they will certainly experience the effects of his wrath, and *know* him as a God of righteous vengeance. How careful then should men be, not to provoke him to give them up to hardness and impenitence! If they would escape that awful judgment, they must neither continue to practise presumptuous sins, nor procrastinate in the great concerns of salvation: they must watch against heedless and proud insensibility under affliction, and insolence in prosperity. They must not turn away their ears from instruction and reproof; or smother convictions of conscience by dissipation, business, or company; by rushing into sin, or by hating and shunning the awakening light of divine truth. For these are some of the steps, by which multitudes proceed to the brink of that awful precipice.

## V. 8—25.

No evidence suffices to convince men while left to themselves, that those doctrines are true and divine, which affront the pride of their hearts, and condemn their beloved iniquities: but the least shadow of an argument, though counterbalanced by demonstration itself, induces the belief of those opinions which they wish to find true.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses, <sup>a</sup> Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, <sup>b</sup> Thus saith the Lord, <sup>c</sup> Let my people go, that they may serve me.

2 And if thou <sup>d</sup> refuse to let *them* go, behold I will smite all thy borders with <sup>e</sup> frogs.

3 And the rivers shall bring forth

<sup>a</sup> Jer. i. 17—19.  
<sup>b</sup> xv. 19—21. Ez.  
ii. 6, 7.  
<sup>c</sup> See on v. 1. vi.  
16.

<sup>d</sup> See on vii. 14.  
ix. 2.

<sup>e</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 45.  
cv. 30. Rev. xvi.  
13, 14.

Thus all *mental errors* in religion originate, in some degree, from the state of the heart, and from the contrariety of revealed truths to men's prejudices, interests, or inclinations. “*Because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.*” John viii. 45.—Our merciful God always accompanies the word with sufficient evidence of its divine authority, were we but suitably disposed to attend to it: but, when men are bent upon disobedience, and inclined to cavil and object, he often permits a snare to be laid, in which they are entangled. Nor are any deceivers more instrumental to the destruction of sinners, than such as resist the truth, in the same manner as the magicians withstood Moses; namely, by amusing men with some resemblance and counterfeit of it: indeed Satan himself is most to be dreaded, when “transformed into an angel of light.”—But “madness is in the heart of man,” or he would never dare to provoke that God, who can so easily turn his choicest comforts into the most dreadful plagues; and who may so righteously render those things, which have been the fuel of men's pride, or the instruments of their cruelty, the weapons of his indignation: and then no human help can avail to alleviate or remove the inflicted misery.—In the mystery of Providence, subjects often suffer *through* the crimes of their princes; yet for their own sins, which provoke God to send them wicked rulers: and they, for their own profit or pleasure, join their iniquity, and are involved in the punishment.—“The righteous Lord so delights in mercy,” that he proceeds by slow degrees to extremities, even with the most atrocious offenders: but, if neither judgments nor mercies bring them to repentance, destruction will at length overtake them without remedy.—We seldom duly value our comforts, till we are deprived of them: but let us remember, that as the anger of God converts the most valued advantages into scourges, or curses, to his enemies; so the love of Christ renders the most common mercies special blessings to his disciples.

## NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1—6. It is probable, that this message was sent at the end of the seven days, and just about the time when the former plague was removed. The prediction of each judgment was an additional proof, that it was wrought by the power of JEHOVAH, and was not the mere effect of second causes. The plague of frogs must have been peculiarly distressing; as the immense multitudes of them infested every place, harassed all ranks of the Egyptians, night and day, and rendered them incapable of either eating, drinking, or sleeping, in peace and comfort. As it was limited to Pharaoh's servants and people, we may infer, that in this as well as in the preceding miracle, the Israelites were in a great measure, if not entirely, exempted.—Here again Moses issued the man-

frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into thine house, and into thy bedchamber, and upon thy bed, and into the house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneading troughs.

\* Or, dough xii. 34.

4 And the frogs shall come up both on thee, and upon thy people, and upon all thy servants.

\* Ps. cvii. 40. Is. xix. 11, 22, xxxiii. 2. Dan. ix. 37 Acts xii. 22, 23

f vii 19

5 And the LORD spake unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, 'Stretch forth thine hand with thy rod over the streams, over the rivers, and over the ponds, and cause frogs to come up upon the land of Egypt.

k Ps lxxxvi. 45 cv. 30

6 And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt: and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt.

l vii. 11, 22. Deut. xiii. 1—3. Matt. xxiv. 24. 2 Tim. ii. 9—11. 2 Tim. iii. 8. Rev. xiii. 14.

7 And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt.

m v. 2. ix. 28. x. 17. Num. xxi. 7. 1 Sam. xii. 19. 1 Kings xiii. 6. Acts viii. 24. 25—28. x. 9—11. 24—27. xii. 31. 32. xiv. 5. Ps. lxxvi. 3. Marg. lxxvi. 1. 34—36. Jer. xxxix. 8—16.

8 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, 'Intreat the LORD, that he may take away the frogs from me, and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may do sacrifice unto the LORD.

date; and Aaron, who bare the rod, the token of the divine presence and power, gave the signal for the miracle.

V. 7, 8. The magicians succeeded in their attempt to imitate this miracle also, but 'they should rather have shewn their skill in removing the frogs...which, one would think, Pharaoh expected from them...So *Aben Ezra* observes, 'He called for Moses, because he saw that the magicians had only added to the plague, but could not diminish it.'

*Bp. Patrick*: The continuance of the plague was so intolerable, that Pharaoh, notwithstanding his haughtiness and impiety, was constrained to tremble before the power of JEHOVAH, thus exerted against him; and even to honour Moses and Aaron, by intreating them to intercede for him and his servants. Under the anguish of this most humiliating and disgusting judgment, he seemed inclined to dismiss Israel; but it was an extorted, reluctant consent, and therefore it was not durable, but was soon retracted.

V. 9—11. In order the more fully to convince Pharaoh, that the power of JEHOVAH alone had inflicted the judgment, Moses allowed him to "glory over him," or to have the honour of fixing the time when, in answer to his prayer, the frogs should be destroyed, whether immediately or afterwards: for Moses earnestly desired, that Pharaoh by submitting might escape destruction. 'Ap- point (*raʿai*) to me when I shall pray for thee.' *Sept.* The Lord was pleased thus to influence his servant, that all cavils and objections might be the more effectually obviated; the very time of the removal of the plague having been exactly foretold.—But why did not Pharaoh choose

9 And Moses said unto Pharaoh, 'Glory over me: when shall I intreat for thee and for thy servants, and for thy people, to destroy the frogs from thee, and thy houses, that they may remain in the river only?

† Or, Have this honour over me, against when. 1 Kings xviii. 25. Heb. to cut off.

10 And he said, 'To-morrow. And he said, Be it according to thy word: that thou mayest know that there is none like unto the LORD our God.

† Or, Against to-morrow. Prov. xxvii. 1. Jam. iv. 14.

11 And the frogs shall depart from thee, and from thy houses, and from thy servants, and from thy people; they shall remain in the river only.

ix. 14, 29. xv. 11. Dent. xxxii. 31. xxxiii. 26. 2 Sam. vii. 22. 1 Chr. xvii. 29. Ps. lxxxiii. 18. lxxxvi. 18. lxxxix. 6—8. Is. xl. 25. xlv. 9. Jer. x. 6. 7. p. 3. 9.

12 And Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh: and Moses cried unto the LORD, because of the frogs which he had brought against Pharaoh.

q See on 8. 35. ix. 33. x. 18. xxxii. 11. 1 Sam. xii. 23. Jam. v. 16—18.

13 And the LORD did according to the word of Moses: and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the villages, and out of the fields.

r 24. vii. 21. Is. xxxiv. 8. Ez. xxxix. 11. Joel ii. 20.

14 And they gathered them together upon heaps: and the land stank.

s xiv. 5. Ec. viii. 11. Is. xxvii. 10. Jer. xxxiv. 7—11. Hos. vi. 4.

15 But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

t See on iv. 21. vii. 13. 14.—Prov. xxix. 1. Zech. vii. 11, 12. Heb. iii. 8. 15. Rev. xvi. 9.

to be delivered from the frogs immediately? He seems to have still indulged some hopes that they would go away of themselves; and then he should not be obliged to Moses, or under the necessity of submitting to JEHOVAH, and letting Israel go; and therefore he would stand out till the next day, that if possible he might escape this most bitter mortification. Perhaps he had learned from the magicians to count some days more fortunate than others: and Moses, knowing this, allowed him to fix his own time, that the power of JEHOVAH might be rendered the more conspicuous; and he preferred the next day, in order to try whether that power could remove the frogs at the appointed time.

V. 14. It thus appeared that they were real frogs, which God in his judgment at first created, and afterwards in mercy destroyed.

V. 15. Pharaoh had now no pretence to question, either the power of JEHOVAH, or the divine mission of Moses. While the plague pressed upon him, he was inclined to submit, for it was insupportable: but when it was removed, and he had, (as the word denotes,) time to take his breath, he mistook a respite for a deliverance. Ambition, pride, and interest again influenced his mind; and thus he was induced to break his promise, and persist in disobedience. Having engaged in the contest, the further he proceeded, the more he was infatuated: that which at first appeared a loss, and a weakening of his kingdom, was now considered as an insufferable degradation of his dignity; and he thought himself engaged in

16 And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, "Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

17 And they did so; for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust of the earth, and it became <sup>\*</sup>lice, in man and in beast: all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt.

18 And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but <sup>†</sup>they could not: so there were lice upon man, and upon beast.

19 Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, <sup>\*</sup>This is the finger of God: <sup>\*</sup>and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

20 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses,

Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, (<sup>b</sup> lo, he cometh forth to the water,) and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

21 Else if thou wilt not let my people go, behold, I will send <sup>\*</sup>swarms of *flies* upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses: and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of <sup>\*</sup>swarms of *flies*, and also the ground whereon they *are*.

22 And I will <sup>\*</sup>sever in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of *flies* shall be there; to the end thou mayest know, <sup>\*</sup>that I *am* the LORD in the <sup>\*</sup>'midst of the earth.

23 And I will put <sup>†</sup>a division between my people, and thy people: <sup>\*</sup>to-morrow shall this sign be.

x Ps. cv. 31. Is. xxiii. 9. Acts xii. 22.

y ix. 11. Gen. xli. 8. Is. xix. 12. xiv. 12. 13. Dan. ii. 10, 11. Is. 7. v. 3.

z 1 Sam. vi. 9. Ps. viii. 3. Dan. ii. 10, 11. 19. Matt. xii. 28. Luke xi. 20. John xi. 47. Acts iv. 16. See on 16.

Or, a mixture of noisome beasts, &c.

c Ps. lxxviii. 45. cv. 31. Is. vii. 18.

d ix. 4. 6. 26. x. 23. xi. 6, 7. xii. 18. Mal. iii. 18.

e See on 10. vii. 17. Ez. xxx. 19. f Ps. lxxiv. 12. cx. 2.

† Heb. a redemption.

: Or, by to-morrow.

honour, not to be threatened and forced into submission. This being the state of his mind, judgments and mercies alike combined to increase his obduracy.

V. 16, 17. Had the Lord sent a great number of lions and tigers to devour the Egyptians, or armies of victorious enemies to desolate the land; Pharaoh, though crushed, would have appeared, in his own eyes and in the eyes of others, of some consequence: but it was inconceivably humiliating, and rendered him extremely contemptible, to be thus vanquished by creatures so insignificant and despicable, as frogs, lice, and flies, which however he could neither escape, nor oppose, nor endure.—This judgment seems to have been sent without any previous warning; as an awful declaration, how greatly the Lord was provoked by the recent instance of Pharaoh's prevarication and obstinacy.

V. 18, 19. The Lord allowed the magicians to proceed, till his righteous purposes were answered, and then they could do nothing; to convince them that they had no power against Moses, but "what was given them from <sup>\*</sup>above," or exercised by the permission of God. Some suppose from the concluding part of the verse, that they at length attempted to remove the plague, but could not. Probably, the lice harassed the magicians, as well as others; and this extorted from them a confession that it was "the <sup>\*</sup>finger of God." They might also intend to vindicate their art and their skill in it, by intimating that no power, but that of God himself, could thus have overcome them. (Note, Dan. ii. 10—13.) Yet this declaration produced no effect on Pharaoh, whom their enchantments had helped to harden; for he was too deeply engaged in the contest, and had too often done violence to his convictions, to be influenced by their opinion. Probably he still *endeavoured to believe*, that Moses was only a magician of superior attainments; and that his magicians intended, by this concession, to conceal their own deficiency in professional skill.

V. 21. *Swarms of flies.* מִצְרָיִם: <sup>\*</sup>a mixture of noisome beasts.' Marg. Der. from צָרַר *misceri, confundi*. The idea of *mixture* is supposed to be implied in the different modifications of words from this root. צָרַר a mixed multitude, or mingled people: xii. 38. Neh. xiii. 3.—Insects, however, of different kinds, are generally supposed to be meant.—צָרַר, a mixture of insects, or of various animals: as wasps, hornets, locusts, beetles.' Robert-son's *Thesaurus*. 'Κυνόμυια, the dog-fly.' Sept. The same word is retained in the Hebrew, and translated in the same manner by the LXX, Ps. lxxviii. 45. cv. 31.—Winged insects, most noxious and harassing to mankind, seem intended. The common fly is called צָרַר: whence *Baalzebub*. Locusts were afterwards sent as a separate plague; and they keep together in a compact body: we may therefore conclude that they did not form a part of this *mixture*; and the effects described do not comport with the idea of the larger destructive animals. But immense swarms of winged insects of various kinds, such as have been mentioned, would form a most distressing and mortifying judgment, on this proud monarch and his haughty nobles and people.

V. 22, 23. Perhaps the Israelites, for their correction, had in some small measure felt the former plagues. At least the distinction between them and the Egyptians had not been so particularly noticed, as it would be rendered on this occasion; when the express prediction, and exact accomplishment, would so mark the difference, that it could not be overlooked. Thus it must appear, that JEHOVAH, the God of the whole earth, protected the region inhabited by his worshippers, while he executed judgment on his enemies who dwelt close by them.—The very nature of the plague of *flies*, which so readily move from place to place, would render the exemption of Israel the more remarkable.—'I will greatly honour (παροξασσω) the land <sup>\*</sup>of Gesem.' Sept.

**24** And the LORD did so: and <sup>g</sup>there came a grievous swarm of *flies* into the house of Pharaoh, and into his servants' houses, and into all the land of Egypt: <sup>h</sup>the land was <sup>\*</sup>corrupted by reason of the swarm of *flies*.

<sup>h</sup> See on 4.  
<sup>\*</sup> Or, destroyed.

**25** And Pharaoh <sup>i</sup>called for Moses, and for Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land.

<sup>i</sup> See on 8. ix. 27.  
—x. 6. xii. 31.  
Rev. iii. 9.

**26** And Moses said, <sup>k</sup>It is not meet so to do; for <sup>l</sup>we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our God: lo, shall we sacrifice <sup>m</sup>the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us?

<sup>k</sup> iii. 18. 2 Cor. vi. 14—17.

<sup>l</sup> Gen. xliii. 32.  
xvi. 34. Deut. vii. 25, 26. xii. 31.

<sup>m</sup> 1 Kings xi. 5—7. 2 Kings xxiii. 13.

**27** We will go <sup>n</sup>a three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the LORD our God, <sup>o</sup>as he shall command us.

<sup>n</sup> iii. 18. v. 1.

<sup>o</sup> x. 26. xxxiv. 11.  
Lev. x. 1. Matt. xxviii. 20.  
p Hos. x. 2.

**28** And Pharaoh said, <sup>p</sup>I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the LORD

your God in the wilderness; only ye shall not go very far away: <sup>q</sup>Intreat for me.

<sup>q</sup> See on 8. ix. 28.  
x. 17.—1 Kings xiii. 6. Ec. vi. 10.

**29** And Moses said, Behold, I go out from thee, and I will intreat the LORD, that the swarms of *flies* may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, <sup>r</sup>to-morrow: but <sup>r</sup>io let not Pharaoh <sup>s</sup>deal deceitfully any more, in not letting the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.

<sup>r</sup> 8. 15. Ps. lxxvi. 8.  
Magg. lxxviii. 34  
—37. Jer. xlii. 20, 21. Acts v. 3, 4. Gal. vi. 7.

**30** And Moses went out from Pharaoh, and intreated the LORD.

**31** And the LORD did according to the word of Moses; and he removed the swarms of *flies* from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people; there remained not one.

**32** And <sup>t</sup>Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also, neither would he let the people go.

<sup>t</sup> See on iv. 21. vii. 13, 14.—Is. lxiii. 17. Acts xxviii. 26, 27. Jam. i. 13, 14.

V. 24. This plague seems to have been sent, without the token of waving the rod of Moses, or striking the ground with it; perhaps lest Pharaoh should ascribe the effects to some magical virtue in the rod itself, instead of considering it as a token of the divine operation.—When we consider, that flies in general propagate by maggots of one kind or another, we shall perceive the emphasis of the expression, “the land was corrupted by them:” for it would not only be desolated by the flies themselves, but filled with stench and filthiness by their maggots; as no doubt the insects intended were in a state of maturity, however produced.

V. 25—27. Pharaoh was aware, that if the Israelites went into the wilderness to offer sacrifice, they would not readily be brought back again; and he intimated, that if they only meant to sacrifice to JEHOVAH, they might do it in the land, and he would make no farther opposition. But Moses objected, that according to the rites of their religion, they must sacrifice to JEHOVAH “the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes,” who would thus be provoked to stone them. It is well known that the Egyptians in after times worshipped oxen or calves, and other animals; and it seems natural to conclude, that the Israelites had in Egypt imbibed the idea of making an image of God in the form of a calf, and that this worship prevailed there at that time: if so, to offer the very animals as sacrifices, which the Egyptians adored as deities, would be an abomination in their eyes, even as their idolatry was an abomination in itself. It was therefore necessary for the Israelites to retire to a great distance in the wilderness.

V. 29. To-morrow.] In the former instance, Pharaoh had chosen to wait till the morrow for the removal of the plague: and on this occasion he was left to suffer under the rod till the morrow, perhaps to remind him of his folly in that instance; and to warn him not to deal deceitfully any more by breaking his promise, as he had repeatedly done. (8. 15.)

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

### V. 1—15.

How dangerous is it to provoke that God, who hath such a variety of ways, in which he can inflict dreadful punishment on his rebellious creatures! He can employ the most despicable insects as formidable executioners of his vengeance; he can turn all our pleasures into loathing, our comeliness and decorations into deformity and corruption, and pour contempt on all our pride and self-importance! Nor is there any resistance, or escape, from his tremendous indignation. Yet he still continues merciful; he is ready to forgive every sinner who submits; and he pursues with vengeance such alone as persist in their rebellion. But let us not mistake *transient relentings*, or hasty determinations of amendment, for that *unreserved submission* which the word of God requires. Under the weight of incumbent affliction, and the dreadful expectation of still heavier sufferings, the proudest and hardest heart feels some pangs of remorse: the despised and hated servants of the Lord may then perhaps be called for; their prayers requested, and amendment promised; but alas! such appearances are entitled to small regard. Even the evil spirits once besought Christ not to torment them; and experience shews, that prayers offered, under severe sufferings and urgent terrors, frequently spring from no higher principle. For when there is a respite, men again harden their hearts, throw off their assumed and constrained shews of piety, return to their sins, and commonly proceed to more daring ungodliness. But though we must not countenance the delusion of men living in sin, and expecting to die penitent, or give unscriptural encouragement to fallacious appearances; yet, knowing that “nothing is too hard for the LORD,” we should be ready to assist, with our counsel and prayers, even those persons who have been our most injurious enemies; rendering them every kind of service, and shewing them every species of courteousness, (except that of flatter-

## CHAP. IX.

The plague of murrain predicted, and sent on the cattle of the Egyptians; while the cattle of Israel are exempted, 1—7. The plague of boils, 8—12. Moses expostulates with Pharaoh, and predicts the plague of hail, which is sent, and causes immense devastation, 13—26. Pharaoh confesses his wickedness, deprecates further judgments, and promises to let Israel go, 27, 28. Moses intercedes, the hail ceases, and Pharaoh continues hardened, 29—35.

**THEN** the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>a</sup> Go in unto Pharaoh, and tell him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me. <sup>b</sup> For if thou refuse to let them go, and wilt hold them still, <sup>c</sup> Behold, the hand of the LORD is upon thy cattle which is in the field,

<sup>a</sup> 13. iii. 18. iv. 22.  
23. v. 1. viii. 1.  
20. x. 3.

<sup>b</sup> iv. 21. viii. 2. x.  
4. Lev. xxvi. 14.  
—16. 23. 24. 27.  
28. Ps. vii. 11.  
12. bcviil. 21. Ia.  
1. 20. Rom. ii. 8.  
Rev. ii. 21, 22.  
xvi. 9  
<sup>c</sup> vii. 4. 1 Sam. v.  
6—11. vi. 9. Acts  
xiii. 11.

ing them in false confidence,) without being wearied of well doing by reiterated disappointments.

## V. 16—32.

It is peculiarly necessary to remind such persons, as repeatedly shew tokens of remorse, that on former occasions they relapsed into their evil courses; and to warn them, no longer to deal deceitfully: for the love of sin, and its supposed advantages and pleasures, joined with the pride of the human heart, if not effectually subdued by the grace of God, will certainly prevail against all convictions. Hence, “many seek to enter in, and are not able:” they seem in earnest, but there is some reserve, some Herodias, some beloved secret sin, of which they are ready to say, as Lot of Zoar, “Is it not a little one?” They are unwilling to think themselves exposed to everlasting misery; they hope for some abatement, or some allowance; they propose to make some compromise; they refrain from other sins; they do many things, and give liberally, yea, punish themselves severely: they even abstain at some times, and, as it were, let their sin depart a little way, provided it may remain within call. But finally to divorce Herodias; to sell all, and follow Christ, bearing the cross; alas! if this be the case, they must have longer time to consider; they must postpone, though not forego, the thoughts of eternal life; they are sorrowful, but depart from Christ, determined to keep the world at present, and hoping for some future season, when salvation may be had without such costly sacrifices. Yet the word of God is peremptory: “He is of one mind, and who can turn him?” The expected abatement, the favourable season, is waited for in vain; the conviction wears off, the heart grows hard; and at length the poor sinner is “driven away in his wickedness,” and left without hope to execrate his own folly and madness. Would we escape this dreadful end, we must earnestly pray for grace to enable us, “if our right hand, or eye, or foot offend us,” resolutely to part with it. Without reserve or delay, we must hearken to the voice of Christ, which

upon the horses, upon the asses, upon the camels, upon the oxen, and upon the sheep; *there shall be a very grievous murrain.*

4 And the LORD shall <sup>d</sup> sever between the cattle of Israel, and the cattle of Egypt: and there shall nothing die of all *that is* the children's of Israel.

5 And the LORD appointed <sup>e</sup> a set time, saying, To-morrow the LORD shall do this thing in the land.

6 And the LORD did that thing on the morrow, and <sup>f</sup> all the cattle of Egypt died: but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one.

7 And Pharaoh sent, and behold, there was not one of the cattle of the Israelites dead. And <sup>g</sup> the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go.

<sup>d</sup> viii. 22. x. 28.  
xii. 18. Is. lxxv.  
13, 14. Mal. iii.  
18.

<sup>e</sup> 18. viii. 28. x. 4.  
Num. xvi. 5. Job  
xxiv. 1. Ec. iii.  
1—11. Jer. xxviii.  
16, 17. Matt  
xxvii. 63, 64.

<sup>f</sup> 19. 25 Ps. lxxviii.  
43.

<sup>g</sup> 12. vii. 14. Job  
ix. 4. Prov. xxix  
1. Is. xlviii. 4.  
Dan. v. 20. Rom.  
ix. 18.

bids us finally to break off every sin, and to renounce all that leads to evil; and we must stand prepared, when called to it by his command and in Providence, to forsake all for his sake. Nor let us forget, that they who would serve God must separate from the society of sinners, whose conduct is an abomination to the true Christian, and who reciprocally hold him in abhorrence.—We may also observe for our comfort, that though wicked men and deceivers often “practise and prosper,” yet their power is limited; and however they may impose on others, they cannot hurt the servant of God; but in due time shall be constrained to confess that the Lord is with him. And whether God do, or do not, exempt his people from the common afflictions of the world, he will make all at last to “return and discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not.” *Mal.* iii. 18.

## NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 6. No mention is made in the narrative of this miracle of the rod of Moses, probably for the same reason as before. (*Note*, viii. 24.) The subsequent history shews, that some of the cattle were preserved; but vast multitudes of every kind were suddenly destroyed throughout the whole land of Egypt.—It is supposed that, even at this early period, the Egyptians idolized some kinds of cattle, and represented their deities under images in the shape of them; and this terrible calamity was well suited to expose the stupidity of this practice, as well as to shew the power of God, both in destroying the cattle of the Egyptians, and preserving the cattle of Israel.

V. 7. It does not appear, that Pharaoh had in any former instance sent to enquire, whether the Israelites were involved in the calamities, or not; for he had treated the nation with contempt: yet on this occasion he sent to enquire, and he learned that not one of their cattle had died. But he had so long done violence to his conscience, that it was become callous, as “seared with an hot iron:” so that

**S ¶** And the LORD said unto Moses, and unto Aaron, <sup>b</sup>Take to you handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it towards the heaven in the sight of Pharaoh.

**9** And it shall become small dust in all the land of Egypt, and shall be <sup>i</sup>a boil breaking forth *with* blains, upon man, and upon beast, throughout all the land of Egypt.

**10** And they took ashes of the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh, and Moses sprinkled it up towards heaven: and it became a boil breaking forth *with* blains, upon man, and upon beast.

**11** And the magicians <sup>k</sup>could not stand before Moses, because of the boil: for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians.

**12** And <sup>l</sup>the LORD hardened the

heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had spoken unto Moses.

**13 ¶** And the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>m</sup>Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, that they may serve me.

**14** For I will at this time send <sup>n</sup>all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people: <sup>o</sup>that thou mayest know that *there is* none like me in all the earth.

**15** For now I will stretch out my hand, <sup>p</sup>that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence: and thou shalt be <sup>q</sup>cut off from the earth.

**16** And in very deed <sup>r</sup>for this *cause* have I <sup>s</sup>raised thee up, <sup>t</sup>for to shew in

<sup>b</sup> vii. 16.

<sup>i</sup> Deut. xxviii. 27.  
<sup>35.</sup> Job ii. 7.  
<sup>Rev.</sup> xvi. 2.

<sup>k</sup> viii. 18, 19. Is.  
xviii. 12—14.  
<sup>2 Tim.</sup> iii. 8, 9.

<sup>l</sup> See on iv. 21. vii.  
13, 14. Ps. lxxxi.  
11, 12. Rev. xvi.  
10, 11.

<sup>m</sup> i. vii. 15. vii.  
20.

<sup>n</sup> Lev. xxvi. 18.  
21. 28. Deut.  
xxviii. 15—17.  
59—61. xxix. 20  
—22. xxxii. 39  
—42. 1 Sam. iv.  
8. Jer. xix. 8.  
Mic. vi. 13.  
Rev. xviii. 8.  
xxii. 18.

<sup>o</sup> See on viii. 10.  
<sup>p</sup> xl. 4—6. xii. 29,  
30.

<sup>q</sup> xiv. 28. 1 Kings  
xiii. 34. Prov. ii.  
22.

<sup>r</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 17.  
18. Prov. xvi. 4.  
Rom. ix. 22.  
1 Pet. ii. 8. Jude  
4.

<sup>s</sup> Heb. made thee  
stand.

<sup>t</sup> xiv. 4. xv. 11—  
16. xviii. 11.  
Josh. ii. 10, 11.  
1 Sam. iv. 8. Ps.  
cxxxvi. 10—15.

this marked distinction made no impression on him. (Note, 12.)

V. 8—10. It is thought that these ashes were taken from the furnaces, or *kilns*, in which the Israelites burnt the bricks; and that this was intended to shew Pharaoh, that he was visited with these sore judgments for his cruel oppression of the people of JEHOVAH.—Instead of *waving the rod*, as in some former instances, *the sprinkling of the ashes* by Moses and Aaron in the sight of Egypt's haughty monarch, was made the token of a dire disease, which arose from the state of the air, out of which small dust fell on the people throughout the land, and most dreadful ulcers followed.—The former miracles distressed and impoverished the Egyptians, yet their health and persons had not been touched: but the judgments of God came nearer and nearer; so that their bodies, as well as the poor remains of their cattle, were now visited by the most distressing tokens of divine indignation.

V. 11. The magicians, though baffled, had hitherto it seems persisted in the contest, at least so far as to encourage Pharaoh to stand out in his opposition, as expecting that they would soon be able to overcome Moses and Aaron; but, being visited by this loathsome and painful disorder; they were rendered contemptible, and finally driven away: “their folly appeared unto all men,” and we hear nothing more respecting them in the sacred records; but traditions, both of Jewish Rabbies and of Mohammedans, concerning them, are many, sufficiently contradictory, and absurd.

V. 12. The Lord had declared twice, that “he would harden the heart of Pharaoh” (iv. 21. vii. 3); but this is the first time, in which it is expressly said that “the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart:” yet this expression is afterwards several times repeated. Hence we may infer, that as God had before permitted and appointed a variety of events, which had a tendency to augment Pharaoh’s obduracy; so now, in punishment of his presumptuous rebellion, he totally gave him up to his own lusts, and to the

power of Satan: nor can we interpret the expression too strongly, if we only remember this one thing, that God did not by his own power create any hardness or wickedness in his heart; “for God is not tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man.” (Note, Jam. i. 13—15.)—It was his settled purpose that Pharaoh should be finally hardened, for the accomplishment of which he effectually provided, and in which he doubtless was perfectly righteous. “The sentence of destruction was irreversibly denounced against him, and God resolved to dispose things so that he should not repent, but run headlong to his ruin.” Bp. Patrick. Indeed, we may perceive that this proud tyrant and cruel oppressor *deserved* to be made an example, by the just Judge of the universe: and provided none are punished who do not deserve it, and none above their deserts, there can be no reasonable cause of complaint, or ground of objection.—Hardness of heart is a figurative expression, denoting that insensibility of mind, upon which neither threatenings nor promises, judgments nor mercies, make any abiding impressions; but the conscience being stupified, and the heart filled with insolent pride and presumption, the obdurate rebel persists in determined impenitence, unbelief, and disobedience: not from a natural incapacity of obeying, or as deprived of his understanding; but from enmity of heart, and a determined opposition of his will against the known commands of God. The tendency of our nature to this state of mind is also called the *stony heart*; and to it is opposed “the heart of flesh,” the broken, contrite, and tender heart.—(Note, Ez. xi. 17—20.)—Though the boil was upon the magicians, yet probably Pharaoh had escaped it, which might conduce to increase his obduracy.

V. 13—16. Pharaoh, even when given up to *judicial obduracy*, was not at all exempted from obligation to obey God, nor excused in his wilful and insolent disobedience (34). Accordingly Moses was again sent to him, in the name of the LORD, requiring him to “let his people go that they might serve him;” and enforcing the de-

<sup>a</sup> 1 Chr. xvi. 24. thee my power; and <sup>t</sup>that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.

<sup>u</sup> Job ix. 4. xv. 26. xl. 9. Is. x. 15. xxvi. 11. xxxvii. 23, 24. 29. xlv. 9. Acts xii. 23. 1 Cor. x. 22.

17 As yet <sup>u</sup> exaltest thou thyself against my people, that thou wilt not let them go?

<sup>x</sup> 1 Kings xix. 2. xx. 6. 2 Kings vii. 1. 18.

<sup>y</sup> 22—25.

18 Behold, <sup>x</sup> to-morrow about this time, <sup>y</sup> I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt, since the foundation thereof, even until now.

<sup>z</sup> Hab. iii. 2.

19 Send therefore now, <sup>z</sup> and gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field: *for upon* every man and beast which shall be found in the field, and shall not be brought home, the hail shall come down upon them, and they shall die.

<sup>a</sup> Prov. xxii. 3. Jon. iii. 5, 6. Mark xiii. 14—16. Heb. xi. 7.

20 He that <sup>a</sup> feared the word of the LORD among the servants of Pharaoh, made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses.

<sup>b</sup> Heb. set not his heart unto. vii. 23. 1 Sam. iv. 20. Marg. 1 Chr. xxii. 19. Job vii. 17. xxxiv. 14. Prov. xxiv. 32. Marg. Ez. xl. 4. Dan. x. 12.

21 And he that <sup>b</sup> regarded not the word of the LORD, left his servants and his cattle in the field.

<sup>b</sup> vii. 19. viii. 5. 16.

22 And the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>b</sup> Stretch forth thine hand toward heaven, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt; upon man, and upon

beast, and upon every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt.

23 And Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven, and <sup>c</sup>the LORD sent thunder and <sup>d</sup>hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; and the LORD rained hail upon the land of Egypt.

24 So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was <sup>e</sup> none like it in all the land of Egypt, since it became a nation.

25 And the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt, all that *was* in the field, both man and beast: and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field.

26 Only <sup>f</sup> in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel *were*, was there no hail.

27 ¶ And Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said unto them, <sup>g</sup> I have sinned this time; <sup>h</sup> the LORD is righteous, and I and my people are wicked.

28 <sup>i</sup> Intreat the LORD (for it is enough) that there be no *more* <sup>j</sup> mighty thunderings and hail; and I will let you go, and <sup>k</sup> ye shall stay no longer.

mand with still more awful denunciations of desolating judgments on him, and on his people, who concurred in his rebellion; that he might be effectually convinced of the unrivalled power and majesty of JEHOVAH, above all the imagined gods of the nations, in the whole earth. After many other plagues, the Lord would smite him and his people with the *pestilence*, which seems to denote the destruction of the first-born. Yet it was implied that Pharaoh himself, while he felt most exquisitely the anguish of that dreadful judgment, would not die by it; but “be cut off from the earth” by a subsequent stroke. For indeed “the LORD had raised him up” for this very purpose. He “who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will,” knowing the heart of Pharaoh, had placed him on the throne, and established him in great prosperity, at the very time long before appointed and predicted for Israel’s deliverance. (Notes, Gen. xv. 12—16.) God foresaw that Pharaoh’s pride and presumption would induce him to refuse obedience; and that every circumstance would concur in determining him to persist in the contest with desperate obstinacy. Accordingly, the Lord had purposed to leave Pharaoh to be hardened to his destruction; and, in the example of this haughty tyrant and cruel oppressor, to display his almighty power, sovereign authority, and awful justice; that all the nations might hear, and know that the God of Israel was indeed the Lord of the whole earth, for the glory of his name, and for an extensive and

durable advantage to mankind. (Notes, Rom. ix. 15—18. 22, 23.)

V. 17. ‘Art thou so infatuated as still to oppose thy feeble arm against that omnipotence, the effects of which thou hast already witnessed?’ In exalting himself against Israel, Pharaoh exalted himself against God.

V. 18, 19. Rain or hail was very rare in Egypt; but such a tremendous storm of rain and hail, with thunder and lightning, as Moses denounced, would be entirely unprecedented.—Warning of this judgment was mercifully given, that individuals, who were not hardened in rebellion, might escape the more ruinous effects of it.

V. 20, 21. When Moses had delivered the message to Pharaoh, the report would doubtless spread swiftly among the people; and some, by what they had seen and heard, were so far influenced as to provide against the approaching storm. But a great part of the people remained almost as obdurate as Pharaoh himself.—This instance aptly illustrates the inseparable connexion between believing and obeying. Some believed that the judgment would come, others did not; and both acted accordingly, obeying or disobeying.

V. 23, 24. This plague must have been inconceivably tremendous, as well as destructive in its effects: few words indeed are used in describing it, but they are peculiarly emphatical.

V. 25. Man.] Hitherto the lives of the Egyptians had

29 And Moses said unto him, As soon as I am gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands unto the LORD: and the thunder shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that thou mayest know, how<sup>m</sup> that the earth is the LORD's.

30 But as for thee and thy servants, I know that ye will not yet fear the LORD God.

31 And the flax, and the barley was smitten: for the barley was in the ear, and the flax was bolled.

32 But the wheat and the rye were not smitten: for they were<sup>\*</sup> not grown up.

been spared; but this plague first began to destroy them.

V. 30. Moses knew that Pharaoh and his servants would not give up the contest, both as he was made acquainted with the purpose of God, and as he knew the human heart. He was sensible, that Pharaoh's confessions and promises were not the effect of any radical change of mind and heart by special grace; but extorted merely by terror and anguish. He would not, however, leave him the least shadow of excuse for his conduct, and therefore readily complied with his request.

V. 31. *Was bolled.*] The flax was grown up into stems or stalks; and, as some think, had begun to form pods for the seed. 'The flax was forming seed.' (Το δὲ λινὸν σπερμα-τισόν.) Sept.

V. 32. The wheat and rye were not destroyed, because they were *hidden*. (*Marg.*) They were tender and flexible; and, not being yet eared, the hail did not much injure them.—It can hardly be supposed that the barley was in ear, and the wheat not above ground, as our version seems to imply: for this is contrary to known fact, as to the different kinds of grain in those countries.—The LXX read, 'They were late' or 'backward (ὀψιμα γὰρ ἦν).'

V. 33. Moses, assured of the divine protection, expressed this confidence before Pharaoh and his servants, by fearlessly going forth from the city in the midst of this destructive tempest: for it is evident, that he went forth before there was any abatement of the storm (29).

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—12.

"Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil:" and they are emboldened in sin, because God is long-suffering and slow to anger.—But, "evil pursueth sinners;" and, with rapid though often unnoticed steps, approaches nearer and nearer: nor is there any possible escape without repentance, and works meet for repentance.—God hath various methods of impoverishing those who have grown rich by injustice, and depriving men of the things which they have idolized: and if they will not take warning, and submit to him, when he bereaves them of their substance, he can fill their bodies with disease, and their hearts with terror, and at length

33 And Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and spread abroad his hands unto the LORD: and the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured upon the earth.

34 And when Pharaoh saw that the rain, and the hail, and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants.

35 And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, neither would he let the children of Israel go, as the LORD had spoken by Moses.

cut them off in their wickedness.—Satan encourages his servants with hopes of great advantages, but he cannot ensure even their present impunity: and they who wait patiently, shall see the folly of all seducers and deceivers made as manifest, as that of these magicians was. They who perish in rebellion, have none to blame but themselves; as nothing but their own depraved inclinations renders them obstinate in pride and ungodliness, and impels them to pervert the bounty and patience of God into an occasion and encouragement to sin: and in whatever way the Lord hardens the hearts of men, he always does it *judicially*, as a punishment of former sins; and generally of the sin of hardening their own hearts under solemn warnings, deep convictions, severe rebukes, and remarkable deliverances.

##### V. 13—35.

The haughty and powerful may despise the Lord, and set him at defiance; but they cannot defeat his purposes: and many have been advanced to thrones, and greatly prospered and exalted, in order to manifest the extreme wickedness of their hearts, that the justice and power of God might be displayed in their destruction, for the glory of his great name.—Even in wicked nations, which are ripe for vengeance, some are more destitute of all fear of God, and more daring in sin, than others. But, alas! men in general are vastly more careful of their cattle and property, than of their immortal souls!—Would we escape the threatened vengeance of God, we must notice his warnings, and flee for refuge at his appointment; for they who disregard his word, will be convinced of its truth when it is too late.—Under the prospect of impending destruction, the anguish of suffering, and the dismay of conscience, the proudest sinner is often appalled, and the most humiliating confessions are extorted from him: nay, he may even use the language of piety; not because he thoroughly means it, but because he feels a momentary conviction that it suits his case and situation. These reluctant and transient convictions cannot indeed avail those who remain impenitent; but they are honourable to God, and illustrate his justice in punishing such as, having respite, return to their crimes and are hardened in iniquity.—While all things concur in hastening the obstinate sinner's condemnation, the Lord gives his people safety, amidst storms and tempests; and the most tremendous scenes sometimes fail of disturbing,

## CHAP. X.

Moses is sent to denounce the plague of locusts, 1—6. The servants of Pharaoh persuade him to let Israel go, 7; he sends for Moses, treats with him, but drives him away, 8—11. The plague of locusts, 12—15. Moses is sent for, and intreats the Lord; the locusts are removed, and Pharaoh is hardened, 16—20. The plague of darkness; Pharaoh again treats with Moses, but is again hardened, and drives him away with menaces, 21—29.

**AND** the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for <sup>a</sup>I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants; <sup>b</sup>that I might shew these my signs before him:

2 And <sup>c</sup>that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; <sup>d</sup>that ye may know how that I *am* the LORD.

3 And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, <sup>e</sup>How long wilt thou refuse to 'humble thyself before me? Let my people go, that they may serve me.

4 Else if thou refuse to let my people go, behold <sup>f</sup>to-morrow will I bring the <sup>g</sup>locusts into thy coast.

5 And they shall cover the <sup>h</sup>face of the earth, that one cannot be able to see the earth: and they shall eat 'the residue of that which is escaped, which remaineth unto you from the hail, and

shall eat every tree which groweth for you out of the field.

6 And they shall <sup>k</sup>fill thy houses, and the houses of all thy servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians: <sup>l</sup>which neither thy fathers, nor thy fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were upon the earth, unto this day. <sup>m</sup>And he turned himself, and went out from Pharaoh.

7 And Pharaoh's servants said unto him, <sup>n</sup>How long shall this man be a <sup>o</sup>snare unto us? Let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God: knowest thou not yet, <sup>p</sup>that Egypt is destroyed?

8 And Moses and Aaron were <sup>q</sup>brought again unto Pharaoh: and he said unto them, Go, serve the LORD your God: <sup>r</sup>but <sup>s</sup>who are they that shall go?

9 And Moses said, <sup>t</sup>We will go with our young, and with our old, with our sons, and with our daughters, with our flocks, and with our herds will we go: for we *must hold* <sup>u</sup>a feast unto the LORD.

10 And he said unto them, Let the LORD be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: <sup>v</sup>'look to it, for evil *is* before you.

11 Not so: go now ye *that are* men, and serve the LORD, for that ye did desire. <sup>w</sup>And they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.

<sup>a</sup> See on iv. 21. vii. 13, 14. ix. 34, 35.

<sup>b</sup> iis. 20. vii. 4. ix. 16. xiv. 17. 18. xv. 14, 15. Josh. ii. 9, 10. iv. 23, 24. i Sam. iv. 8. Rom. ix. 17.

<sup>c</sup> xiii. 8, 9, 14. Deut. iv. 9. vi. 20—22. Ps. xlv. 1. lxxvi. 18. Joel i. 3.

<sup>d</sup> See on vii. 17. Ps. lxxiii. 11. Ez. xx. 25, 38.

<sup>e</sup> ix. 17. xvi. 28. Num. xiv. 27. i Kings xviii. 21. Prov. i. 22, 24. Jer. xli. 10. Ez. v. 6. Heb. xii. 25.

<sup>f</sup> i Kings xxi. 29. 2 Chr. vii. 14. xxxiii. 12, 19. xxxiv. 27. Job xlii. 6. Prov. xviii. 12. Is. ii. 11. Jer. xlii. 18. Jam. iv. 10.

<sup>g</sup> Pet. v. 6. vii. 10, 23. ix. 5. 18. xi. 4, 5.

<sup>h</sup> Prov. xxx. 27. Joel i. 4—7. ii. 2—11. 25. Rev. ix. 3.

<sup>i</sup> Heb. eye. i. ix. 32.

<sup>k</sup> viii. 3.

<sup>l</sup> 14, 15. ix. 24. xi. 6. Joel ii. 2.

<sup>m</sup> i. xi. 8. Heb. xi. 27.

<sup>n</sup> xxi. 33. Josh. xxiii. 13. i Sam. xviii. 21. Prov. xxix. 6. Ec. vii. 26. p. Is. xiv. 20. li. 9. Jer. xlviii. 4. li. 8. Zeph. i. 18.

<sup>q</sup> 16. 24. xii. 31.

<sup>r</sup> Heb. who and who, &c.

<sup>t</sup> Gen. i. 8. Deut. xxxi. 12, 18. Josh. xxiv. 15. Ps. cxlviii. 12. Ec. xii. 1. Eph. vi. 4.

<sup>u</sup> iii. 18. v. 1. 3. viii. 25—28. xiii. 5. Num. xxix. 12. i Cor. v. 7, 8.

<sup>v</sup> 2 Chr. xxxii. 15. Lam. iii. 87.

<sup>w</sup> 28. v. 4.

even at the moment, the sweet serenity of their souls; for "the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever."

## NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1, 2. The Lord here says, "I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants:" the servants of Pharaoh had copied his wickedness, and were involved in his punishment (7).—As these awful judgments were inflicted on purpose, that the power and glory of JEHOVAH might be illustrated for the instruction of future generations; it was proper that Moses should again and again go to Pharaoh, and warn him of the approaching plagues, that his obstinate defiance of God might more fully shew the justice of his condemnation.

V. 3. *Refuse, &c.*] The point in contest was, whether Pharaoh would humble himself before God, or not. Refusing to do this was his ruin; and the case is the same with all impenitent sinners. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6. The ravages which locusts make in those eastern countries, are frequently extremely terrible. They even

darken the earth, by intercepting with their inconceivable multitudes the light of the sun; they turn fruitful countries into desolate deserts, and leave the wretched inhabitants to perish with famine; nor can they by any means be resisted or escaped. But the locusts sent on Egypt were dreadful beyond example and comparison, in size and multitudes, and in the desolations which they occasioned: and the plague was thus foretold, that the hand of the Lord in sending it might be the more evident.—Pharaoh had repeatedly violated his promises; and Moses seems to have left his presence abruptly, without waiting for an answer.

V. 7. Some of Pharaoh's servants were less hardened than others of them, and embraced this occasion of expostulating with him.

V. 10, 11. *Let the LORD, &c.*] This was either spoken in scorn and contempt, as if Pharaoh would say, 'Let the LORD be with you, and take care of you if he can; but I will not let you go:' or by way of imprecation: 'I would, that the LORD may as certainly cease to be with you any more, as I shall refuse to let you go with all your company; for to this I never will consent.' He intended to keep the

12 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>x vii. 19.</sup> "Stretch out thine hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come up upon the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land, *even* all that the hail hath left.

13 And Moses stretched forth his rod over the land of Egypt, and the LORD brought an <sup>y xiv. 21. Ps. lxxviii. 26. cvii. 23-24. cxviii. 8. Jon. i. 4. iv. 8.</sup> east-wind upon the land all that day, and all *that* night: and when it was morning, the east-wind brought the locusts.

14 And <sup>z Deut. xxxviii. 42. 1 Kings viii. 57. Ps. lxxviii. 46. cv. 34, 35.</sup> the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of Egypt: very grievous *were* they; <sup>a d. .</sup> before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such.

15 For <sup>b Joel i. 6, 7. ii. 1-11. 25.</sup> they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees, which the hail had left: and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt.

16 Then Pharaoh <sup>\* Heb. Hastened to call. c ix. 27. Num. xxii. 34. 1 Sam. xv. 24. 39. xxvi. 21. 2 Sam. xix. 20. Job xxxiv. 81, 32. Prov. xxviii. 13. Matt. xxvii. 4.</sup> called for Moses and Aaron in haste; and he said, "I

have sinned against the LORD your God, and against you.

17 Now therefore <sup>d 1 Sam. xv. 25. e See on viii. 8. Acts viii. 24.</sup> "forgive, I pray thee, my sin only this once, and <sup>f 2 Kings iv. 42. 2 Cor. i. 10.</sup> treat the LORD your God, that he may take away from me 'this death only.

18 And he went out from Pharaoh, and intreated the LORD.

19 And the LORD turned <sup>g See on viii. 9. 29. Matt. v. 44. Luke vi. 28. h 13.</sup> a mighty strong west-wind, which took away the locusts, and <sup>+ Heb. fastened. i xiii. 18. xv. 4. Joel ii. 20.</sup> cast them into 'the Red Sea: there remained not one locust in all the coasts of Egypt.

20 But <sup>k See on iv. 21. vii. 13, 14. ix. 12. 21. 10.—Deut. ii. 30. Is. vi. 9, 10. John xii. 39, 40. Rom. ix. 18. 2 Thes. ii. 11, 12.</sup> the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go.

21 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>l ix. 22.</sup> "Stretch out thine hand toward heaven, that there may be <sup>m Ps. lxxviii. 49. cv. 28. Prov. ix. 21. Is. viii. 21. 22. Matt. xxvii. 45. Mark xv. 33. Luke xxiii. 44. 2 Pet. ii. 4. 17. Jude 6. 13. Rev. xvi. 10, 11.</sup> darkness over the land of Egypt, <sup>+ Heb. that one may feel darkness. n xx. 21. Deut. iv. 11. v. 22. Joel ii. 2. 31. Am. iv. 13.</sup> even darkness *which* may be felt.

22 And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven: and there was a <sup>n xx. 21. Deut. iv. 11. v. 22. Joel ii. 2. 31. Am. iv. 13.</sup> thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days.

23 They saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three

children, and probably the women also, as hostages to ensure the return of the men. Nay, he threatened to punish Moses and Aaron, if they continued to trouble him; and his mad presumption was such, that he certainly would have attempted it, had not God dismayed and restrained him.—Some suppose that he charged them with the design of stirring up the people to a revolt, when he said, "evil is before you."—As, however, they were not satisfied with his proposal, he drove them with violence from his presence.

That are *men*. (11.) <sup>וְהָיָה בְּיָמָיו</sup> *vir, masculus, quasi validus*. Robertson's Thes. <sup>Οἱ ἀνδρες</sup> *Sept.*

V. 13. *East-wind*.] "Being lifted up by the wind, they 'fly in the air in a great cloud;...people looking on them 'in great fear, lest they fall down and cover the country.' *Pliny*.

V. 16, 17. Pharaoh now had nothing before his eyes, but inevitable death to himself and his people by famine, unless some respite could be obtained; for all vegetation was totally destroyed. He therefore confessed his sins to Moses, craved forgiveness of him, and intreated him to pray for him; but it does not appear, that he confessed his sins unto the Lord, or besought him to forgive him.

V. 19. *Red Sea*.] "The sea of weeds," or *flags*, as it is in the original.—The Greek translators of the Bible call it 'the Red Sea,' either from the colour of the waters, the soil, or the weeds, or flags; or from the neighbourhood of the Edomites, whose name signifies *red*. This is a large arm of the sea, which runs up between Arabia and Idumea on one hand, and Egypt on the other, and separates the

continents of Africa and Asia; except as they communicate by the narrow isthmus of Suez, which lies betwixt the end of the Red Sea and the Mediterranean.—The *Red Sea* in most ancient writers means what is now called the Indian Ocean.

V. 20. *Note*, ix. 12.

V. 21. *Darkness*.] It is generally supposed, that some extraordinary fog, which combined in occasioning this plague, extinguished all the lamps of the Egyptians, and left them in total darkness; and that this was *felt* in the pain which it excited. Certainly it was such a darkness as we have no conception of; and not wholly unlike the "blackness of darkness for ever."

V. 22. *Thick darkness*.] <sup>הָעֲרָפָה הַכֹּהֶלֶת</sup> *misty and thick darkness, full of obscurity*. (From the radical noun <sup>עָרַפָּה</sup> which has a similar signification).—<sup>Σκόλος γνόφος, θύελλα ἐπὶ, κ. τ. λ.</sup> *Darkness, thick darkness, a tempest upon, &c. Sept.*—<sup>Ἐνόφω, καὶ σκόλω, καὶ θύελλῃ,</sup> "to blackness and darkness and tempest." *Heb.* xii. 18.

V. 23. It is a tradition of the Jews, that the Egyptians were afflicted with horrible noises, occasioned by evil spirits, and that this is the meaning of the expression of the Psalmist, "He sent evil angels among them." (*Note*, Ps. lxxviii. 46—49.) Doubtless their consciences were filled with horror, and inflicted torment upon them, when thus inclosed in this tremendous darkness.—The Israelites might now have marched off unmolested; but it was the Lord's pleasure, that they should go forth, not as abject fugitives, but as triumphant conquerors.

o vii. 22. ix. 4 days: °but all the children of Israel  
26. xiv. 20. Josh.  
xxiv. 7. Is. ix. 7  
—3. lxx. 13. 14.  
Mal. iii. 18.

24 And Pharaoh called unto Moses,  
and said, °Go ye, serve the LORD: only  
q Gen. xxiv. 23. °let your flocks and your herds be  
r 10. stayed: °let your little ones also go  
with you.

25 And Moses said, Thou must give  
\* Heb into our \* us also sacrifices, and burnt-offerings,  
hands. that we may sacrifice unto the LORD  
our God.

26 Our °cattle also shall go with us;  
xii. 32. Is. xxiii.  
18. ix. 5—10  
Hos. v. 6. Acts  
ii. 44, 45, 2 Cor.  
viii. 5.

there shall not an hoof be left behind:

for thereof must we take to serve the  
LORD our God; °and we know not with t Prov. iii. 9. Heb.  
xi. 8. what we must serve the LORD, until we  
come thither.

27 But the LORD °hardened Pha- u See on iv. 21—  
raoh's heart, and he would not let them xiv. 4. 8. Rev.  
ix. 20. xvi. 10,  
11. go.

28 And Pharaoh said unto him, °Get x 11.  
thee from me, take heed to thyself, see  
my face no more: °for in that day thou y 2 Chr. xvi. 10  
xxv. 16. Am. vii.  
13. seest my face thou shalt die.

29 And Moses said, Thou hast spoken z xl. 4—8. xii. 30,  
31. Heb. xi. 27.  
well, °I will see thy face again no more.

V. 24. After the end of the three days, when the dark-  
ness terminated, Pharaoh called for Moses to treat again  
with him.

V. 27. It is worthy of notice, how frequently, in the  
concluding part of the narrative, the hardening of Pha-  
raoh's heart is unreservedly ascribed to God, (1. 20. xi. 10.)  
Different language was previously used; which shews, that  
God's hardening Pharaoh's heart was the punishment of  
his hardening his own heart.

V. 29. The first three verses of the next chapter may  
be read as a parenthesis: for Moses seems to have warned  
Pharaoh of the death of all the first-born, before he quitted  
his presence at this time; and then he went out purposing  
never more to see his face.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—11.

The manifestation of his own glory is the ultimate end  
of all the Lord's dispensations, whether of judgment or  
mercy; and though we do not at present clearly discern it,  
yet we shall hereafter behold it in full splendour: and all  
his servants with joyful acclamations proclaim, that he is  
"righteous in all his ways and holy in all his works." Then  
"the wicked shall be silent in darkness;" for  
"every mouth shall be stopped, and all the world shall  
"become guilty before God."—Again and again he sends  
to demand of his rebellious creatures, "How long will ye  
"refuse to humble yourselves before me?" But the  
haughtiness and stoutness of the human heart induce men  
to defer this mortifying submission, even when severely  
suffering the effects of their obstinacy, in former instances;  
when expostulated with for acting in so ruinous a manner  
to themselves and others; and when nothing but the  
patience of God keeps them from utter destruction. But  
"hast thou," O sinner, "an arm like God? and canst  
"thou thunder with a voice like his?"—The examples of  
severity and goodness, recorded in the sacred Scriptures,  
were written for our profit; and if we duly regard them,  
our own experience will prove their extensive and lasting  
usefulness.—Whatever we learn from the word and works  
of God, we should point out, and interpret to our children,  
and shew them his power, wisdom, justice, and love, as  
displayed in them; for they were intended, not only for  
our good, but for that of our children also.—We should  
likewise remember, that Satan and his instruments are ex-  
tremely averse to our serving God with our sons and our

daughters; and that they employ various methods of keep-  
ing them from joining in his service. We ought therefore  
to be very peremptory in this concern, and be careful to  
initiate them, even when "little ones," in the ways and  
worship of God; "for of such is the kingdom of heaven."  
But alas! many *apparently* religious parents act as if they  
were of Pharaoh's opinion, and supposed that the service  
of God was intended for men alone: for they allow their  
children to stay behind when they go to worship, and per-  
mit them to spend their time in dissipation and vanity; as  
if they would leave them under the yoke of Satan, "the  
"god of this world," as hostages for their own return to  
his service.—But let young people themselves observe,  
that the Lord himself says, "Remember thy Creator in  
"the days of thy youth;" while Satan and his servants  
are they, who counsel them to put off the thoughts of  
God and religion till some future period.

##### V. 12—29.

It is incumbent on us to serve God, not only with our  
households, but likewise with all our substance; neither  
avariciously hoarding any part of it, nor spending it upon  
our pride and self-indulgence of any kind, but considering  
the whole as the Lord's property committed to our steward-  
ship. And, not knowing what he may immediately de-  
mand, we should be prepared to expend, or part with, any  
proportion which may be required, without hesitation and  
reluctance. But if we would sincerely and decidedly serve  
the Lord, we must learn to disregard the contempt, re-  
proach, and even menaces, of wicked men. They may in-  
deed haughtily affirm that "evil is before us;" but if we  
simply and faithfully trust and obey God, we need not  
"fear what flesh can do unto us." For he will be for us;  
and perhaps they will ere long be constrained to address  
us with respect, and intreat our prayers or assistance.  
Assuredly, in the days of adversity, and in the gloomy vale  
of death, when the wicked are consumed with terrors, and  
tormented by their own consciences, believers will walk in  
the light of God's countenance, and rejoice in his salva-  
tion: and when the wicked are driven into the blackness  
of eternal darkness, believers will have an inheritance  
amongst the saints in light eternal. Let us then "lift up  
"our heads, for our redemption draweth near;" "yet  
"looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God:"  
for the most hardened sinner often trembles, the most in-  
sensible is sometimes self-condemned; nay, many that are

## CHAP. XI.

The Lord shews Moses that one more plague is coming on Egypt, and directs that the Israelites should ask jewels of the Egyptians, 1, 2. Moses is honoured by the Egyptians, 3. He denounces the death of the first-born, and goes out from Pharaoh, 4—8. The Lord hardens Pharaoh's heart, 9, 10.

**AND** the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>a</sup> Yet will I bring one plague *more* upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; <sup>b</sup> afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let *you* go, he shall surely <sup>c</sup> thrust you out hence altogether.

2 Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man <sup>d</sup> borrow of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, <sup>e</sup> jewels of silver, and jewels of gold.

3 And <sup>f</sup> the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover, the man <sup>g</sup> Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight

<sup>a</sup> ix. 14. Lev. xxvi. 21. Deut. iv. 34. 1 Sam. vi. 4. Job x. 17. Rev. xvi. 9. xxii. 18.

<sup>b</sup> iii. 20. Gen. xvi. 14.

<sup>c</sup> xii. 31—33. 39.

<sup>d</sup> iii. 22. xii. 35. 36. Gen. xxxi. 9. Job xxvii. 16. 17. Ps. xxiv. 1. cv. 37. Prov. xiii. 22. Hag. ii. 8. Matt. xx. 15. xxxii. 1—24. xxxv. 22. Ez. xvi. 10—13. Hos. ii. 8.

<sup>e</sup> iii. 21. xii. 35. Gen. xxxix. 21. Ps. cvi. 46. Acts vii. 10.

<sup>f</sup> Gen. xii. 2. 2 Sam. vii. 9. Esth. ix. 4. Is. ix. 14. Acts vii. 22. Rev. iii. 9.

<sup>g</sup> xii. 31—33. Is. xlix. 23. 26. Rev. iii. 9.

finally lost, have “been almost persuaded to be Christians.” But pride, the love of sin, and aversion to the immediate exercises of piety, with procrastination, as the result of it, form the three-fold cord which men cannot break; and upon persons thus enslaved, all counsel is thrown away, though enforced with the evidence of the most undeniable facts, and the certain prospects of destruction. They would treat about reconciliation; but they will not yield unreservedly to part with *every* sin, and cast themselves wholly on the Lord's mercy. He therefore rejects their proposals with disdain: and every relenting and respite leaves them still harder; as the winter sun thaws the *snow*, which, when its beams are withdrawn, congeals into *ice*. Such persons often use good words, and put the Lord's servants in his place, as if they were *gods* to them, (vii. 1,) and seem to expect salvation from them: but they do not pray earnestly and constantly for themselves; and therefore sin retains its dominion, and Satan his possession, and “their last state is worse than the first.”

## NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1. It is probable, this was a secret revelation to Moses, while in the presence of Pharaoh; in order that he might denounce the last dreadful judgment on Egypt, before he went out from him. Moses, no doubt, would be glad to hear that this contest, which desolated Egypt in order to deliver Israel, would so speedily be determined.—“When he shall send you away with every thing, he will cast you out with an *expulsion*.” (εκβολη. Acts xxvii. 18. Gr.) Sept.

V. 2, 3. The original does not in the least imply, that the Israelites asked the Egyptians to *lend* them the jewels, or vessels, of gold and silver, as promising to return them; but rather that they *requested*, or even *required* them: and

of Pharaoh's servants, and in the sight of the people.

4 And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, <sup>i</sup> About midnight <sup>j</sup> will I go out into the midst of Egypt.

5 And all the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die, from <sup>k</sup> the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the first-born of the maid-servant that is <sup>l</sup> behind the mill; and all the first-born of beasts.

6 And there shall be <sup>m</sup> a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more.

7 But against any of the children of Israel shall not a <sup>n</sup> dog move his tongue, against man or beast; that ye may know how that the LORD doth put <sup>o</sup> a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.

8 And <sup>p</sup> all these thy servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee

<sup>i</sup> xii. 28. 29. Job xxxiv. 20. Am. iv. 10. v. 17. Matt. xxv. 6.

<sup>j</sup> 2 Sam. v. 24. Ps. lx. 10. Is. xlii. 13. Mic. ii. 13. Zech. xiv. 3.

<sup>k</sup> iv. 23. xii. 12. xiii. 15. Ps. lxxviii. 61. cv. 36. cxxxv. 8. cxxxvi. 10. Heb. xi. 28.

<sup>l</sup> Judg. xvi. 21. Is. xlvii. 2. Lam. v. 13. Matt. xxiv. 41.

<sup>m</sup> iii. 7. xii. 30. Prov. xxi. 13. Is. xv. 4. 5. 8. Jer. xxxi. 15. Lam. iii. 8. Zeph. i. 10. Luke xii. 28. Rev. vi. 16. 17. xviii. 18, 19.

<sup>n</sup> Josh. x. 21.

<sup>o</sup> See on vii. 22. x. 23.—Mal. iii. 18. 1 Cor. iv. 7.

<sup>p</sup> xii. 31—33. Is. xlix. 23. 26. Rev. iii. 9.

the Lord engaged to dispose the Egyptians to comply with their requirement; for the words may be rendered, “And the LORD *will give* the people favour, &c.” (Note, iii. 21, 22.)—The Egyptians revered Moses, as an extraordinary person, of wonderful courage, wisdom, and sanctity; and endued with powers of inflicting judgments, or removing them, at pleasure: and probably many of them were persuaded, that he had justice on his side, and blamed Pharaoh, as the real cause of their calamities. For while oppressors pursue infatuated counsels, and are flattered by hiring courtiers, it often happens that their subjects secretly favour the cause of the oppressed, even where themselves have no personal ground of complaint; considering a measure of liberty as the common right of mankind.

*Borrow.* (2.) Αἰτησάτω. Sept.

V. 4. The Lord went out, on this awful occasion, as a mighty Conqueror, to trample down and triumph over his enemies.

V. 5. (Note, xii. 29, 30.)—*Behind the mill.*] Water-mills and wind-mills were not known till many ages after this time; but the female slaves ground the corn for use, by hand-mills. (Marg. Ref. 1.)

V. 6. ‘The calamity, being in every house; it made a general and loud lamentation: men, women, children, and servants, bewailing the loss of the prime person in the family.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 7. *Move his tongue.*] ‘No one shall dare to do the Israelites harm, or to speak any evil of them; but all shall stand in awe of them.’—The expression seems to have been proverbial.

V. 8. Moses thus expressed his abhorrence of Pharaoh's obstinacy, who probably treated this last message with contempt: and he solemnly left him to the judgment of God, as an incurable rebel.

\* Heb. *is at thy feet*. Judg. iv. 10.  
 † Kings xx. 10.  
 2 Kings iii. 9.  
 ‡ Heb. *heat of anger*. Deut. xxxix. 24. xxxii. 24. Ps. vi. 1. Ez. iii. 14. Dan. iii. 19.  
 § iii. 19. x. 1.  
 ¶ Rom. ix. 17, 18.  
 \* See on vii. 8.

out, and all the people that \* follow thee: and after that I will go out: and he went out from Pharaoh in a great anger.

9 And the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>a</sup>Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you: that my <sup>b</sup>wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.

10 And Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh: and <sup>c</sup>the LORD hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that he would not let the children of Israel go out of his land.

### CHAP. XII.

The month of Israel's deliverance is appointed to be the first of their year, 1, 2. The institution of the passover, and the feast of unleavened bread, 3—28.

V. 9. This may be rendered, "For the LORD had said, &c." (vii. 3.—*Note*, iv. 21.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When the Lord has inflicted so many and severe judgments, that man can conceive of nothing worse; he has still more terrible plagues in reserve: yet he generally executes those last, which he denounced first (iv. 23); for "he endures with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath" "fitted for destruction, that he may shew his wrath and "make his power known." (*Notes*, Rom. ix. 19—23.) But what are all these ten plagues combined, when compared with "the wrath to come," that one plague reserved for all obstinate rebels in another world!—The Lord can make his people "a burdensome stone to all, who burden themselves with them" (*Zech.* xii. 3); and render all men sensible that it is at their peril they touch them: nay, he is able to give them favour in the sight of those, who have been their enemies.—When he enables his servants to maintain a consistency of character, he will put such honour upon them, as shall silence and confound all those, who slander and despise them; and constrain men in general to approve of their conduct, reverence their persons, and even to bow down before them: and when the people of God shall triumph in his redemption, and their enemies cry out under the anguish of his indignation, the difference will be too evident to remain any longer unnoticed.—They who are employed by him in publick services, may, consistently with the deepest humility, "magnify their office;" and, without deviating from the most exemplary Christian meekness, they may and ought to express deep indignation, as well as sorrow, at the wickedness of mankind; after his example, who looked round with "anger, being grieved" "for the hardness of their hearts." Such anger against the sin of those, whose good they have perseveringly sought in vain, and for whom their prayers have again and again prevailed, is a terrible indication, and usual forerunner, of the wrath of God. The Lord, however, will at last be glorified in all his dispensations; and as he hath foretold that his gospel would be slighted and abused, we must not think the worse of it on that account.

The first-born throughout Egypt are cut off at once, 29, 30; the Israelites are sent away in haste, 31—33; they spoil the Egyptians and march out, attended by a mixed multitude, 34—39. The term of their sojourning, and the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham, 40—42. Further rules respecting the passover, 43—51.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,

2 \*This month *shall be* unto you the beginning of months: it *shall be* the first month of the year to you.

3 <sup>b</sup>Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, \*In the tenth day of this month, they shall <sup>c</sup>take to them every man a \*lamb, according to the house of *their* fathers, a lamb for an <sup>d</sup>house.

a xiii. 4. xxiii. 15. xxxiv. 18. Lev. xxiii. 5. Num. xxviii. 16. Deut. xvi. 1. Esth. iii. 7.  
 b iv. 30. vi. 6. xiv. 15. xx. 19. Lev. i. 2.  
 c 6. John xii. 1. 12.  
 d Gen. iv. 4. xxii. 8. 1 Sam. vii. 9. John i. 29. 36. 1 Cor. v. 7. Rev. v. 6—13. vii. 9—14. xiii. 8. Or, *kid*. Lev. v. 6. Num. xv. 11. 2 Chr. xxxv. 7.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1. These instructions must have been given to Moses and Aaron, some days before the last message was delivered to Pharaoh, and perhaps before the plague of darkness was inflicted: for the tenth day of the month was not come, when they were given (3); yet the people observed the passover on the fourteenth, which seems to have been the very day, on which Moses went out from Pharaoh (xi. 4).

V. 2. The month called *Abib*, (which signifies an ear of corn, because the corn was then eared,) and also *Nisan*, answers nearly to the latter part of our March, and the beginning of April. This had hitherto been reckoned the seventh month; and the Israelites continued afterwards to compute several of their civil concerns by this reckoning, which agreed with that of the surrounding countries: but in remembrance of their deliverance out of Egypt, when they were formed into a nation and a church, and received, as it were, a new kind of existence; it was appointed to be the first month of the year to them, and their sacred institutions were regulated according to it. This new style began the year with the spring, when the face of the creation was renewed.

V. 3—10. It may be supposed, that the people had been ordered to prepare for leaving Egypt at the shortest notice, and had a variety of engagements to occupy their time; yet, amidst them all, they were required to observe a sacred festival. For on this occasion the passover was instituted, to be then celebrated as a *token*, or *means*, of their deliverance, and afterwards as a sacramental *memorial* of it, and a prefiguration of redemption by the promised Saviour. (*Note*, 11—14.)—The Israelites, though not guilty of the same crimes as the Egyptians, were in many respects deserving of the wrath of God: and this institution was suited to shew them, that they were preserved and rescued, not for their own righteousness, but by the mercy of God through an atoning sacrifice. (*Notes*, Ez. xx. 5—9.) They were therefore directed, on the tenth day from the new moon, to select a *lamb* or *kid* for every one of those *households*, into which the families of their tribes were subdivided; unless when the small number of persons in the

- <sup>c</sup> Lev. i. 3 16.  
xxii. 19-24.  
Deut. xxi. 1.  
Mal. i. 7, 8, 14.  
Heb. vii. 26. ix.  
13, 14. 1 Pet. i.  
18, 19.  
<sup>e</sup> Heb. *sun of a*  
*year* Lev. xxiii.  
12. 1 Sam. xiii.  
1. *Marg.*  
<sup>f</sup> Lev. xxiii. 5.  
Num. ix. 3.  
xxviii. 16, 18.  
Deut. xvi. 1-6.  
2 Chr. xxx. 16.  
Ec. xiv. 21.  
<sup>g</sup> 1a. liii. 6. Matt.  
xxvii. 20. 25.  
Mark xv. 1. 8.  
11. Luke xxiii.  
1. 18. Acts ii. 23.  
iii. 14. iv. 27.  
<sup>†</sup> Heb. *between*  
*the two even-*  
*ings.* Matt. xxvii.  
46-50.  
<sup>h</sup> 23, 23. Eph. i. 7.  
Heb. ix. 13, 14.  
22. x. 14. 29. xi.  
28. 1 Pet. i. 2.
- 4 And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take *it*, according to the number of the souls; every man, according to his eating, shall make your count for the lamb.
- 5 Your lamb shall <sup>e</sup>be without blemish, a male <sup>f</sup>of the first year; ye shall take *it* out from the sheep or from the goats.
- 6 And ye shall keep it up until the <sup>f</sup>fourteenth day of the same month: and <sup>g</sup>the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it <sup>h</sup>in the evening.
- 7 And they shall take of the <sup>h</sup>blood,

and strike *it* on the two side-posts, and on the upper door-post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.

8 And they shall <sup>i</sup>eat the flesh in that night; <sup>k</sup>roasted with fire, and <sup>m</sup>unleavened bread, and <sup>n</sup>with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

9 Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, <sup>a</sup>but roast *with* fire: his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof.

10 And ye shall let <sup>o</sup>nothing of it remain until the morning: and that which remaineth of it until the morning, ye shall burn with fire.

11 And thus shall ye eat it; *with*

household made it proper to join with some of their neighbours. They were allowed to take either a *lamb*, or a *kid*; but, as Christ is commonly represented under the emblem of a *Lamb*, and never under that of a *kid*, it is supposed that lambs were generally preferred. This lamb must be "without blemish, a male of the first year," or under a year old; as typifying the "Lamb of God," "without spot and blemish," who was "slain from the foundation of the world."—After four days of preparation, which would afford time leisurely to examine the intended victims, they were slaughtered on the fourteenth by the whole congregation; the head of each household killing the lamb selected for it, as it is probably concluded. This was done, *between the two evenings* (*Marg.*); and it is supposed, that the first of these evenings began when the sun had passed the meridian, and that the second ended at sun-set. The paschal-offerings, therefore, seem to have been slain from three o'clock in the afternoon till sun-set; and afterwards the people ate the passover, when the fifteenth day of the month had begun; for they reckoned from sun-set to sun-set.—Learned men are of opinion, that the Lord Jesus, our passover, entered Jerusalem on the tenth of the first month, at the very time when the paschal sacrifices were selected; and the language of the Evangelist may be thus interpreted: for if the *three days*, after which Christ should rise from the dead, contained only one complete day and part of two others; according to the custom of the Jews in computing time; five days before the passover may mean three whole days and part of two others. (*John* xii. 1. 12.) It is likewise supposed, by many expositors, that Christ was crucified on the fourteenth day of the month, and expired soon after the ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon, at the very time when the paschal lambs were slain: but the Evangelists expressly state, that he ate the passover at the accustomed time, on the evening of the fourteenth day; and if so, it is certain that he was crucified on the fifteenth. (*Matt.* xxvi. 17. *Mark* xiv. 12. *Luke* xxii. 7.) He was, however, put to death, in the midst of the assembled congregation of Israel, and at their united request; and he expired, just before the *hour* when the paschal lamb began to be sacrificed, though not on the same day.—The blood of these victims, having been preserved for that purpose, was ordered to be sprinkled, with

a bunch of hyssop, on the side-posts, and on the upper door-posts, of the houses in which the passover was eaten; and this was the token of the Israelites being preserved when the first-born of Egypt were destroyed: it was also a type of our avowed dependance on the atonement of Christ, while 'we feed on him in our hearts by faith with 'thanksgiving.' But the blood was not sprinkled or poured on the threshold, which would have implied contempt; and this seems to have been intended as a typical caution against apostasy and abuse of the gospel. (*Heb.* x. 29.)—*Leaven* is the known emblem of hypocrisy, malice, and wickedness: *unleavened* bread therefore was the representation of sincerity, truth, and love. (1 *Cor.* v. 8.)—The bitter herbs might be an emblem of godly sorrow, deep repentance, self-denial, and mortification of depraved passions; and of those outward tribulations which accompany the exercise of living faith in Christ: and the roasting of the lamb by fire, (the emblem of divine wrath,) might prefigure the varied and excruciating sufferings which Christ endured, in bearing our sins, and preparing our blessedness.—It was likewise ordered that the whole of the lamb should be thus prepared and eaten. This might imply that true faith receives the entire salvation of Christ, and depends upon him in every part of his mediatorial character, without any exception: while the annexed order, that if any part of the lamb was left, it should, before the morning, be burned with fire, and not reserved either for food or any superstitious purposes, implied that it was a solemn propitiatory sacrifice of awful import, and not merely a cheerful festival.

*Eat not of it raw.* (9.) This by no means proves, that the Israelites were accustomed to eat raw flesh at their meals, as some have concluded from the expression: for no other intimation of the kind is any where given in the whole Scripture: but merely that they were not, in this religious service, to adopt any such practice. It is well known, that idolaters have in many instances eaten the flesh of their sacrifices, or part of it, raw, and even drunk the blood of them: but these superstitions must have no sanction in the ordinances of the people of JEHOVAH.

V. 11—14. The Israelites were directed at this time to eat the paschal lamb, in the attire and posture of men, who were setting out on a journey, and in haste to depart.

<sup>p</sup> Matt. xxvi. 19, <sup>q</sup> your loins girded, your <sup>r</sup> shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand : and ye shall eat it in haste ; <sup>r</sup> it is the LORD's passover.

12 For I will <sup>r</sup> pass through the land of Egypt this night, and <sup>r</sup> will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast ; and <sup>r</sup> against all the <sup>r</sup> gods of Egypt I will execute judgment ; <sup>r</sup> I am the LORD.

13 And <sup>r</sup> the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye <sup>r</sup> are : and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you, <sup>r</sup> to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

14 And this day shall be unto you <sup>r</sup> for a memorial ; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations : ye shall keep it a feast <sup>r</sup> by an ordinance for ever.

15 <sup>b</sup> Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread, even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses : for whosoever eateth leavened bread, from the first day until the seventh day, <sup>c</sup> that soul shall be cut off from Israel.

16 And in the first day, *there shall be* <sup>d</sup> an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you : <sup>e</sup> no manner of work shall be done in them, save *that* which every <sup>f</sup> man must eat, that only may <sup>f</sup> be done of you.

17 And ye shall observe *the feast of* unleavened bread ; for <sup>f</sup> in this self-same day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt : therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations, <sup>g</sup> by an ordinance for ever.

18 <sup>h</sup> In the first month, on the four-

It does not appear, however, that the passover was afterwards celebrated in this manner ; and our Lord and his apostles seem to have eaten it, in the posture commonly used at their meals. Indeed several things, required at this institution, were not afterwards observed. No intimation is given, that the lamb, which our Lord used at his last passover, was selected four days before ; and he with his apostles left the house soon after the celebration of it. But the circumstances in which the Israelites were placed, at this time, rendered these observances significant and proper : for they were taught, that it was the "LORD's passover : " that he was about to go through the whole land of Egypt, destroying every first-born of man and beast without exception, triumphing over the idols, as well as the princes, of that country : and that he would respect the sprinkled blood on the doors of the Israelites ; and *pass by* or *over* them, nay effectually *protect* them, at the time of this general desolation. They must therefore be ready to march, on the shortest notice within the course of that night.—The manner and posture in which the passover was then eaten, might represent the Christian's deliverance from the bondage of sin, and his heavenly pilgrimage by faith in Christ.—It is probable, that a devastation of the temples and idols of Egypt was miraculously effected on this occasion ; as Dagon afterwards was broken before the ark of God.—The observance of the passover, by the Israelites in Egypt, was an open avowal of their relation to JEHOVAH as his people ; a profession of their faith in his promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; a means of grace, and an act of solemn worship and obedience. Most of them, probably, rested in the outward observance, which was connected with their temporal deliverance ; but, had any disobeyed the command, they would have been involved in the judgments executed on the Egyptians. In after ages, it was a *memorial* of the power and love of God, in delivering Israel, and of the miracles connected with that deliverance. Had not these events taken place,

the nation could not possibly have been persuaded, that they were eye-witnesses of them, and induced to adopt such a memorial of them : and if it had not been adopted at the time, when these publick and extraordinary events were said to have occurred ; at what *future* time could the nation be persuaded, that they had, from age to age, believed and commemorated them ? It was thus a demonstration that Moses spake and acted by divine authority, and that the religion which he established was from God ; while it exceedingly favoured the instruction of the people, and of young persons especially, in the nature and obligation of that religion. (26, 27.)—It was also a prefiguration of Christ our Passover : and believers would discover, from the promises and prophecies, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, something of the nature of redemption through him, and of all other blessings ; and in them it would not only be a joyful tribute of gratitude for former temporal mercies, but an act of humble faith and dependence on the promised Saviour, even until his coming.—Learned men have indeed pointed out many customs among the pagans, with reference to which they suppose these several circumstances were arranged ; especially in order to keep the Israelites at a distance from the idolatrous worship of their neighbours : but it may be questioned, whether the origin of those customs was not of much later date, than the institution of the passover.

*I will pass over you.* (13.) Σκεπασω υμας.—(*I will cover, or, shelter you.*) Sept.

V. 15—18. From the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month, till the evening of the twenty-first, the Israelites were forbidden to eat any leaven : and every person who violated this precept was sentenced to be "cut off from Israel." It does not appear, that the magistrate was required to put the offender to death, even if his offence were known ; but the Lord himself threatened to inflict punishment on him, however secretly he violated the command.—It is not agreed, what is meant by this

teenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even.

19 Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger or born in the land.

20 Ye shall eat nothing leavened: in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread.

21 ¶ Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover.

22 And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel, and the two side-posts, with the blood that is in the bason: and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.

23 For the LORD will pass through to smite the Egyptians, and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side-posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.

24 And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee, and to thy sons for ever.

25 And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land, which the LORD will give you according as he has promised, that ye shall keep this service.

26 And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service?

27 That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the LORD's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped.

28 And the children of Israel went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

29 ¶ And it came to pass that at midnight the LORD smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the first-born of cattle.

30 And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry

expression; (*Marg. Ref. c*;) but something beyond exclusion from the religious privilege of an Israelite must be intended, as the strangers also are included in it (19).—During all the seven days, sacrifices were appointed to be offered; but, on the first, and on the last, “a holy convocation” was held, or an assembly of the people for solemn worship. These days were accounted holy, like the sabbaths, and no manner of work was permitted to be done, except preparing their food. (*Marg. Ref. e*.)

V. 19, 20. The people were commanded to put away all leaven from their houses, that none might be found by any person, to tempt him to transgress. Heathen slaves, therefore, and strangers, seem to have been included; and not merely proselytes who had been circumcised. Indeed, the latter alone might eat the passover; but all without exception were required to abstain from leaven.—This was a shadow of the holy life of the true believer, who, by the grace of Christ, through faith in his atonement, puts away the old leaven of sin with abhorrence, and walks with God in newness of life: (*Note, 1 Cor. v. 6—8*;) and also, of that pious attention to his domesticks, as to their external conduct, which is required of him.

V. 22, 23. The blood of the paschal lamb, sprinkled on the lintel and door-posts, was the only security to the

Israelites from the destroyer who smote the Egyptians; and under that protection they must abide during the whole night, if they would be secured from destruction.—Thus we must abide in Christ by faith to the end of our days.

V. 26. *Notes*, 11—14. xiii. 8—10.

V. 27. *Sacrifice*.] The passover was a “sacrifice,” as offered to God and typical of Christ; but it differed from all the other sacrifices, in that no part of it was consumed upon the altar. The Jewish writers indeed say, that the fat was burnt on the altar; but the Scripture is silent on that head.

V. 29, 30. The hour chosen, for this most tremendous execution, was suited to enhance the consternation. Probably, the persons smitten expired with agonizing cries, which awakened every family; and the report would rapidly spread from house to house. The Egyptians, for three days and nights just before, had been kept in perpetual solicitude and horror by the darkness; and now their rest was broken by a still more terrible calamity. By the death of the first-born, they were righteously punished for murdering the children of the Israelites; as well as for keeping that nation in bondage, which God honoured by calling it “his son, and his first-born.”—Words can never

i See on 15

j 48. 49.

k iii. 16. xvii. 5. xix. 7. Num. xi. 16.

l 8. Num. ix. 2—5. Josh. v. 10. 2 Kings xxiii. 21. 2 Chr. xxx. 16—17. xxxv. 5, 6. Matt. xxvi. 17—19.

m Or, kid *Marg.*

n Lev. xiv. 6, 7. Num. xix. 18. Ps. li. 7. Heb. ix. 1. 14. 19. xii. 24. 1 Pet. i. 2. n Matt. xxvii. 30.

o See on 12.

p 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. 1s. xxxvii. 36. Ez. ix. 6. 1 Cor. x. 10. Heb. xi. 28. Rev. vii. 3. ix. 4.

q See on 4 Gen. xvi. 8—10.

r Deut. iv. 5. xii. 8, 9. xvi. 8—9. Josh. v. 10—12. Ps. cv. 44, 45.

s xiii. 8, 9. 14, 15. Deut. vi. 7. xi. 19. xxxii. 7. Josh. iv. 6, 7. 21—24. Ps. lxxviii. 3—6. cxlv. 4. 1s. xxxviii. 19. Eph. vi. 4. See on 11 23.—xxxiv. 25 Deut. xvi. 2. 5. Cor. v. 7.

t iv. 31. xxxiv. 8. 1 Chr. xxix. 26. 2 Chr. xx. 18. xxix. 30. Neh. viii. 6.

x See on 12. xi. 4. xiii. 15. Job xxxiv. 20 1 Thes. v. 2. Num. iii. 13. viii. 17. xxxiii. 4. Ps. lxxviii. 51. Jer. xlvi. 8. cxlvi. 10. Heb. xi. 28.

y iv. 28. xi. 5. Heb. house of the pit. 1s. xxiv. 22. li. 14. Jer. xxxviii. 6. 13. Zech. ix. 11.

z See on xi. 6.—Prov. xxi. 13. Am. v. 17. Jam. ii. 13.

in Egypt: for *there was* not a house where *there was* not one dead.

<sup>b</sup> 31 And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, <sup>b</sup> Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both you and <sup>c</sup> the children of Israel: and go serve the LORD, as ye have said.

<sup>d</sup> 32 Also take <sup>d</sup> your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and <sup>e</sup> bless me also.

<sup>f</sup> 33 And the Egyptians were <sup>f</sup> urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste: for they said, <sup>g</sup> We *be* all dead men.

<sup>h</sup> 34 And the people took their dough before it was leavened, their <sup>h</sup> kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders.

<sup>i</sup> 35 And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses: <sup>i</sup> and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and raiment.

36 And <sup>j</sup> the LORD gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them *such things as they required*: and they spoiled the Egyptians.

37 And the children of Israel journeyed from <sup>k</sup> Rameses to Succoth, about <sup>k</sup> six hundred thousand on foot: *that were* men, besides children.

38 <sup>m</sup> And <sup>m</sup> a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, *even* very much cattle.

39 And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they brought forth out of Egypt, for it was not leavened: because they were <sup>n</sup> thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any victual.

40 ¶ Now the <sup>o</sup> sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, *was* <sup>o</sup> four hundred and thirty years.

41 And it came to pass, at the end of the four hundred and thirty years,

express the terror and bitterness of this sudden blow, from an invisible hand, destroying the pride, and hope, and comfort of every family of all ranks, throughout this populous kingdom; the whole nation at once mourning over the dead, and trembling for themselves!

V. 31, 32. It is probable, that Pharaoh only sent a message to Moses and Aaron, allowing and requiring Israel to depart; and that Moses never saw him again after he left him in anger, as before related. (Note, xi. 8.)—The first words may be rendered, “And he called to Moses and Aaron.”

V. 35, 36. In their extreme terror, the Egyptians were willing to purchase the favour, and the speedy departure, of Israel at any price: and thus the Lord both took care that their hard-earned wages should at last be paid, and that the people should be well provided for their journey. They therefore left the country laden with the wealth of the Egyptians, as if they had plundered them in war. (Notes, iii. 21, 22. xi. 2, 3.)

*Borrowed.* (35.) ‘The word signifieth also to ask or require. Junius renders it *petierunt*: Montanus, *postularunt*.’ Leigh.—[*Jewels.*] <sup>יָצְאוּ</sup>, *oxum*. Sept. Not only ornaments, but also vessels of gold and silver: plate as well as jewels.—*Lent.* (36.) <sup>לָוָה</sup>, *exerxan*. Sept.—“I have lent him (<sup>לָוָה</sup>) to the Lord.” 1 Sam. i. 28. This seems to be the only other place in which the Hiphil of <sup>לָוָה</sup> occurs: and the word *lent* does not well suit the transaction there recorded. (Note, 1 Sam. i. 28.)

V. 37, 38. It seems the Israelites made a general rendezvous at Rameses, and from thence marched to some distance, where they pitched their tents: for the word *Succoth* signifies tents.—The word rendered *men*, literally denotes *strong men*: and it is generally supposed, that not only the minors and women, but such men as were incapable of great exertion by reason of age, were excluded

in this computation; and the subsequent numberings of the people confirm the supposition. So that the whole company could not be much less than two millions; an immense increase from seventy persons, in little more than two hundred years!—Of “the mixed multitude” that followed Israel, it is probable, that some left Egypt because it was desolated, others because they were distressed or discontented; and others out of curiosity to see what would become of Israel, and how they would serve the Lord: some might be connected with the Israelites by marriage; and perhaps a few accompanied them from love to them and their religion. But these were few indeed: for the bulk of this multitude became a snare to them, and probably after a time returned into Egypt. (Num. xi. 4.)—Cattle seem to have been almost the only property, which the Israelites possessed in Egypt; and these the Lord had lately caused exceedingly to increase.

V. 39. The Israelites, though no doubt warned to prepare for a speedy departure, were at last driven out of Egypt so suddenly, that they had not provided themselves with victuals for the journey. But being constrained to set off while they were about to lay in a stock of bread, when the dough was yet unleavened, they took it with them in that state: and when they came to Succoth, they baked cakes of it for the present use. Probably, this was their principal supply till the manna was sent. Thus the Lord took care, that they should keep the feast of unleavened bread, which otherwise they would perhaps have neglected.

V. 40. From the first calling of Abraham, to the departure out of Egypt, exactly four hundred and thirty years seem to have passed.—The Septuagint read it, ‘the sojourning of Israel..in Egypt and the land of Canaan.’ But this is merely a comment, though a just one. (Notes, Gen. xv. 12—16.)

<sup>q</sup> Ps. cii. 13. Dan. ix. 24. Hab. ii. 3. John vii. 8. Acts i. 7. <sup>r</sup> vii. 4. Josh. v. 14.

• Heb. a night of observations. <sup>s</sup> 14. Deut. xvi. 1—6.

even <sup>a</sup> the self-same day it came to pass, that all the <sup>r</sup> hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.

42 It is <sup>a</sup> a night to be much <sup>o</sup> observed unto the LORD, for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel, in their generations.

43 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover: <sup>t</sup> there shall no stranger eat thereof.

44 But every man's servant, that is bought for money, when thou hast <sup>u</sup> circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof.

45 A foreigner, and an hired servant shall not eat thereof.

46 In <sup>v</sup> one house shall it be eaten: thou shalt not carry forth ought of the

flesh abroad out of the house: <sup>y</sup> neither shall ye break a bone thereof.

47 <sup>z</sup> All the congregation of Israel shall <sup>z</sup> keep it.

48 And when <sup>a</sup> a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, <sup>b</sup> let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he <sup>c</sup> shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof.

49 <sup>d</sup> One law shall be to him that is home-born, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.

50 Thus did all the children of Israel; <sup>e</sup> as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.

51 And it came to pass the self-same day, <sup>f</sup> that the LORD did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, <sup>f</sup> by their armies.

V. 42. *To be observed, &c.*] It was thus observed, when the passover was duly celebrated. (Προφυλαχῆ, a vigil, or a watching. Sept.)

V. 43—45. Every person in each household, including women and children, ate this first passover, none being excepted but uncircumcised males. The law was not yet given; and whatever traditional customs prevailed, no restriction is mentioned in this chapter in respect of ceremonial uncleanness. Yet afterwards, even before the ceremonial law had been explicitly given, we read of those, who “being defiled by the dead body of a man, could not keep the passover on that day.” (Note, Num. ix. 6—8.) The ceremonially unclean therefore, were thenceforth excluded. The women and children were not indeed commanded to go up to the tabernacle, where alone it was celebrated; but when they did, they joined in this sacred feast.—It does not appear that any servant or stranger was compelled to be circumcised; but, till he was circumcised, he must not be allowed to eat the passover.—This may intimate, that without regeneration, or “the circumcision of the heart,” we cannot share the benefits of redemption by the death of Christ; and by parity of reason, we are not meet communicants at the Lord's table.

V. 46. When two households joined for one lamb, they were not allowed to divide it, either before or after it was roasted; but they must meet in one house, and eat it together. This coincided with the direction before given (9); and implied that all believers receive the whole of Christ's salvation and have fellowship one with another, while they live on his fulness, and share the blessings derived from his cross.—The injunction, “neither shall ye break a bone thereof,” may be considered also as prophetic, to be literally fulfilled in the great Antitype, and which the apostle thought worthy of special notice. (John xix. 36.)

V. 48, 49. A stranger, though he renounced idolatry, and by circumcision professed himself a worshipper of the

God of Israel, was not allowed to eat the passover, unless all the males in his family also were circumcised: and, as there was “one law to him that was home-born and to the stranger,” it seems that even an Israelite, who retained uncircumcised persons in his household, must not eat the passover. It is therefore probable, according to the opinion of Jewish writers, that if any heathen slave after a year's trial, persisted in refusing to be circumcised, he was sold to some of the heathen neighbours. As to other persons, who refused to embrace the religion of Israel, and to profess it by circumcision; they were allowed to remain with them. The practice, indeed, of open idolatry must not be tolerated; but such as professed to worship the true God, though not according to the ceremonies of the law, might live in the country, but not in the households of the Israelites.—A great part of the observations of learned men on this chapter, and on other parts of the ceremonial law, consists of citations from Jewish writers, concerning the manner in which they suppose the several rules were observed by their ancestors: but as they were not authorized to add to the divine law, or to take from it; we can make no other use of their information, than as it sometimes helps us to understand more clearly the meaning of the scriptural expressions. In other respects, their traditions form a kind of comment on the Mosaic institutions, not much dissimilar from that of Popish writers on the Christian sacraments; and only shew, how far they have ventured to deviate from the simplicity of their written rule.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

##### V. 1—28.

The Lord makes all things new, to those whom he delivers from the bondage of Satan, and takes to himself as his peculiar people; and the æra of their enlargement is the commencement of a new life, of new hopes, pleasures, and employments. They who in early life are devoted to the

## CHAP. XIII.

The first-born of man, and firstlings of cattle, are sanctified to God, 1, 2. The feast of unleavened bread is appointed to be kept annually as a memorial of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, 3—10. Their children must be instructed in the meaning of these

service of God, are peculiarly happy: and we should begin every year, and month, and week, and day, with the great duties of religion; endeavouring to engage our families likewise. For nothing is more honourable to God, or more profitable to men, than harmonious family-religion: it is the best bond of domestick peace, the best solace of domestick afflictions, and the best security for the continuance and increase of domestick felicity; while it affords an important advantage for constant "growth in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ."—In order to attain these advantages, and communicate them to others, we should diligently study the holy Scriptures, that we may understand the true nature and meaning of every part of our religion, and be enabled to explain it to our children; who ought to be encouraged in their enquiries, and informed by clear and satisfactory answers: that, in the most easy and agreeable manner, they may become acquainted with the word and works of God, and join with us in celebrating the praises of his truth and mercy, and the wonders of his powerful arm.—But, in attending on the ordinances of God, we should carefully observe the *stated* order and season: and, while we must not neglect or despise any of his appointments, we may properly take time for serious enquiry and conscientious preparation, that we may at length attend on them with more solemnity, and to better purpose. But, if we would have the comfort of acceptance in our religious services, we must watch against the leaven of hypocrisy, malice, and wickedness; which in numberless instances have rendered, and still do render, attendance on the very ordinances, that God himself has appointed, an abomination in his sight. (*Notes, Is. i. 10—20.*) And whatever we offer to the Lord, should be the best which we possess.

## V. 29—42.

When the Lord's time comes to perform his promises, mountains melt and flow down at his presence, and nothing creates any more difficulty, than is proper to illustrate his powerful operation.—The greatest and proudest sinner is not exalted out of the reach of his omnipotent vengeance, and the least are not beneath his notice: and if a *temporal* calamity filled Egypt with universal, inexpressible terror and lamentation; what words can describe, or imagination conceive, the consternation and anguish of the wicked, at the approaching judgment-day!—For fear of impending death, the Egyptians were willing to part, not only with their bond-slaves, but with their gold and silver: and "what shall a man be profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Alas! riches will not profit in the day of wrath, for it costs more to redeem souls from destruction: but if we would escape, we must moderate our worldly attachments, renounce our sinful projects, and hold ourselves in continual readiness to leave all and follow Christ; and if we should be called to part with, not only our wealth, but every temporal comfort, the perfect free-

observances, 11—16. The Lord guides forth the people, 17, 18; who take with them the bones of Joseph, 19; and, under the guidance of a pillar of cloud and of fire, arrive at Etham, 20—22.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

dom of his service will give a relish to our meanest provisions.—But, alas! a very numerous mixed multitude have hitherto accompanied the camp of Israel; who, from various worldly motives, or transient convictions, seem to leave Egypt, and to set out for the heavenly Canaan. While they retain their profession, they often prove snares and tempters to others; and at length in "time of temptation they fall away," and "their last state is worse than the first." Let us then "look diligently," that we may not prove such as "draw back to perdition;" but be found among "those who believe to the saving of their souls."—While we hear even hardened Pharaoh, under the dread of immediate destruction, not only consenting to let Israel go, according to the utmost demand of Moses and Aaron, but even intreating them to "bless him also;" we may know what in general to think of the confessions and pious language, which are extorted from many wicked men, when death affrights them; and which, being *injudiciously attested as genuine repentance*, by some Christians and ministers, often give encouragement to others to procrastinate, in hopes of being saved at last in the same manner.

## V. 43—51.

"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;" his blood is the only ransom for our souls; without the shedding of it there could have been no remission, without the sprinkling of it there can be no salvation. But have we, by faith, sheltered our souls, from the deserved vengeance of God, under the protection of his atoning blood? Do we keep close to him, in habitual dependence on his merits, and access to the throne of grace through his intercession? Do we so profess our faith in the divine Redeemer, and our obligations to him, that all who pass by may know, as by the blood-besprinkled door, to whom we belong? Are we careful not to pervert or disgrace this our profession, by any inconsistent conduct, lest we should trample the blood of the covenant under our feet? Is Christ indeed, the Food and Feast of our souls? Do we 'feed on him in our hearts' by faith with thanksgiving, deriving all our life, strength, hope, and consolation from his fulness of truth and grace? Do we receive him in his whole character, and for all the purposes of salvation, from wrath, from sin, from this evil world, and from the powers of darkness? Do we in consequence stand prepared for his service, and prompt to walk in his ways; to separate ourselves from his enemies, and assert that liberty with which he makes his people free? These are questions of vast importance to our souls: the Lord direct our consciences to give an honest answer to them! Without the daily exercise of godly sorrow and true repentance, we can never eat of this true Passover; and though we must also bear our cross, and have our feast alloyed by the bitter herbs of tribulation and temptation; we shall find the life of faith and grace a feast indeed, a source of joy, such as the world can neither give nor take away.—Finally, the Lord's supper is our unbloody

<sup>a</sup> 12-15. xxii. 29.  
<sup>b</sup> 30. xxiii. 19.  
<sup>c</sup> xxiv. 19. 20.  
<sup>d</sup> Lev. xxvii. 26.  
<sup>e</sup> Num. iii. 13.  
<sup>f</sup> viii. 16. 17.  
<sup>g</sup> xviii. 15. Deut.  
<sup>h</sup> xv. 19. Luke ii.  
<sup>i</sup> 23. Heb. xii. 23.  
<sup>j</sup> xii. 42. xx. 8.  
<sup>k</sup> Deut. v. 15. xv.  
<sup>l</sup> 15. xvi. 3. 12.  
<sup>m</sup> xxiv. 18. 22.  
<sup>n</sup> 1 Chr. xvi. 12.  
<sup>o</sup> Ps. cv. 5. Luke  
<sup>p</sup> xxii. 19. 1 Cor.  
<sup>q</sup> xi. 24.  
<sup>r</sup> 14. xii. 2. Deut.  
<sup>s</sup> v. 6. vi. 12. viii.  
<sup>t</sup> 14. xiii. 5. 10.  
<sup>u</sup> Josh. xxiv. 17.  
<sup>v</sup> Jude. vi. 8.  
<sup>w</sup> Heb. servants.  
<sup>x</sup> vi. 1. Deut. iv.  
<sup>y</sup> 34. xii. 2. 3.  
<sup>z</sup> Neh. ix. 10.  
<sup>aa</sup> Eph. i. 19.  
<sup>ab</sup> See on xii. 8. 15.  
<sup>ac</sup> xxiii. 15. xxiv.  
<sup>ad</sup> 18. Deut. xvi. 1.  
<sup>ae</sup> iii. 8. xxxiv. 11.  
<sup>af</sup> Gen. xv. 18-21.  
<sup>ag</sup> Deut. vii. 1. xii.  
<sup>ah</sup> 29. xix. 1. xxvi.  
<sup>ai</sup> 1. Josh. xxiv.  
<sup>aj</sup> 11.  
<sup>ak</sup> v. 8. xxviii. 1.  
<sup>al</sup> Gen. xvii. 7. 8.  
<sup>am</sup> xvii. 16-18.  
<sup>an</sup> xxvi. 8. 1. 24.  
<sup>ao</sup> Num. xiv. 16.  
<sup>ap</sup> 30. xxvii. 11.  
<sup>aq</sup> See on iii. 17.  
<sup>ar</sup> See on xii. 25.

2 \*Sanctify unto me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine.

3 ¶ And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten.

4 This day came ye out, in the month 'Abib.

5 And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, which he swore unto thy fathers to give thee, a land flowing with milk and honey, that thou shalt keep this service in this month.

6 Seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread, and in the seventh day shall be a feast to the LORD.

7 Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days: and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters.

8 And thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, *This is done* because of that which the LORD did unto me, when I came forth out of Egypt.

9 And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes; that the LORD's law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt.

10 Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season, from year to year.

passover, our feast upon the atoning sacrifice, our 'sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.' Having previously "examined ourselves whether we be in the faith," and seriously as sinners applied to the Lord Jesus for his salvation, and devoted ourselves to his service; let us frequently and constantly, in this appointed way, remember our Redeemer's love and sufferings; let us make this confession of our sins, this profession of our faith, this declaration of our gratitude, and this surrender of ourselves to his service, as "bought with a price to glorify him, both in body and spirit, which are his." Thus uniting ourselves to him, and having fellowship with him and his people here, we shall receive from his fulness, rejoice in his ways on earth, and at length sit down with him in his heavenly kingdom.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 2. In remembrance of the destruction of the first-born of Egypt, both man and beast; and of the preservation of Israel, and their deliverance out of bondage by means of that judgment; the first-born males of the Israelites must be solemnly presented and dedicated to the Lord, and a price was appointed to be paid for their redemption.—This represented to them, that their lives were preserved through the ransom of the atonement, which in due time was to be made for sin; and that they ought to consider themselves, thus ransomed from death, as consecrated to the service of God.—The *first-born* may mean either the first son of his father, or the first son of his mother. Reuben was the first son both of Jacob and Leah, and Joseph was the first-born of Rachel; but Jacob acknowledges Reuben only as his first-born. (Gen. xlix. 3. Deut. xxi. 15-17.)—In many cases the eldest son of the father, who was entitled to some peculiar privileges, might not be the first-born of the mother: but the first-born of the mother, exclusively, was dedicated to God out of Israel,

as the language used clearly shews; and it may be supposed, that the destruction of the first-born in Egypt was made by the same rule.

V. 3-7. On the arrival of Israel at Succoth, Moses seems to have again enforced the injunctions before given in Egypt, lest the people should forget them; and to shew that these institutions were to be considered as of perpetual obligation, especially after they were settled in the promised land; for they could not regularly observe them in the wilderness. This Moses did with varied expressions, concerning the *leaven*. Accordingly we are told that the Israelites were very careful in searching every corner of their houses, that no leaven might remain; and what they found, they burnt, buried, or in some way destroyed, before the feast of the passover.—The first day of unleavened bread was particularly observed, in remembrance of Israel's setting out from Egypt on that day; and many expositors suppose, that they passed the Red Sea on the seventh day, and that it was likewise the sabbath-day.

V. 8-10. The constant observance of these institutions, with plain and easy explications of the meaning to the young persons, would render the deliverance out of Egypt familiar to the Israelites, from generation to generation; and be a continual memorial, as well as an open profession, of their obligations to love and serve the Lord: as those who wish to remember and fear to forget any thing, use a variety of methods to remind them of it. Inscribe it upon the hand, placing it before their eyes, or as a frontlet upon their foreheads, seem to have been used in those times for such purposes.—"That the LORD's law may be in thy mouth;" "that their children might be able to declare to their posterity, the law of the Lord about these matters." Bp. Patrick.—In like manner Baptism and the Lord's Supper, if clearly explained and duly attended on, would render the nature of Christianity, and the obligations of Christians, familiar to the minds of one generation after another; and remind them, or give them occasion to

11 ¶ And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, <sup>r</sup> as he sware unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee,

<sup>r</sup> See on h. 5.

12 That <sup>s</sup> thou shalt <sup>t</sup> set apart unto the LORD all that <sup>u</sup> openeth the matrix: and every firstling that cometh of a beast, which thou hast, the males *shall* be the LORD's.

<sup>s</sup> See on 2.  
<sup>t</sup> Heb. *cause to pass over*.  
<sup>u</sup> xxxiv. 19. Num. iii. 12. xviii. 15

13 And every firstling <sup>v</sup> of an ass thou shalt redeem with <sup>x</sup> a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the first-born of man among thy children <sup>y</sup> shalt thou redeem.

<sup>v</sup> xxxiv. 20. Num. xviii. 15—17.  
<sup>x</sup> Or, *kid*. xii. 3. 21. Margins.

14 And it shall be when <sup>z</sup> thy son asketh thee <sup>z</sup> in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage.

<sup>v</sup> Num. iii. 46—51. Rev. xiv. 4.  
<sup>x</sup> See on xiv. 26. Deut. vi. 20—24. Josh. iv. 6. 21—24. Ps. cxlv. 4.  
<sup>z</sup> Heb. *to-morrow*. Gen. xxx. 33. Deut. vi. 20. Josh. iv. 6. xxiii. 24. Margins.

15 And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that <sup>y</sup> the LORD slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man, and the first-born of beast: <sup>z</sup> therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all that openeth

<sup>y</sup> See on xii. 29

<sup>z</sup> See on 12.

remind one another, of their obligations, their duty, and the vows of God which are upon them.

V. 11—16. The first-born males alone were thus set apart for God: if a female preceded, the first succeeding male was not considered as the first-born. The firstling males of such animals as were appointed for sacrifice, were offered at the altar; but others must either be exchanged, or killed. The firstling of an ass is mentioned, as asses were common among the Israelites; but that of horses or camels likewise, which were not common, seem to have been under the same regulation. The Levites were afterwards taken instead of the first-born children. (Notes, Num. iii.)—This custom likewise would give parents an important opportunity of instructing their children, in respect of the wonderful works of God in behalf of his people.

V. 17, 18. The nearest road from Egypt to Canaan was only a few days' march; as it must be evident to every reader, who considers the journeys of the sons of Jacob into Egypt. But the Philistines were a hardy warlike people; and the Israelites were unarmed, dispirited by long bondage, and not acquainted with war; and they might have been greatly discouraged, had they been reduced to the necessity of engaging so soon with these formidable enemies. This was one reason, and probably the avowed reason, why the Lord led them another way: so that, by his express command, the Israelites took their route, much more to the south, than the direct road lay; and they marched towards the banks of the Red Sea; instead of going directly to the isthmus of Suez, which com-

municates betwixt Africa and Asia. It is probable, that at this time, the Israelites had scarcely any weapons of war: though they seem to have procured some from the dead bodies of the Egyptians, before the Amalekites attacked them. (xvii. 8—13.)—The margin intimates that the word, translated *harnessed*, may signify, *by five in a rank*; but the room such a multitude must have taken from the van to the rear, is immense, had they marched in this manner; as there would have been 120,000 lines of five men each, besides women and children. It seems rather to mean that they marched in five distinct squadrons; or in general, that though unarmed, they journeyed in regular order, and not as a disorderly multitude. The LXX translate it *in the fifth generation*.—The Psalmist informs us, that "there was not one feeble person amongst their tribes:" Ps. cv. 37. This was a very extraordinary circumstance, which the history of the world cannot parallel: yet it was very suitable to the situation of those, who had sufficient encumbrances in their march, without having invalids to take care of. It also completed their triumph over Pharaoh and the Egyptians, since they were not constrained to leave one of the company behind them.

16 And it shall be for <sup>a</sup> a token upon <sup>a</sup> thine hand, <sup>b</sup> and for frontlets between <sup>b</sup> thine eyes: <sup>c</sup> for by strength of hand the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt.

<sup>a</sup> 9. See on xii. 13.  
<sup>b</sup> Deut. vi. 7—9. xi. 18.  
<sup>c</sup> 9. 14.

17 ¶ And it came to pass when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not *through* the way of the land of the Philistines, although that *was* near: for God said, Lest peradventure <sup>d</sup> the people repent when they see war, and they <sup>e</sup> return to Egypt.

<sup>d</sup> xiv. 11, 12. Num. xiv. 1—4. Deut. xx. 8. Judg. vii. 8. Luke xiv. 27—32. Acts xiii. 13. xv. 38. 1 Cor. x. 13.

18 But God <sup>e</sup> led the people about, *through* the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea: and the children of Israel went up <sup>f</sup> harnessed out of the land of Egypt.

<sup>e</sup> xvi. 2, 8. Neh. ix. 17. Acts vii. 39.  
<sup>f</sup> xiv. 2. Num. xxxiii. 6—8. Ps. cvii. 7.

19 And Moses took the bones of Joseph with him: <sup>g</sup> for he had straitly sworn the children of Israel, saying, <sup>h</sup> God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones away hence with you.

<sup>g</sup> Or, *by five in a rank*. xii. 51.  
<sup>h</sup> Gen. i. 24, 25. Josh. xxiv. 32. Acts vii. 16.

20 And <sup>i</sup> they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness.

<sup>h</sup> iv. 31. Gen. xlviii. 21. Luke i. 68. vii. 16.

<sup>i</sup> Num. xxxiii. 5, 6.

Harnessed. (18.) מִצָּבָה. Rendered by the LXX συζωνοι, Josh. i. 14: and διασκευασμενοι, Josh. iv. 12.—It occurs also Judg. vii. 11.

V. 19. The bones of Joseph had long been a pledge of Israel's deliverance, and of their inheriting Canaan. Some think that the bones of the other sons of Jacob likewise were carried with the Israelites to Canaan, though it is not here expressly mentioned. (Note, Gen. i. 24—26.)

k xiv. 19—21. xl.  
34—38. Num.  
ix. 15—22. x. 34.  
xiv. 14. Dent. i.  
33. Neh. ix. 12.  
19. Ps. lxxviii.  
14. xcix. 7. cv.  
50. Is. iv. 5, 6.  
1 Cor x i 2.

1 Ps cxi. 5—8.

in Rev. x. 1.

21 And <sup>k</sup> the LORD went before them, by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night.

22 He <sup>l</sup> took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the <sup>m</sup> pillar of fire by night *from* before the people.

#### CHAP. XIV.

The way taken by Israel proves the occasion of hardening Pharaoh's heart, 1—4. He pursues them, 5—9. Being affrighted, they murmur; but are encour-

V. 21, 22. The Lord manifested his gracious presence with Israel, by a miraculous appearance in the air, in form like a pillar, the base of which was so large as to overshadow the camps of Israel. This was seen by day as a cloud, and by night it gave light as fire; and it seems to have been continued with them, to direct their marches, and as a pledge of the divine protection, till they entered Canaan.—This pillar represented the guidance, comfort, and security, which the Lord affords his true people; from the time when they renounce the service of sin and Satan, until they safely arrive in heaven.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—10.

We are so unteachable in divine things, that we need the same lessons over and over, in a variety of ways, before we make any tolerable proficiency: repetitions therefore are neither impertinent nor useless.—The instructions of the holy Scriptures are suited to render divine truths and precepts very plain and familiar to our minds, that we may have them continually in view, frequently converse about them, and regulate our conduct by them. Ministers when teaching their congregations, and parents when educating their children, should keep this constantly in sight; and embrace every opportunity of deeply impressing the minds of those committed to their charge, with a sense of their obligations to the Lord for all his benefits. They should use every means of rendering them well acquainted with his wonderful works, especially the redemption of the world by Jesus Christ, and his harmonious perfections, displayed in that grand design; that they may thus be led to know, trust, love, and serve the God of their salvation.—But if we sincerely desire to devote ourselves to God, we must be as careful to search out, and put away, all remains and occasions of sin, and to mortify and subdue every carnal and corrupt affection, as the Israelites were to remove the leaven from their houses, when they celebrated the passover.

##### V. 11—22.

By creation, and as preserved and sustained by him, we are the Lord's property, and he has a right to dispose of us as he pleases; but redemption gives him a new and more endearing title to our bodies, souls, and services: and exemption from the desolations which come on the wicked, and deliverance from the malice of our enemies, flow from his mercy, through the ransom of

aged by Moses, 10—14. God instructs Moses, 15—18. The cloud removes behind the camp; the Red Sea is divided; the Israelites pass through it; but the Egyptians following them are drowned, 19—30. The Israelites are suitably affected, 31.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, <sup>a</sup> that they turn and encamp before Pihahiroth, between <sup>b</sup> Migdol and the sea, over against Baal-zephon: before it shall ye encamp by the sea.

3 For <sup>c</sup> Pharaoh will say of the chil-

a 9. xlii. 17, 18.  
Num. xxxiii. 7.  
b Jer. xlv. 1.  
xlv. 14. Ez.  
xxix. 10. Heb.  
c vii. 3, 4. Dent.  
xxxi. 21. Ps.  
cxix. 2. 4.  
Ez. xxxviii. 10.  
11. 17. Acta iv  
28.

the Redeemer's blood, and by the power of his mighty arm. If we are really made partakers of these benefits, we belong to "the church of the first-born, whose names are "written in heaven;" and we are required to "present "our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to "God, which is our reasonable service." Nor shall we ever enjoy so much liberty, or so much comfort in our children and substance, as when we most unreservedly devote ourselves and them to him. "The strong man, "armed" with our lusts and passions, our inveterate habits and intimate evil connexions, vehemently opposes our conversion, and "will hardly let us go;" but "when a "Stronger than he comes upon him, he takes from him "his armour wherein he trusted, and divides the spoil." Then, being delivered from bondage, putting ourselves under the Lord's care and protection, and joining ourselves to his people, we learn to walk before him in all his ordinances and commandments: and though the way in which he leads us is widely different from that which we should choose for ourselves; we shall find that he in every particular regards our weakness, and that he orders all things for our good, and in such a manner as may most effectually keep us from returning back to sin and the world.—Through all the intricacies and dangers of the way, he will guide and guard us by his word and Spirit; he will enlighten every dark night of affliction by his holy consolations, and shelter us from the burning sun of temptation, until he bring us to his heavenly rest with everlasting songs of joy and praise.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 2. The Israelites before this had marched, not in the direct road to Canaan, but more to the south, towards the Red Sea; until they came to the edge of the wilderness, whither the Egyptians expected they were retiring to offer sacrifices to the Lord. (xiii. 20.) But now they received orders to turn still further out of the way, into some impervious straits, or narrow defiles. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3, 4. It was the avowed design of God to harden the heart of Pharaoh; and he knew how to effect it, without being in any sense or degree the Author of sin. It would suffice for this purpose to remove all restraints from his heart and conscience; to leave him entirely to his own pride, and impetuous lusts, and to the instigations of Satan; and to arrange the dispensations of providence, so as most



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[illegible]





THE RED SEA, NEAR THE SUPPOSED SPOT AT WHICH THE ISRAELITES PASSED OVER.

Exod. xiv 2, 9, 16.



<sup>d</sup> Judg. xvi. 2. <sup>1</sup> Sam. xxiii. 7. <sup>23</sup> Ps. lxxi. 11. <sup>Jer</sup> xx. 10. **dren of Israel, <sup>d</sup>They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in.**

<sup>e</sup> 17. See on iv. 21. vii. 8. 13. 14. —Rom. xi. 8. <sup>f</sup> 18. ix. 16. xv. 10. 11. 14—16. xviii. 11. Neh. ix. 10. Is. ii. 11, 12. Ez. xx. 9. xxviii. 22. xxxix. 13. Dan. iv. 30—37. Rom. ix. 17. 22, 23. Rev. xix. 1—6. **4 And <sup>e</sup>I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them, <sup>f</sup>and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; <sup>g</sup>that the Egyptians may know that I *am* the Lord. And they did so.**

<sup>g</sup> See on vii. 17. <sup>h</sup> xii. 33. Ps. cv 25. <sup>i</sup> Jer. xxxiv. 10—17. Luke xi. 24. —26. 2 Pet. ii. 20—22. **5 And it was told the king of Egypt, that the people fled: and <sup>h</sup>the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and they said, <sup>i</sup>'Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?'**

**6 And he made ready his chariot, and took his people with him:**

<sup>k</sup> 23. xv. 4. Josh. xvii. 16—18. Judg. iv. 3. 15. Ps. xx. 7. lxxvii. 17. Is. xxxvii. 24. **7 And he took <sup>k</sup>six hundred chosen chariots, and all the chariots of Egypt, and captains over every one of them.**

<sup>l</sup> See on e. 4. **8 And <sup>l</sup>the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he pursued after the children of Israel: and the children of Israel went out <sup>m</sup>with an high hand.**

<sup>n</sup> vi. 1. xiii. 9. 16. 18. Num. xxxiii. 8. Deut. xxxii. 27. Ps. lxxxix. 13. Acts xiii. 17. <sup>n</sup> xv. 9. Josh. xxiv. 6. **9 But <sup>n</sup>the Egyptians pursued after them, (all the horses *and* chariots of Pharaoh, and his horsemen and his army,) and overtook them <sup>o</sup>encamping by the sea, beside Pi-hahiroth before Baal-zephon.**

**10 ¶ And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold the Egyptians marched**

effectually to encourage his hopes of yet prevailing in the contest. The heart of Pharaoh had been sorely galled, but it was not in the least humbled. He had been repeatedly baffled and frightened, and forced to yield; yet his daring spirit was not subdued, but revolted more and more against the violence done him, so that he was fired with resentment and thirsted for revenge. His covetousness and ambition had been severely disappointed; his kingdom had been desolated and almost depopulated, and his first-born son slain: he had suffered an ignominious defeat; and nothing, but despair of success, and the urgent terror of death, could have extorted his consent to Israel's enlargement.—While under the immediate pressure of the last dreadful visitation, every thing except the preservation of his life was forgotten: but when his terror and anguish were somewhat subsided, and his convictions abated, then his stoutness of spirit returned; and the thoughts of the mortifications, ignominy, and loss which he had sustained, with all their probable and possible effects, no doubt rushed into his mind. Then every thought or counsel would be welcome, which could point out the way, or revive the hope, of reducing Israel, or of wreaking his vengeance on them.—Had they marched directly towards Canaan, they would, probably, have been out of his dominions, before he had recovered from his fright, and he might have given them up in despair: but as they turned another way, and were, as he supposed, entangled in the wilderness, and shut up by surrounding rocks, mountains, and seas; he would conclude that they were not under an infallible guidance, and thence infer that they had not an almighty protection, but might yet be subdued to his will: and what he ardently wished, feeble evidence would induce him to believe.—This the Lord foresaw; and that he might be honoured upon the Egyptians, and make his power and justice known, he gave his directions to Israel accordingly.—I will 'show my power and justice in their destruction, 'which would not have been so visible, had they died of 'the pestilence,...as it was by hardening Pharaoh so far as 'to follow the Israelites into the Red Sea, where he and 'his whole host were overthrown; which made the terror 'of the LORD's wrath manifest to the world.' *Bp. Patrick.*

**V. 5—9.** The Egyptians had consented to the departure

of the Israelites, and even urged them to be gone; and when they liberally bestowed on them the gold and silver and raiment which they asked, they seem to have had no expectation that they would return. But as the Israelites, probably, had not expressly declared themselves on this head; when the Egyptians heard, (perhaps by some of the mixed multitude who came back,) that they neither halted in the desert to offer sacrifices, nor kept the direct road to Horeb, (where some think they had said that they intended to keep a feast to the LORD,) but turned aside into intricate paths; they began to treat them as fugitive slaves. The servants of Pharaoh, while terrified by the divine judgments, and suffering severely the effects of them, had counselled him to dismiss Israel: yet considering themselves sharers in his loss and disgrace, and being again encouraged to expect better success; they blamed themselves for having let them go, and gave Pharaoh more agreeable advice: and he was so infatuated by worldly policy, and so hardened in obstinate rebellion against the Lord, that, forgetting his late terrors, he determined to take vengeance on Moses and on Israel. Accordingly he collected all his forces which were at hand, especially his chariots of war and his cavalry, which was the chief strength of his army; and without delay pursued the fugitives: but they, not expecting so formidable an enemy, had marched on with great alacrity, and in good order, not at all like slaves who were fleeing from their masters; and were at that time encamping by the sea. It is generally supposed, that on the right and left of their encampment there were impassable mountains or fortifications; while the Red Sea was in the front, and Pharaoh and his army pressed upon their rear.

**V. 10—12.** It is evident, that all the wonders, wrought for Israel in Egypt, had excited in most of them nothing beyond transient convictions, hopes, and joy; and that in general they were destitute of true faith and confidence in God. They had therefore been in high spirits, when no danger appeared: but when they saw the army of Pharaoh marching up to them, they sunk into terror and despondency; and their cries to the Lord, having been extorted by dismay, were soon succeeded by rebellious murmurs. Yet it must be supposed that some out of the vast mul-

after them, <sup>2</sup> and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel <sup>3</sup> cried out unto the LORD.

11 And they said unto Moses, <sup>4</sup> Because *there were* no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? <sup>5</sup> Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt?

12 <sup>6</sup> Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, <sup>7</sup> Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? <sup>8</sup> For *it had been* better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness.

13 And Moses said unto the people, <sup>9</sup> Fear ye not, stand still, and <sup>10</sup> see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to-day: <sup>11</sup> for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day <sup>12</sup> ye shall see them again no more for ever.

14 <sup>13</sup> The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

15 And the LORD said unto Moses,

<sup>16</sup> Wherefore criest thou unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward.

16 But <sup>17</sup> lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it; <sup>18</sup> and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.

17 And <sup>19</sup> I, behold <sup>20</sup> I, will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: <sup>21</sup> and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

18 And the Egyptians shall <sup>22</sup> know that I *am* the LORD, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

19 ¶ And <sup>23</sup> the Angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; <sup>24</sup> and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them.

20 And it came between the camp

titude, in this emergency sought the Lord in fervent prayer, while the rest vented their anguish in bitter complaints against Moses. All however were sensible, that such an unarmed multitude could not withstand Pharaoh's disciplined troops: they had no thoughts therefore of fighting, no prospect of escaping by flight, no hope in submitting to so enraged a tyrant; and very few of them had any confidence in God, or expectation from him, so that death seemed inevitable. They therefore expostulated bitterly with Moses for leading them out of Egypt; as if he had done it by his own authority, and in order to expose them to the rage of Pharaoh, that he might kill them in the wilderness!—Thus, while Pharaoh, hardened in desperate presumption, forgot the wonderful works of God, which he and his people had seen and severely felt; the Israelites themselves, in unbelieving despondency, were equally regardless of them; and looked back with sad regret on the wretched slavery, under which they had before groaned!

V. 13, 14. On this trying occasion, the faith of Moses was peculiarly illustrious. He answered the injurious complaints of Israel without the least resentment, and with great sedateness, meekness, and presence of mind. He expressed no fear of Pharaoh and his army; and only required the people to be still, and not put themselves into disorder, but to stand prepared to obey his word of direction; being assured that the Lord would deliver them by his own powerful arm. It would not be at all needful for them to fight against the Egyptians; but merely to look on with silent astonishment, and to witness their destruction. (*Marg. Ref.*) For this would be the last time they would ever see them, as living enemies, either to injure or affright them. They afterwards indeed saw

the dead bodies of some of them on the sea shore; (3<sup>o</sup>. xv. 5. 12;) but it is very remarkable, that the power of Egypt was so crushed, and the spirit of the rulers so broken, by this last stroke, that the Egyptians never attempted to pursue or molest Israel, even when shut up in the wilderness during forty years.

V. 15, 16. Moses was earnest in prayer at this trying conjuncture; and it cannot be supposed, that the Lord was displeased with him: but he thus assured him, that his request was granted, and that he was about to effect the deliverance of Israel. Moses needed only to excite and encourage the people to march forward; and God would make way for them, by dividing the sea, that they might go through it as on dry land.

V. 17. *I, behold I.*] This speaks the certainty of the event, as the Lord himself undertook, that the heart of Pharaoh and of his subjects should be hardened. These had associated themselves with their king in rebellion, and were thus with him doomed to the same deserved punishment.

V. 18. *The Egyptians.*] The miserable remains of this once flourishing people.—The expression, again and again repeated, “I will be honoured, upon Pharaoh, &c.” as marking the grand design of all these transactions, should be peculiarly noticed.

V. 19. *The Angel.*] Either a created angel, by whose ministry this pillar was produced, and moved; or rather the great Angel of the Covenant, the eternal Son of God. (24.)

V. 20. Even in the night, the cloud caused an additional gloom to the Egyptians: yet it was a light to the Israelites, who marched as by day-light to the sea-shore; while their enemies bewildered in darkness could scarcely

of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was <sup>m</sup> a cloud of darkness *to them*, but it gave light by night *to these*: so that the one came not near the other all the night.

21 ¶ And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and <sup>n</sup> the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry *land*, and the waters were divided.

22 And <sup>o</sup> the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry *ground*: and the waters *were* <sup>p</sup> a wall unto them, on their right hand, and on their left.

23 And <sup>q</sup> the Egyptians pursued, and

went in after them, to the midst of the sea, *even* all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

24 ¶ And it came to pass <sup>r</sup> that in the morning-watch, the LORD <sup>s</sup> looked unto the host of the Egyptians, <sup>t</sup> 'through the pillar of fire and of the cloud,' and troubled the host of the Egyptians,

25 And <sup>u</sup> took off their chariot-wheels, <sup>v</sup> 'that they drave them heavily': so that the Egyptians said, <sup>w</sup> 'Let us flee from the face of Israel; <sup>x</sup> 'for the LORD fighteth for them, against the Egyptians.

26 And the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>y</sup> 'Stretch out thine hand over the sea,

m Ps. xviii. 11.  
Prov. iv. 18, 19.  
Is. viii. 14, 2 Cor.  
ii. 15, 16.

n xv. 8. Josh. iii.  
13-16. iv. 23  
Neh. ix. 11. Job  
xxvi. 12. Ps.  
lxxvi. 6. lxxiv.  
13. lxxviii. 13.  
cvi. 7-10. cxiv.  
3-5. cxxvi. 13.  
Is. li. 10. lxxiii.  
12.

o Num. xxxiii. 8.  
1 Cor. x. 1.  
Heb. xi. 29.  
p xv. 8. Hab. iii.  
8, 9. Zech. ii. 5

q 17. xv. 9. 19  
1 Kings xxii. 20.  
Ec. ix. 3. Is. xiv  
24-27.

r Sam. xi. 11  
s Job xl. 12. Ps.  
xviii. 13, 14.  
lxxvii. 16-19.  
civ. 32.

t 19, 20.  
u 25. Job xxii. 13.  
xxiii. 15, 16.  
xxiv. 20, 29.  
Ps. xlviii. 5.

x Judg. iv. 15. Ps.  
xli. 9. lxxvi. 6.  
Jer. li. 21.

y Or, and made  
them to go heu-  
rily.

v Job xi. 20. xx.  
24. xxviii. 22.  
Ps. lxxviii. 12.  
Am. i. 14. v. 19.  
Is. 1.  
z See on 14-Deut.  
iii. 22. 1 Sam.  
iv. 7, 8.  
a vii. 19. viii. 5.  
Matt. viii. 27.

discern the prey, which they expected at once to seize upon!

V. 21-23. At the stretching forth of Moses's hand, and the waving of his rod, the Lord caused a strong east wind to blow: but even this was only the signal of his power, by which he divided the waters, till they formed two mighty walls, and a spacious road between, through which the Israelites marched securely; being encouraged, outwardly by the word of Moses, but inwardly by the power of God; while the Egyptians, given up to desperate hardness of heart, presumptuously followed them. Some however think, that bewildered by the darkness, and hearing the Israelites before them, they were not aware that they had entered the sea, till it was too late to escape: but the language of the apostle seems to favour the former interpretation. (Heb. xi. 29.)

V. 24, 25. The Israelites, who marched foremost, probably entered the channel of the sea while it was yet day; and a very spacious opening being made for them, the others followed in a broad column, so that the whole multitude was marching on the bed of the channel of the sea, at the beginning of the night, the Egyptians closely pursuing them.—The *watches*, into which the Israelites, and afterwards the Romans, and probably many other nations, divided the night, were so called from the term allotted to watchmen or soldiers who kept guard, after which they were relieved. The morning-watch seems to have begun about three hours before sun-rise: so that the whole company, both of Israel and of Egypt, had probably been many hours marching, with all possible speed, between the waters, piled up as walls on either side of them: and they must have gone several miles at that time. The channel of the Red Sea is thought by some to have been ten or twelve miles across, by others twenty, or more: but, taking the larger dimensions, even the Egyptians might have gone far more than half the way before the morning-watch.—The Scripture uniformly states that the Lord led Israel *through* the Red Sea: yet the Jewish expositors, and some others, who pay far too much deference to their comments, are of opinion, that after Pharaoh and his army were overwhelmed, the Israelites came out on the same side by which they had entered. This they ground chiefly, on the improbability of this large company march-

ing so far, in the short time allotted them; which in fact amounts to nothing: for if the path through the channel of the sea was as wide as the ordinary road by which they travelled; they might as well march twelve, or even twenty miles during the night, on this occasion, as the same distance during the same time, in any other part of their journey; and they were surely as likely to make all haste, while pursued by the Egyptians, and envired by the sea, as on an ordinary march.—It is also said, that they encamped in the wilderness of Etham, the first stage after they came out of the sea; and they encamped at Etham on the edge of the wilderness, after they left Succoth. (Comp. xiii. 20. Num. xxxiii. 6-8.) But is it not most likely, that the wilderness of Etham extended on each side the extremity of the Red Sea, while Etham was a town or village, situated near the place where the Israelites first entered that wilderness, whence it took its name? (Note, Num. xxxiii. 8.) Certain it is, that Horeb lay east of the sea, and they appear to have come out on that side nearest Horeb.—In the morning-watch, JEHOVAH looked upon the Egyptians, as evidently frowning on them, through the pillar of fire (19). It is probable, that there was a tremendous storm of thunder, lightning, and hail, and other dreadful appearances, which concurred with an inward influence on their minds to trouble and dismay them: while by some extraordinary interposition, their chariot wheels were broken or taken off, so that they could not get forward; and thus they were made sensible, when too late, that JEHOVAH fought against them in behalf of his people. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 26-30. We may suppose, that the Israelites were nearly arrived on the opposite shore, when Moses received this command, which was given perhaps by a voice from the pillar of fire: but there is no improbability in the opinion, that the waters began to roll back with irresistible violence to their ancient channel, in that part of the sea where the Egyptians were, though they still continued a wall to Israel where they marched; and the introduction of verse 29 seems to favour it. It is however sufficient to know, that Israel was completely preserved; and Pharaoh, with the Egyptians, so entirely overwhelmed that not one remained. The returning light of the morning would show them their dreadful situation; but every effort to

b 1. 22. Judg. i. 6. that <sup>b</sup> the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.

c 21, 22. xv. 10. 27 And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, <sup>c</sup> and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared, and the Egyptians fled against it: <sup>d</sup> and the LORD <sup>e</sup> overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

f 13. 2 Chr. xx. 24. Ps. cvi. 9—11. cxxxvii. 15. 28 And <sup>e</sup> the waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them: there <sup>f</sup> remained not so much as one of them.

escape was fruitless.—The Egyptians had drowned the male children of the Israelites in the river; and now the righteous Lord took vengeance on them for those cruel and multiplied murders, by drowning all the strength and flower of the nation in the Red Sea!—It is probable that very many of the dead bodies were driven on shore, near the place where the Israelites went up out of the sea, the Lord thus ordering it; and that they were furnished with arms, as well as enriched with other spoils, by that means.—The Egyptians were renowned for their art in embalming the dead, and for their attention to the bodies of their relatives, and especially their princes and grandees; but God now poured contempt upon all the great ones of the nation, and caused their bodies to be left unburied on the sea-shore!

V. 31. When the Israelites witnessed this stupendous scene; they were for the time greatly affected, both with reverence of the majesty, power, and justice of the Lord, and with gratitude for their surprising deliverance; and they shewed a readiness to believe his word, as delivered to them by Moses, and to trust in him for the future; but, alas! this proved only a temporary faith, as the event in a little time evinced. (*Note, Ps. cvi. 12—14.*)—Learned men have shewn, by various citations, that a traditionary mutilated report of this grand transaction prevailed among the surrounding nations, many centuries afterwards.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—9.

The Lord, by all his commands and dispensations, makes trial of men's spirits; and every thing eventually concurs to harden the hearts of obstinate rebels to their destruction, and to exercise and increase the faith of his people: that by making known the glories of his name, he may be honoured *by* the one, and *on* the other. Would we then escape the awful sentence of being judicially hardened, we should take care not to harden our own hearts in sin, when called upon to repent, and submit ourselves to God; for none are thus punished, who have not *righteously* deserved it.—Genuine faith gives the Lord credit for his wisdom, faithfulness, and love, even where they are not discernible; and expects the accomplishment of his promises in the way of unreserved obedience to his commandments, however contrary to the suggestions of human policy; it also rests satisfied, that the event will clear up every difficulty;

29 But the children of Israel <sup>g</sup> walked upon dry *land* in the midst of the sea: and the waters *were* <sup>h</sup> a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

30 Thus <sup>i</sup> the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians: and Israel <sup>k</sup> saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea-shore.

31 And Israel saw that great <sup>l</sup> work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people <sup>m</sup> feared the LORD, and <sup>n</sup> believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.

and in this its excellence greatly consists.—Unless the heart be truly humbled, sin of every kind abhorred, and love to God and holiness implanted, no religious impressions will be abiding. Under remorse of conscience, the anguish of sufferings, and the terrors of impending destruction, and while temptations are out of sight, sinful propensities appear to be slain: but they soon revive when there is respite, when convictions wear off, terrors subside, and temptations return; and only rage with redoubled force, for having received a temporary check. Then, the past is forgotten, and the heart grows harder than ever in bold presumption; till, given up of God, and infatuated by Satan, men become even ashamed of their constrained repentance, and impetuously rush upon their own destruction! Such is the progress of those who rebel against the light, and encourage one another in wickedness, till they are involved in one common ruin. “Let us therefore fear lest we also should be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.”

##### V. 10—18.

Our fallen race is prone, not only in desperate presumption to lose sight of the power and wonderful works of God, and his threatened destruction of the wicked; but also, in despondency, to forget his wonders of love and promises of deliverance to his people; and in large companies even of professed worshippers, there always have been multitudes destitute of faith and grace. These in times of trial, when others are crying to the Lord for help, manifest their impatience and rebellion against God, by quarrelling with his servants: and they often discourage others, and lead them to mingle unbelieving murmurs, and peevish complaints, with their prayers and supplications. Indeed, it is too commonly the case, that when men meet with unexpected difficulties in their first entrance on a religious life, or on any particular service, they are tempted to wish they had never gone about it, or to utter expressions equally unreasonable and sinful; and few of those who watch their own hearts, can fairly plead not guilty in this respect.—But the Lord still pities and pardons the upright: and he encourages some by the faith and boldness of others, and the meekness with which they bear the reproaches that are cast upon them. For the wisest and best of men must not expect to escape calumny, even in their most disinterested endeavours to be useful: so that we should especially arm ourselves with the mind

## CHAP. XV

The song of Moses, Miriam, and Israel on their deliverance, 1—21. In the wilderness they want water, 22; the waters of Marah are bitter, they murmur, Moses prays, and the waters are made sweet by means which God appointed, who also gives them his charge and promise, 23—26 They encamp at Elim, 27.

of Christ, in “meekness of wisdom,” if we would do any real good in the world.—The more we observe human nature, the fuller will be our conviction, that there is immense difficulty in prevailing with men to use *the means of salvation*, in which the Lord hath promised to meet and bless us; and to find a *willing* people to welcome a *willing* Saviour. For this also we should trust in his power, and lift up our prayers to him; and likewise exhort, admonish, and persuade those to whom we are sent, with all earnestness and perseverance. If the Lord answers our desires, so that sinners are excited to observe his directions, whether to patient waiting, or to go forward in his ways; we need not fear but he will fight for them, and open them a way through difficulties and obstacles, as insurmountable as mountains and seas; and make the number and power of their enemies subservient to his glory, and their final and abundant advantage. But he sometimes leads us into circumstances, in which we can see no possible way of escape or success; that we may the more admire his power and love in our deliverance, and be more encouraged and affected by it.

## V. 19—31.

How dark do all the dispensations of Providence, and even the doctrines of the gospel, (which give light and comfort to believers,) appear to those who are fighting against God! And who can stand before him, who has all creatures at his command? All men will at length see, that JEHOVAH fighteth for his church against all her enemies; but, alas! multitudes harden their hearts in mad rebellion, till they fall into destruction, beyond the possibility of escape! And how tremendous will that day be, when the wicked shall sink into the depths of hell, and “all the “people that forget God!” But happy are they, who at his command march forward under his banner, enlightened by his word, comforted by his Spirit, and protected by his arm. From time to time, even here, they experience such interpositions in their favour, as silence their complaints, make them ashamed of their despondings, and excite them to animated praises and cheerful obedience. How then will their hearts exult, in adoring, triumphant love, joy, and gratitude, when, finally delivered from every enemy, they shall stand on the heavenly shore, and celebrate their great Deliverer with everlasting songs of praise!

## NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1. The capacity of the human mind for poetry and musick, and for taking pleasure in them, has been common to every age and nation; and though too generally perverted to the worst of purposes, through the depravity of our fallen nature, (as all our other capacities have been,) it was doubtless originally implanted by the Creator for wise and holy reasons, and should be conse-

THEN <sup>a</sup>sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, <sup>b</sup>for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

2 The LORD is my <sup>c</sup>Strength and

<sup>a</sup> Judg. v. 1, &c.  
<sup>2</sup> Sam. xxii. 1  
&c. Ps. cvi. 12  
cvi. 8. 18. 21.  
22. Is. xli. 1  
&c. II. 10, 11  
Rev. xv. 3.  
<sup>b</sup> 21. xiv. 17, 18  
27. xviii. 11.  
Col. ii. 10.  
<sup>c</sup> Ps. xviii. 1, 2.  
xxviii. 8. lix. 17.  
lclii. 6, 7. cxviii.  
14. Hab. iii. 17—  
19. Phil. iv. 13.

crated to his service and glory. Accordingly, hymns or songs of praise form a considerable portion of the sacred Scriptures; some of which were composed on particular occasions, and sung as a part of solemn worship at the time, or afterwards in commemoration of the transactions celebrated in them; while others seem to have been of a more general nature, as suiting the experience, and expressing the varied affections, of believers in every age. The poetry of these sacred hymns has been carefully investigated; and much admired, by many persons of eminent attainments in ancient learning, as in many respects vastly superior to all other remains of antiquity; especially by Dr. Lowth, the late Bishop of London, in his *Prælectiones*.—This song, which Moses prepared, doubtless by divine inspiration, in order to instruct Israel, how to express their admiring gratitude to the Lord for their late surprising deliverance, is the most ancient composition of the kind now extant in the world. It was sung by Moses and the congregation of Israel; while Miriam led the women, to accompany them, not only with singing, but also with timbrels and dances. (Note, 20, 21.) Mr. Henry observes, that, ‘this proves Psalm-singing to be more ancient than the ceremonial law, and therefore no part of it:’ and it proves the same also concerning the use of instrumental musick in the worship of God, and even of religious dances. Whether, in present circumstances, either the one or the other tends to the glory of God and the edification of men, and therefore whether either of them ought to be retained, or both excluded from the worship of the New-Testament Church, is another question: but it seems evident, that they form no part of the ceremonial law, and are neither commanded nor prohibited in the Scripture; though we have examples of them in the Old Testament, and none in the New.—Pharaoh and the Egyptians had contended with pertinacious obstinacy against JEHOVAH the God of Israel; but JEHOVAH, unexpectedly and with violence, throwing the “horse and his rider into the sea,” had obtained a complete victory, and triumphed most gloriously: it was therefore Israel’s bounden duty to sing joyful praises to their great Deliverer, and to celebrate the wonders which he had wrought in their behalf.

V. 2. The original word here translated, “The LORD,” is JAH, which seems to have the same meaning as JEHOVAH, and to be derived from the same root; indeed, some think it is merely a contraction of it. Both names are supposed to signify nearly the same as the words rendered, I AM THAT I AM; and to denote Self-existence. ‘That character from which the acutest reasoners have endeavoured demonstratively to deduce, as from their source, all the divine attributes, is SELF-EXISTENCE. Is it not then highly remarkable, that it is under this character, the Divinity is described, on his first manifestation to the Jewish Law-giver?—The Self-existence, and by consequence the

d Deut. x. 21. Ps. <sup>a</sup> Song, and he is become <sup>a</sup> my Salvation: he is <sup>a</sup> my God, and I will prepare him <sup>a</sup> an habitation; my <sup>b</sup> father's God, and I will <sup>c</sup> exalt him.

3 The LORD is <sup>a</sup> a man of war: <sup>b</sup> the LORD is his name.

4 Pharaoh's <sup>a</sup> chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his <sup>b</sup> chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea.

5 The <sup>a</sup> depths have covered them: <sup>b</sup> they sank into the bottom as a stone.

6 Thy <sup>a</sup> right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath <sup>b</sup> dashed in pieces the enemy.

7 And in <sup>a</sup> the greatness of thine ex-

c <sup>a</sup> eternity, and immutability of the one Great JEHOVAH? Graves.—On the almighty power, and sovereign authority of the Creator of the world, and the God of their fathers, the Israelites had been taught to depend for protection and deliverance; and he had, in the crisis of extreme danger, answered and exceeded their expectations. He was their "Strength;" and they celebrated his praises in joyful songs, because "he was become their Salvation." (Is. xii. 2.) This every Israelite was taught to profess in the most explicit manner: and Moses, prophetically intimating the LORD's design, of having a tabernacle and afterwards a temple among them, as the external token of his gracious presence, the centre of their worship, and the type of the human nature of Christ, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness "of the godhead bodily," led them also to avow their purpose of preparing him a habitation, as the God whom alone they would worship.—The Lord had also manifestly shewn himself to be the God of their "father" Abraham, and of Isaac, and Jacob; and had glorified his mercy and truth by fulfilling the promises which he had made to them: and on this account, he should be exalted by their loftiest adorations and most grateful acknowledgments.—It is obvious, that all this is a shadow of the true Christian's confidence, conflicts, victories, and triumphs; and of the praises which the whole ransomed church shall at last render to the glorious God of their salvation, and which here on earth they in a feeble manner anticipate. (Note, Rev. xv. 1—4, latter part.)

V. 3. JEHOVAH had acted as a renowned warrior and conqueror, whose achievements ought to be celebrated in sacred songs of praise, as those of the heathen conquerors were in their profane poems; emphatically so called, while they ascribed the honours, due to God, to some ambitious, cruel man.—Perhaps the Holy Spirit might in the expression, "A Man of War," have some reference to the incarnation of the divine Saviour: for every deliverance of the church was granted, in consequence of his engagement to take on him our nature; his most glorious victories have been, and will be, obtained by him, under the character of "the Son of Man;" and all divine perfections

cellency thou hast overthrown <sup>a</sup> them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, which <sup>b</sup> consumed them as stubble.

8 And with the <sup>a</sup> blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together: <sup>b</sup> the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.

9 The enemy said, <sup>a</sup> I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil: my lust shall be satisfied upon them, I will draw my sword, my hand shall <sup>b</sup> destroy them.

10 Thou didst <sup>a</sup> blow with thy wind, <sup>b</sup> the sea covered them: <sup>c</sup> they sank as lead in the mighty waters.

11 Who is <sup>a</sup> like unto thee, O LORD,

are displayed in the sight of the universe, through the medium of his human nature.

V. 5. The Egyptians, overwhelmed by the weight of the waves which impetuously rushed upon them, sank to the bottom as a stone; and probably multitudes of them rose no more (12); though others were washed up again, and driven to the land. (Note, xiv. 26—30.)

V. 6. Or "Thy right hand is glorified in power."—All men would admire the greatness and power of God, as glorified in the destruction of Pharaoh; and, in like manner, his right hand would dash in pieces every other enemy.

V. 7. *Excellency.*] Not only *excelling* in power, but *excellent* in justice, wisdom, truth, and goodness.—This verse, and the latter clause of the foregoing, are in the future tense in the original; and may be considered, as a solemn warning to all men, not to copy the persecuting, impious, and obstinate conduct of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, if they would escape the dreadful effects of JEHOVAH's omnipotent indignation.—"Thou wilt dash, &c."

V. 8. The wind may, by a strong metaphor, be called "the blast of the LORD's nostrils," or *indignation*, having been excited by his power, as the token of his dividing the Red Sea. The waters piled up into immense heaps on each side of the road, on which Israel marched, stood as if petrified into solid rocks.

V. 9, 10. The former of these verses, in the highest style of genuine sublimity, describes the rage, pride, and presumption of Pharaoh and the Egyptians confirming what was spoken upon that subject in the foregoing chapter; while the latter, with inimitable simplicity and brevity, describes the perfect ease with which they were arrested by the Lord, and overwhelmed in the sea; so that they sank to the bottom suddenly, as lead at once sinks in the water.

V. 11. Not only the mightiest princes, but also all the objects of religious worship of the Egyptians, and other idolaters, through which Satan proudly affected to be worshipped as "the god of this world," were thus proved wholly unworthy to be in any respect compared to JEHOVAH. His righteousness, faithfulness, purity, and love,

\* Or, *mighty ones*. amongst the <sup>o</sup> gods: who *is* like thee,  
 • Lev. xix. 2. Ps. lxxxix. 18. cxlv. 17. Is. vi. 3. xxxc. 11. lvi. 15. 1 Pet. i. 15, 16. Rev. iv. 8.  
 f Ps. lxxvi. 5. lxxxix. 5, 7. xc. 11. cxix. 120. Is. lxxiv. 2, 3. Jer. x. 7. Luke xii. 5. Heb. xii. 24, 25. Rev. xv. 4. xix. 1—6.  
 g See on 6.  
 h Gen. xix. 16. Eph. ii. 4.  
 i Ps. lxxvii. 14, 15. lxxviii. 52, 53. cvi. 9. Is. lxiii. 12, 13. Jer. ii. 6.  
 k 1 Pet. i. 5.  
 l Ps. lxxviii. 54.  
 m Num. xiv. 14. xxi. 5. Deut. ii. 4, 25. Josh. ii. 9, 10. Is. 24. Ps. xlviii. 6.  
 n Is. xiv. 29, 31.  
 o Gen. xxxvi. 40. Num. xx. 14—21. 1 Chr. i. 51—54.  
 p Num. xxii. 8—5. Hab. iii. 7.  
 q Josh. ii. 11. v. 1. Deut. xx. 8—9. Josh. ii. 9. Marg. xiv. 16. 2 Sam. xvii. 10. Ps. lxxviii. 2. Is. xlii. 7. xix. 1. Ez. xxi. 7. Nah. ii. 10. s Deut. xi. 25. t xii. 7. 1 Sam. ii. 9. xxv. 37. u xix. 5, 6. Deut. xxxii. 6. 2 Sam. vii. 23. Ps. lxxiv. 2. Is. xliii. 1—3. li. 10. Jer. xxxi. 11. Acts xx. 28. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 9. 2 Pet. ii. 1.

amongst the <sup>o</sup> gods: who *is* like thee,  
 glorious in holiness, <sup>o</sup> fearful in praises,  
 doing wonders:

12 Thou <sup>o</sup> stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them.

13 Thou <sup>o</sup> in thy mercy hast <sup>o</sup> led forth the people *which* thou hast re-deemed: thou hast <sup>o</sup> guided *them* in thy strength unto thy <sup>o</sup> holy habitation.

14 The people shall <sup>o</sup> hear *and* be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants <sup>o</sup> of Palestina.

15 Then the <sup>o</sup> dukes of Edom shall be amazed, the mighty men <sup>o</sup> of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them: <sup>o</sup> all the inhabitants of Canaan shall <sup>o</sup> melt away.

16 Fear and <sup>o</sup> dread shall fall upon them: by the greatness of thine arm they shall be *as* <sup>o</sup> still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O LORD, till the people pass over <sup>o</sup> *which* thou hast purchased.

17 Thou shalt bring them in, and <sup>o</sup> plant them in the <sup>o</sup> mountain of thine inheritance; *in* the place, O LORD, *which* thou hast made for thee to dwell in: *in* the sanctuary, O LORD, *which* thy hands have established.

17 Thou shalt bring them in, and <sup>o</sup> plant them in the <sup>o</sup> mountain of thine inheritance; *in* the place, O LORD, *which* thou hast made for thee to dwell in: *in* the sanctuary, O LORD, *which* thy hands have established.

18 The <sup>o</sup> LORD shall reign for ever and ever.

19 For the <sup>o</sup> horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots, and with his horsemen into the sea, and the LORD <sup>o</sup> brought again the waters of the sea upon them: but the children of Israel went on dry *land* in the midst of the sea.

20 ¶ And Miriam the <sup>o</sup> prophetess, the <sup>o</sup> sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and <sup>o</sup> all the women went out after her, with timbrels and with dances.

21 And Miriam <sup>o</sup> answered them, <sup>o</sup> Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

x Ps. xlv. 9. lxxviii. 54, 55. lxxx. 8. Is. v. 1—4. Jer. ii. 21. xxxii. 41.  
 y Ps. lxxviii. 54. 68, 69. Jer. xxxi. 23.

z Ps. x. 16. cxlvi. 10. Is. lvii. 15. Dan. ii. 44. vii. 14. Matt. vi. 13. Rev. xi. 15—17. a xiv. 28. Prov. xxi. 81.

b xiv. 28, 29. Heb. xi. 29.

c Judg. iv. 4. 1 Sam. x. 5. 2 Kings xxii. 14. Luke ii. 38. Acts xxi. 9. 1 Cor. xi. 5. xiv. 34.

d ii. 4. Num. xii. 1. xx. 1. xxi. 59. Mic. vi. 4.

e Judg. xi. 34. 1 Sam. xviii. 6. 2 Sam. vi. 14. Ps. lxxviii. 26. cxlix. 3. ci. 4.

f 1 Sam. xviii. 7. 2 Chr. v. 13. Ps. xxiv. 7—10. cxxxiv.

g See on 1.—Judg. v. 3. Is. v. 1. Rev. vii. 10—12. v. 9. xiv. 3. xv. 3. xix. 1—6.

(that is, his holiness,) form his essential glory and excellence; and reflect glory upon all the contrivances of his consummate wisdom, and the operations of his almighty power, which, if not devised and performed in holiness, would be *tremendous*, but not *glorious*. Such majesty also, and excellency, are displayed in the Lord's works of love and mercy, as cannot be suitably admired and praised, unless the mind be filled with solemn awe and reverential fear.

V. 12. 'They who were drowned in the sea, are... said to be swallowed up in the earth: (Jon. ii. 6:) because the sea is in the depths of the earth.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 13. It is here acknowledged, that the deliverance of Israel was a display of *mercy*, even as the destruction of the Egyptians was an act of *justice*. This miraculous redemption from bondage was an earnest of their being put in possession of Canaan, which is spoken of as if it had been already accomplished.—Canaan seems to be called the "holy habitation" of JEHOVAH, and afterwards "the mountain of his inheritance," and "the sanctuary;" because God had chosen it for the place of his future special residence, where he would manifest his presence and love, establish his holy ordinances, and publish his holy word. (Note, 17.)—This is a shadow of the believer's merciful redemption from iniquity and the powers of darkness, and of his being powerfully guided to the holy habitation of God in heaven.

V. 14—16. The Philistines had been objects of terror to Israel; (Note, xiii. 17, 18;) but the people now suppose these formidable enemies to be filled with dismay and anguish, at the report of this wonderful deliverance: and no doubt it produced very great effects on all the surrounding nations, for a long time. The inhabitants of Jericho, forty years after, had not got over the alarm which it occasioned.

(Note, Josh. ii. 8—11.) Thus the nations would be awed into silence, and be restrained from resistance, as if petrified, and become stones, by the glory of JEHOVAH's power and indignation; seeing he had ransomed his people at the price of so flourishing a country as Egypt. (Marg. Ref.)

Pass over. (16.) Note, Josh. iii. 2, end.

V. 17. (Note, 13.) 'Moses seems to have foreseen, by the Spirit of prophecy, that God would place his habitation upon mount Zion; which he understood, perhaps, from the sacrifice of Isaac on mount Moriah.' Bp. Patrick. (Note, Gen. xxii. 2, latter part.)

V. 18. In perfect wisdom, justice, and goodness, "JEHOVAH shall reign for ever," as the only Lawgiver and Judge over his willing people; and he will finally and eternally crush all his enemies with irresistible force.—Two distinct words are used in the original to express what is rendered "for ever and ever," which mutually confirm each other, and evidently signify *eternity*, in the strictest sense of the word.—The translation in the LXX is remarkable: *Κυριος θασιλευων τον αιωνα, και επ' αιωνα, και ει.* 'The LORD reigning over eternity, and unto eternity, and beyond' (or evermore).

V. 20, 21. Miriam is joined, by Micah, with Moses and Aaron, in leading forth the people; (Mic. vi. 4;) and she is here called a *prophetess*: yet nothing is recorded of her in that character, but her leading the women in this song of praise, joined, according to the usages of the times, with timbrels and dances. It may, however, be observed, that she as well as Aaron said, "Hath not the LORD spoken by us?" (Num. xii. 2;) and though she was rebuked for her misconduct on that occasion; yet the context seems to imply that the Lord had spoken by her, but not in the same manner as to Moses. Perhaps on some occasions, she delivered the messages of God to the women of Israel.

22 ¶ So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur: and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water.

23 And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah.

24 And the people murmured against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"

25 And he cried unto the LORD, and the LORD shewed him a tree, which when he had cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet:

She was at this time about ninety years of age; and, having generally lived with Aaron, she is called his sister, rather than the sister of Moses.—It is supposed that the Israelites sang responsively; and that Miriam led the chorus of the women, when it came to their turn to take up the song of praise. Many passages of Scripture seem to denote this alternate mode of singing, some of which are referred to in the margin. (f.)

V. 22—24. This immense multitude, with their numerous flocks and herds, marching for three days without any water, except as they might carry some small quantity with them, must have experienced great distress and perhaps disease: and having found water, but not being able to drink it, they were still more disappointed. Probably, the waters of Marah were not only very nauseous, but also unwholesome, so that the trial was indeed very great. (Note, 25, 26.) When first delivered from the Egyptians, the Israelites were so impressed with the power exerted in their behalf, that "they feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses," as acting under his authority: but being again alarmed, as well as distressed, "they soon forgot his works," and began to vent their discontent and distrust, in peevish murmurs against Moses, as if he had acted of himself!—They "should rather have prayed to God than murmured against Moses." Bp. Patrick.

V. 25, 26. Moses did what the people had neglected to do; and, in answer to his prayer, a tree was pointed out to him, by means of which the waters became sweet and wholesome. It cannot reasonably be supposed, that this change was made by a natural efficacy; but rather, that the wood was the appointed token of God's miraculous operation. (Notes, 2 Kings ii. 19—22. iv. 40, 41.) It may also call to our remembrance the blessings of the gospel, which Christ obtained for us when he hung upon the tree; and which sweeten all our bitterest trials, by giving peace to the conscience, comfort, and the hope of glory.—On this occasion, the Lord was pleased to give Israel some intimations of his holy will, previous to the promulgation of the law; as well as to shew them by what rule he intended to act towards them; even according to their conduct, whether obedient or disobedient. Perhaps, they were reminded to observe the sabbath, and directed how to order their re-

there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them,

26 And said, "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes; I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the LORD that healeth thee."

27 And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and three-score and ten palm-trees: and they encamped there by the waters.

ligious worship, as well as instructed in the grand outlines of the moral law. Whilst the Lord engaged to provide for them, and continue their health and comforts, if they were obedient; he also intimated that if they were rebellious, the very diseases and judgments, which they had seen inflicted upon the Egyptians, would come upon them also. Perhaps the want of water, and the unwholesome waters of Marah, which some of them had drunk, occasioned sickness, and filled the multitude with dismal apprehensions, which were thus obviated and over-ruled for good purposes.

V. 27. *Twelve wells, &c.*] A well of water to each tribe, and the palm-trees for a cooling shade and pleasant fruit.—It is remarkable that the number answers to the twelve patriarchs and the seventy elders, and to the twelve apostles and the seventy disciples.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

##### V. 1—21.

Those events in providence, and those experiences in the life of faith, which have occasioned our most distressing apprehensions, often terminate in such a manner as to fill our hearts with gratitude, and our lips with praise: nor would the Lord lead those whom he loves into straits, did he not intend to render them subservient to his own glory, and to their comfort and advantage.—When we have patiently and quietly waited for deliverance out of trouble, and have had our expectations answered, we should proclaim to all around us the wonderful works of God: and every one, in the improvement of his talent, and the exercise of his particular endowments, should concur in so pleasant and reasonable a service.—They who oppress the people of God, are his declared enemies, over whom he will at length triumph completely; and all shall acknowledge, that he is "glorious in holiness," as well as in power, in their destruction, and in that of all impenitent sinners. But they, who humbly submit to him and trust in his mercy, will find that he "is become their Salvation," and He will "compass them about with songs of deliverance."—What his grace begins, his power and faithfulness will complete; and, having redeemed them from the bondage of sin and Satan, every past favour becomes an earnest of future benefits, till he shall bring them to his holy habitation in heaven.—The judgments inflicted on some enemies



VALLEY IN THE WILDERNESS : PROBABLY ELIM.

EXOD. XV. 27.







THE WILDERNESS OF SIN.

Exod. xvi. 1; xvii. 1. Num. xxxiii. 11, 12.

## CHAP. XVI.

The Israelites come to the wilderness of Sin, and murmur for want of bread, 1—4. Manna, &c. is promised, and the people are rebuked, 5—12. Quails and manna are sent, 13—15. Manna is described, and rules are given for gathering it; the people disobey in hoarding it, and in seeking it on the sabbath-day, 16—31. God commands that an omer of it should be preserved, 32—36.

<sup>a</sup> xv. 27. Num. xxxiii. 10—12.

<sup>b</sup> xvii. 1. Num. xxxiii. 12. Es. xxx. 16, 16.

<sup>c</sup> See on xv. 24—Gen. xix. 4. Ps. cvi. 7, 18. 28. 1 Cor. x. 10.

AND they <sup>a</sup> took their journey from Elim; and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of <sup>b</sup> Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month, after their departing out of the land of Egypt.

2 And the <sup>c</sup> whole congregation of

of God are evidences that judgment will be executed on the rest; and he often intimidates those whom he intends to punish. Ere long "every enemy shall be destroyed, "which hath done evil in his sanctuary;" the whole church shall sing "the song of Moses and of the Lamb," as triumphing over the fall of every antichrist; "and the "LORD shall reign for ever and ever," to the eternal satisfaction of his redeemed people, and the eternal confusion of his adversaries.

V. 22—27.

In this world we must pass through many changes: and those praises, which only spring from gratified self-love, will soon be turned into rebellious murmurs. Hypocrites may have a temporary faith, and sometimes very high affections, and be very earnest in religious exercises; but, in time of temptation, they often fall away: and even true believers, in seasons of sharp trial, are frequently induced to fret, distrust, and murmur. But, in every dispensation, we should cast our care upon the Lord, and pour out our prayers before him; and we shall find that a submissive will, a peaceful conscience, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit, render the bitterest trials tolerable, yea pleasant. And, let us not forget that we are preserved from destruction, and delivered from our enemies, to be the servants of God; that he proves us in order to our more unreserved obedience; that our exemptions from the afflictions, which others endure, is intended to encourage us in the path of duty; and that the evidence, of our being interested in his redeeming love, arises from the habitual disposition to keep his commandments. Our health, both of body and soul, depends on him: may he then sanctify our bodily sicknesses, restore our souls to the health of holiness, enable us "to draw water with joy from the wells of salvation," and "to sit down under his shadow with great "delight," and find "his fruit sweet to our taste."—(Cant. ii. 3. Is. xii. 3.)

## NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1—3. We are informed in another place, (Num. xxxiii. 10—12,) that the Israelites marched back to the Red Sea, when they left Elim. Perhaps the Lord saw good to lead them thither again; in order to re-

the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.

3 And the children of Israel said unto them, <sup>d</sup> Would to God <sup>e</sup> we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the 'flesh-pots, and when we did eat bread to the full: for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, <sup>f</sup> to kill this whole assembly with <sup>g</sup> hunger.

4 Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, <sup>h</sup> I will rain bread from heaven for you: and the people shall go out and gather a <sup>i</sup> certain rate every day, that I may <sup>j</sup> prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.

5 And it shall come to pass, that on

<sup>d</sup> Num. xx. 3—5. Deut. xxxviii. 67. Josh. vii. 7. 2 Sam xviii. 39. Acts xxvi. 29. 1 Cor. iv. 8. 2 Cor. xi. 1. <sup>e</sup> Num. xi. 16. xiv. 2. Job iii. 1. 10. 20. Jer. xx. 14—18. Jon. iv. 3, 9. <sup>f</sup> ii. 23. Num. xi. 4, 5. <sup>g</sup> 21. xvii. 3. Num. xvi. 13. 41. <sup>h</sup> Deut. viii. 8. Jer. ii. 6. Lam. iv. 9. <sup>i</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 24. cv. 40. John vi. 31, 32. 1 Cor. x. 3. <sup>j</sup> Heb. the portion of a day in his day. Neh. xi. 28. Prov. xxx. 8. Matt. vi. 11. 89. 33. Luke xi. 3. <sup>k</sup> See on xv. 25.—Josh. xxiv. 16.

mind them of his past mercies, and to renew the impressions made at first on their mind, which were in great measure erased at Marah.—They however arrived in the desert of Sin, not far from Sinai, exactly a month after they set off from Egypt: but when they came thither, having by this time consumed nearly the whole stock of provisions which they had brought with them, and seeing no prospect of a supply; "the whole congregation," including the elders and the body of the people, with very few exceptions, murmured vehemently against Moses and Aaron. As they had been liberated from Egyptian bondage, and conducted thus far, by a series of stupendous miracles; doubtless they should have expected to be provided for in a similar manner: but, instead of this confidence in God, they looked only to natural causes; and, perceiving nothing but approaching famine and desolation, they passionately wished that they had died by some sudden judgment, in like manner as the first-born of Egypt had been slain! Nay, they seemed to envy their speedy death, while they considered themselves reserved to a more lingering and painful execution! They had likewise forgotten the galling labours and oppression of their cruel bondage, and only remembered the plenty which they had enjoyed, magnifying it probably far beyond the truth: as if their enslaved condition in Egypt had been a most desirable privilege! 'They untruly magnify their former condition, that they may represent their present to be more 'miserable than really it was.' Bp. Patrick.—Not daring directly to arraign the justice of God, they passionately arraigned the conduct of Moses and Aaron; as if they had purposely intended the destruction of the whole congregation!

V. 4, 5. The conduct of Israel was ungrateful, perverse, and distrustful; yet, as their distress was real and urgent, the Lord did not execute deserved punishment on them, or so much as threaten it. But he determined to prove them, and to make it manifest, as by a fair trial, whether any reasonable indulgence, or any miraculous interpositions, would induce them to obey his commandments.—The Manna came from the region of the air, which is sometimes called the heavens, (Note, Gen. i. 6—8;) where it was miraculously produced; and it descended in

128. xxxv. 2, 3. the sixth day they shall 'prepare *that*  
 Lev. xxv. 21, which they bring in; "and it shall be  
 22. twice as much as they gather daily.  
 m 22.

6 And Moses and Aaron said unto  
 all the children of Israel, At "even,  
 n 8. 12, 13. then ye shall know that "the LORD  
 o 3. vi. 7. xii. 51. hath brought you out from the land of  
 xxxii. 1. 7. 11. Egypt.  
 Num. xvi. 28—  
 30. Pa. lxxvii.  
 20. Is lxiii. 11,  
 12.

7 And in 'the morning, then "ye  
 p 13. shall see the glory of the LORD; for  
 q 10. xxiv. 10. 16. that he heareth your murmurings  
 Lev. ix. 6. Num. against the LORD: And 'what *are* we,  
 xiv. 10. xvi. 42. that ye murmur against us?  
 Is. xxxv. 2. xl. 5. John xl. 4.  
 r 2. 8. 8. Num. xvi. 11.

8 And Moses said, *This shall be*  
 when the LORD shall give you in the  
 evening flesh to eat, and in the morn-  
 ing bread to the full; for that "the  
 s 9. 12. Num. xiv. LORD heareth your murmurings which  
 27. Matt. ix. 4. ye murmur against him. And what  
 John vi. 41—43. I Cor. x. 10.

the form of *rain* or *dew*: it might therefore properly be said, that the Lord "rained bread from heaven for them." The manna was also a type of Christ, "the living Bread," "who came down from heaven to give life to the world." (Notes, John vi. 30—35. 47—51.)—It was the purpose of God to keep Israel in dependence on him; and therefore this miraculous *bread* (for it answered the purposes of bread,) was sent *daily*, in proportion to the wants of each day. But he promised to send on the sixth day twice the usual quantity, that they might prepare it against the Sabbath.—Whatever the custom of the patriarchs had been respecting the Sabbath, or the traditions handed down among their descendants concerning its sacred obligation; we may reasonably conclude, that the Israelites, when bond-slaves in Egypt, had not been allowed to rest from labour on that day: and probably the observance of it was almost wholly neglected, and the institution itself nearly forgotten. But if, as many learned men suppose, they left Egypt on the Sabbath, and passed the Red Sea on the Sabbath, which events were commemorated on the first and last days of unleavened bread; we may conclude, that the old traditional recollection of the institution would be now revived; and they would be prepared for more explicit instructions concerning the manner of sanctifying that sacred rest.—Indeed it is very doubtful, whether the Israelitish Sabbath was observed on the seventh day, as calculated from the close of the six days "in which God "created the heavens and the earth:" and when we consider, that a whole day is lost by sailing round the world in one direction, and gained by going round it in the other, we must perceive that no great stress can be laid on such calculations. The seventh day was appointed at first in remembrance of creation being completed; one day in seven was continued to be set apart under the law, but perhaps the day was determined with reference to Israel's deliverance from Egypt: and the same proportion is observed under the Christian Dispensation, but the day is fixed in commemoration of our Lord's resurrection. In all these instances, the day observed was a *memorial*, through

*are* we: your murmurings *are* not against us, but 'against the LORD.

9 And Moses spake unto Aaron, Say unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, "Come near before the LORD: for he hath "heard your murmurings.

10 And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, 'that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD "appeared in the cloud.

11 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

12 I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel; speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be

all subsequent generations, of the event, which gave occasion to its being instituted.

V. 6—8. The people saw in the evening, when the quails came, and in the morning when the manna descended, an additional, miraculous, and merciful proof, that the Lord himself had brought them out of Egypt; and that Moses and Aaron had only executed his commission, and adhered to his instructions. Thus they saw his glorious power and goodness, in supplying by miracle the urgent wants of this vast multitude. But perhaps the words, "In the morning "ye shall see the glory of the LORD," may also refer to that visible display of divine glory which appeared in the cloud (10), as shewing them from whom that supply would be sent. They would, however, evidently perceive, that the Lord regarded their murmurings with decided displeasure: for while they reproached Moses and Aaron, as if unwise, unjust, or unkind, in leading them out of Egypt; they did not consider nor recollect that all their murmurings were indeed against God himself, and a daring impeachment of his conduct towards them.

V. 9, 10. We have frequently read, that JHОВAH appeared to his servants, and that he spake to them; and many expositors suppose, probably on insufficient grounds, that this was always, or generally, from some visible glorious manifestation, which they call the SHECHINAH: but, on this occasion, Israel is summoned by Aaron, at the word of Moses, to draw "near before the Lord:" and when "they looked toward the wilderness, behold, the glory of "the LORD appeared in the cloud." It is evident that, at this time, there was some extraordinary splendour, which intimated the special presence of God; but if this had not differed from all the former appearances of God, why is the language so very different?—It is not unlikely that 'Moses bade Aaron go speak to the people, because he 'himself retired to speak to God; that is, to pray for them, 'and to acknowledge his great goodness in passing by 'their murmurings.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 11, 12. It is probable, that the Lord himself audibly addressed Moses, from the glory which appeared in the

<sup>a</sup> iv. 5. vi. 7. vii. 17. Jer. xxxi. 34. Ez. xxxiv. 30. xxxix. 22. Joel iii. 17. Zech. xiii. 9.

<sup>b</sup> Num. xi. 31—33. Ps. lxxviii. 27, 28. cv. 40.

<sup>c</sup> Num. xi. 7—9. Deut. viii. 3. Neh. ix. 15. Ps. lxxviii. 24. cv. 40.

<sup>d</sup> Ps. cxlviii. 16.

<sup>e</sup> Or, *What is this?* or, *It is a portion.*  
<sup>f</sup> Deut. viii. 3. 16. Josh. v. 12. Neh. ix. 20. John vi. 31, 32. 49. 58. 1 Cor. x. 3. Rev. ii. 17.  
<sup>g</sup> See on 4.—Num. xxi. 5. Prov. ix. 5. Luke xii. 30.

filled with bread: and <sup>a</sup>ye shall know that I *am* the LORD your God.

13 ¶ And it came to pass, that at even <sup>b</sup>the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host.

14 And when <sup>c</sup>the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness *there lay* a small round thing, *as small as* <sup>d</sup>the hoar frost on the ground.

15 And when the children of Israel saw *it*, they said one to another, <sup>e</sup>*'It is manna: for they wist not what it was.* And Moses said unto them, <sup>f</sup>*'This is the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat.*

16 *This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded, Gather of it every*

man according to his eating: an <sup>g</sup>omer <sup>g</sup> 18. 33. 36.

<sup>†</sup> for every man *according to* the number of your <sup>†</sup>persons, take ye every man for *them* which *are* in his tents. <sup>†</sup> Heb. *by the path* or, *heav.* <sup>†</sup> Heb. *souls.*

17 And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less.

18 And when they did mete *it* with an omer, <sup>h</sup>he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack: they gathered every man according to his eating. <sup>h</sup> 2 Cor. viii. 14. 15

19 And Moses said, Let no man <sup>i</sup>leave of it till the morning. <sup>i</sup> xii. 10. xxiii. 18. Matt. vi. 84.

20 Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses, but some of them left of it until the morning, and it <sup>k</sup>bred worms and stank: <sup>k</sup>and Moses was wroth with them. <sup>k</sup> Matt. vi. 19. Luke xii. 15. 33. Heb. xiii. 5. Jam. v. 2, 3. <sup>l</sup> Num. xii. 3. xvi. 15. Mark iii. 5. x. 14. Eph. iv. 26.

cloud; and thus confirmed what he had before spoken. By the miraculous and very large supply of provisions about to be sent, the people would be convinced, not only that the Lord was able, but also that he considered himself engaged, to protect and provide for them; unless they forfeited that privilege by rebellion and apostasy.

V. 13. There are different opinions concerning the meaning of the word translated *quails*. Some imagine that they were a species of locusts; but the language of Scripture uniformly leads us to consider them as wild fowl, of whatever species they might be. (*Marg. Ref. b.*)—Such a large multitude of these were miraculously brought to the camp of Israel, and lighted among the people; that without difficulty they caught as many as sufficed for the whole multitude! This miracle of mercy may be contrasted with the plague of locusts which devoured the remaining sustenance of Egypt.

V. 14, 15. After the Israelites had feasted at night upon the quails, they found in the morning that, along with the dew, there had fallen all around the camp “a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost;” yet it had not been exhaled with the dew, but lay on the ground as a solid substance: and while they did not know what it was, and enquired of each other, they were led to say, *man hu: ‘This is man,’* or, *manna. This is prepared or appointed, or portioned out; that is, ‘This is the food before predicted, which God hath prepared or appointed for us.’*—The name thus first given it, has been retained as to the substance, in most languages, into which the Scriptures have been translated.—As the people seemed not to be generally satisfied, that this was the bread which God had promised to “rain from heaven for them,” Moses expressly assured them that it was.—The name *manna* has also been given to several substances, procured in different ways; but it does not appear, that any of them was the same as the manna given to Israel, or at all fitted to answer the same purposes. It was indeed a miraculous provision, given immediately from God; and not the production of second causes.

*It is manna.* (15) מן נק. ‘Quasi preparatus cibus, aut

‘comparatus sine labore.’ *Robertson.*—It is formed from מן, as is a *precept* from צו, and נק a *line* from קנה. The word may be derived from the substantive מן a *portion, a distribution*. The common opinion that מן נק means *What is this?* seems entirely destitute of foundation.

V. 16—20. The Lord sent the Manna, but the people must go out early to gather it; and they were directed to take, for each individual, such a quantity as would in general suffice a healthy man: for that seems to be the meaning of the expression, “Every man according to his eating,” when compared with the context. There would be in each tent several women and children, who did not require so much food as the grown men; yet these were directed to gather for every one of them, each man according to *his own eating*. And, as an Omer is computed to be nearly three quarts, wine measure, it would be a competent supply for any individual. We may suppose, that the several persons capable of labour, in each tent, cast all they gathered into one stock; and when the father of the family came to measure it, he was allowed to retain an Omer for each of his household: but, if he had any over, he must impart it to his neighbour who had less than that quantity; for some would be less active than others. Thus it came to pass, that he who “gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack;” but they daily gathered for every individual, in that vast assembly, according to the eating of a grown man, or an Omer each, and this was the case during forty years.—The apostle’s argument, grounded on the passage, leads us to this interpretation; (*Note, 2 Cor. viii. 10—15;*) else how could the case of Israel have been in point to that of Christians, when exhorted to impart of their superfluity, to supply the wants of their brethren, and to trust the Lord to send them a new supply, as they needed it? If this exposition be not admitted, it must be supposed, that numberless miracles were constantly wrought, without any apparent occasion, in augmenting or diminishing the quantity gathered by each person, as “some gathered more and some less.” But if we allow that every head of a family who had gathered above the quantity was directed to keep an Omer

21 And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted.

22 And it came to pass *that* on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses.

23 And he said unto them, *This is that* which the LORD hath said, Tomorrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the LORD: *'bake that* which ye will bake *to-day*, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.

24 And they laid it up till the morn-

ing, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein.

25 And Moses said, Eat that to-day; for to-day is *'a sabbath unto the LORD: to-day ye shall not find it in the field.*

26 *'Six days ye shall gather it: but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none.*

27 And it came to pass, *that* there went out *some* of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none.

28 And the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?

29 See, for that the LORD *'hath*

for each of the several persons in his tent, and to give the overplus to his neighbour who had not gathered so much; the whole may be easily explained. Some might retain more than the Omer each, and so hoard what they ought to have imparted: and others, finding an Omer each more than sufficient for his family for the present day, might hoard part of it for the morrow, fearing lest no more should fall. But as the Israelites were taught by this way of subsisting, to live continually and cheerfully dependent on God, and in liberal love to each other; and, as the daily supply of the manna was an emblem of the life of faith in Christ; hoarding in either way was expressly forbidden. And while those who gathered much imparted to their neighbours, they who could not consume an Omer each, might, as some think, give the residue to their cattle; or burn it before the next morning, as they did the remains of the paschal lamb, and other sacrifices. But when some of them selfishly and distrustfully disobeyed this injunction, the manna which they kept bred worms and stank, though when preserved by the Lord's command it continued perfectly good.

V. 21. As the people were required to use, impart, or destroy the manna gathered each day, before the next morning; they were under the necessity of gathering it early in the day, "every man according to his eating," or else they would have had no food: for though it did not exhale with the dew in the morning, "when the sun waxed hot it melted." This was a very extraordinary circumstance, that a substance, which was so easily dissolved and exhaled, should be sufficiently nutrimental to support the people in health and vigour for so long a course of years, and also that what melted and totally disappeared when the sun waxed hot, might yet be baked or seethed (23) without any such effect.

V. 22—27. It is evident, that the miracle, on this occasion, consisted in the larger quantity of manna that fell on the sixth day; which caused it to be so much thicker on the ground than at other times, that the people gathered twice the quantity, with little additional labour (29); and not in a subsequent increase of the quantity which each person had gathered.—As the rulers came to inform Moses,

that the people had gathered twice the usual quantity; it may be supposed, that they were appointed to superintend the distribution, and wanted his directions in the present case: and this gave him the opportunity of more fully stating to them, and by them to the people, the obligation of keeping the sabbath as a holy rest unto the Lord.—In whatever way they chose to prepare the manna, they might use what they wanted on that day, and reserve the remainder for the morrow; and it would continue fit for use: but it is generally thought, that they were forbidden to bake or seethe it on the sabbath-day; though the language used does not necessarily imply this.—It is remarkable, that three miracles were wrought, every week, in honour of the sabbath, even before the promulgation of the Mosaic law. Double the quantity fell the day before; none fell on the sabbath-day; nor did that stink, which they kept for that day. This confirms the opinion, that the institution of the sabbath was from the beginning. Indeed the whole narrative implies, that reference was made to an institution before known, but not properly remembered or regarded; and not to any new law given on the occasion. Neither the enquiry of the elders, nor the language of Moses, can be consistently interpreted of an entirely new institution.

V. 28—30. The people had murmured against Moses and against God, in Egypt, at the Red Sea, at Marah, and before the manna was sent; which implied a rebellious and refractory spirit: when forbidden to hoard the manna, they disobeyed; and again, when forbidden to go out for manna on the sabbath, they went out. After all the miracles of mercy which they had experienced, this was exceedingly ungrateful and provoking; and the Lord sharply rebuked their conduct, in thus refusing to keep his commandments and laws, as made known by Moses.—The extraordinary circumstance, of a double quantity of manna on the sixth day, was a sufficient proof of the Lord's determination to enforce the hallowing of the sabbath. This was originally instituted, when creation was finished: (Note, Gen. ii. 3:) but as the posterity of fallen Adam, being generally sunk into idolatry, entirely neglected to observe it; the God of Abraham, as a special favour, had

<sup>m</sup> Prov. vi. 6—11.  
<sup>n</sup> Ex. ix. 10. xii. 1.  
Matt. vi. 33. John  
xii. 35. 2 Cor  
vi. 2.

<sup>a</sup> 5. 16. Lev. xxv.  
12. 22

<sup>o</sup> xx. 8—11. xxxi.  
15. xxxv. 3 Gen.  
ii. 2, 3. Lev.  
xxiii. 3. Mark ii.  
27, 28. Luke xiii.  
56. Rev. i. 10.  
<sup>p</sup> Num. xi. 8.

<sup>r</sup> See on 23. 29—  
Neh. ix. 14.

<sup>xx.</sup> 9. 11. Deut.  
v. 13. Ez. xvi.  
1. Luke xiii. 14

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xx. 4.  
<sup>u</sup> x. 3. Num. xiv.  
11. xx. 12.  
2 Kings xvii. 14.  
Pa. xxxi. 15.  
14. Is. vii. 9. 13.  
Jer. iv. 14. Ez.  
xx. 13—16. Mark  
ix. 19.  
<sup>x</sup> xxxi. 13. Neh.  
ix. 14. Is. lviii.  
13, 14. Ez. xx  
12.

given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days: <sup>y</sup> abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.

<sup>a</sup> Lev. xxiii. 3  
Deut. v. 12—14  
Heb. iv. 9.

30 So the people <sup>a</sup> rested on the seventh day.

<sup>a</sup> See on 15.

<sup>b</sup> Num. xi. 6, 7  
Cant. ii. 3.

31 And the house of Israel <sup>a</sup> called the name thereof Manna: <sup>b</sup> and it *was* like coriander-seed, white; and the taste of it *was* like wafers *made* with honey.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. ciii. 1, 2. cv.  
5. cxi. 4, 5. Luke  
xxii. 19. Heb. ii.  
1.

32 ¶ And Moses said, This is the thing which the LORD commandeth, <sup>c</sup> Fill an omer of it to be kept for your generations; that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the

wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt.

33 And Moses said unto Aaron, <sup>d</sup> Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the LORD, to be kept for your generations.

34 As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the <sup>e</sup> testimony, to be kept.

35 And the children of Israel did eat manna <sup>f</sup> forty years, <sup>g</sup> until they came to a land inhabited: they did eat manna, until they came unto <sup>h</sup> the borders of the land of Canaan.

36 Now <sup>i</sup> an omer is the tenth part of an ephah.

given the descendants of that patriarch the Sabbath, that it might be a day of holy rest unto them. They must not therefore leave their habitations on that day, for any secular business.—This for the present proved sufficient to induce the people to observe it, though the offenders were not punished.

V. 31. The shape of the manna was like coriander seed, that is, round and small; it was white; and its taste resembled that of cakes mixed up with a small quantity of honey, which were frequently used in those days.—It had also, at least when dressed in some particular way, the flavour of sweet oil, which was in great request and use among the Israelites. (*Num.* xi. 6—8.) We may therefore conclude, that it was a very pleasant substitute for bread, and very nourishing; though the history itself confutes the tradition of the Jews, that it had all manner of pleasant flavours, according to men's different tastes.

V. 32—34. It is very probable, that this direction was not given till the ark of the covenant, the *testimony* of God's gracious presence with Israel, was made, and placed in the holy of holies. The apostle informs us, (according to the Septuagint,) that the pot in which the manna was preserved, like other sacred vessels, was made of gold.—Thus by miracle, the manna, which was dissolved by the sun if not gathered, and when kept in distrust, stank in one night, was preserved pure from generation to generation!

V. 35, 36. As Moses lived till a great part of the fortieth year was past, when Israel was encamped in the plains of Moab; there is no reason to say, that the thirty-fifth verse was added after his decease.—An ephah was something more than seven gallons of our measure, and less than our bushel.—The manna was a type of Christ, provided by God, and given to sinners, who must otherwise have inevitably perished, who were altogether undeserving of such a gift, and prone to despise and undervalue it. The careless multitude understand not what this heavenly manna is, or what use to make of it; till instructed that “it is the Bread which the LORD hath given them.” The hypocrite retains the doctrine as a notion, which corrupts, and produces pride and vain confidence. The true Christian, having an appetite for this heavenly provision,

seeks it diligently and early, day by day; labours for it, though it is the gift of God; and ‘feeds upon it in his heart by faith with thanksgiving;’ by which his soul acquires health and vigour, and he becomes strong to labour and to fight with his enemies.—There is a sufficiency in this provision for the whole congregation of Israel, but nothing over for any one. We must have it fresh, and feed upon it daily, to the end of our journey to the heavenly Canaan; and, though it appear to some light bread, it will hold out to the end: that is, we must by faith receive from Christ, as the purchase of his sacrifice, pardon and peace, grace and strength, every day till we come to heaven. And though we now seem to gather a double portion on the sabbath-day; yet, when we keep the heavenly Sabbath, we shall not need to gather any more, nor will the stock we have acquired any more corrupt; but in that holy of holies it will endure for ever, as provision for our souls, to the glory of our God.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—12.

Changes are prepared for us in this world: we should therefore prepare for them, and be ready to endure hardship, and to exercise faith, patience, and self-denial, whenever called to it. But, before we severely censure others, we ought to put “our souls in their souls’ stead.” We may easily condemn the Israelites: but perhaps we do not readily suspect, that we also should distrust, despond, and murmur, if proved by far less trials, and left to ourselves: nor do we sufficiently regard their conduct as an intended picture of human nature; and their history, as that of the human heart under the varying dispensations of Providence. In whatever situation we are placed, we are prone to undervalue our mercies, to aggravate our troubles, and to compare the unfavourable side of our present circumstances, with the favourable side of some former, or some imaginary situation: and in this way we are perversely ingenious in rendering ourselves discontented and unthankful; and are ever wishing for some change, yet ever seeming to change for the worse.—When ashamed to reflect directly upon God, we are apt to vent our impatience, in complaints against the instruments, or mere

## CHAP. XVII.

The people want water, chide with Moses, and tempt the Lord, 1, 2; Moses expostulates with them, and complains to God; and, at his command, smites the rock in Horeb, which pours out water, 3—6; the place is named Massah, and Meribah, 7. Amalek assaults Israel, and is overcome by Joshua, while Moses holds up his hands with the rod of God, 8—13. Amalek is doomed to destruction: and Moses builds an altar, called JEHOVAH-NISSI, 14—16.

**AND** all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the

occasions, of our uneasinesses; not aware that our murmurings are against the Lord himself. It behoves us, therefore, to watch and pray against this rebellious, unthankful spirit, the offspring of pride and unbelief; that confiding in the wisdom of God, and conscious of our own unworthiness, we may learn contentment: and if plain and sharp reproofs humble and quiet us, they are valuable advantages. But “the Lord is slow to anger,” and mercifully considereth our frame; and He knows how hard we find it to bear urgent want without impatience; and to believe his word in direct opposition to every appearance of probability. He therefore frequently shews us his glory, and proves our obedience, by supplying our wants, and exceeding our expectations; and this tends, for the future, to deprive us of all plausible pretence of saying, that we want encouragement to trust and serve him.

## V. 13—21

The Lord could, at all times, supply his people with superfluities, and in some cases he does so: but, in general, he sees it best for them to have only things necessary, and that from day to day; and he constrains most of them, to expect their support from *him* on the morrow, that they may see the glory of his power, and taste the *sweetness* of his truth and love, in their daily bread. If our faith were strong, we should sleep no worse, though, like Israel, we went to rest night after night, without one morsel in the house for the next day; or any other prospect of obtaining it, except confidence in him, who, as “a Father, knoweth “what things we have need of.” Yet we must “labour “even for the meat that perisheth,” in subordination to our labouring for that “which endureth unto everlasting “life;” though both are the *gift* of God: and it is the Lord’s will, that the poor should be liberal of their little, as well as the rich out of their abundance. But whether we have much or little, that which is hoarded in covetousness and distrust, corrupts, breeds worms, and stinks; and that alone is useful, which supplies our wants and relieves the necessities of others.

## V. 22—36.

Whatever diligence we use in worldly business on other days, we are to consider the sabbath as the Lord’s gift to us; and should *previously* contrive every thing, even in respect of our food, in that manner which may best render it a day of holy rest from worldly business, and in spiritual employments: and he will take care that we shall eventually be no losers by so doing.—But there is in us, by

wilderness of <sup>a</sup> Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in <sup>b</sup> Rephidim: and *there was no water for the people to drink.*

2 Wherefore <sup>c</sup> the people did chide with Moses, and said, <sup>d</sup> Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? <sup>e</sup> Wherefore do ye tempt the LORD?

3 And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured

a xv. 1. Num. xxxiii. 12—14.

b 8. xix. 2.

c v. 21. xiv. 11, 12.

xv. 24. xvi. 2, 3.

Num. xi. 4—6.

xiv. 2. xx. 3—5.

xxi. 5.

d Gen. xxx. 1, 2.

1 Sam. viii. 6.

Luke xv. 12.

e 7. Num. xiv. 22.

Deut. vi. 16. Ps.

lxxviii. 18. 41.

56. xcv. 9. cri.

14. Is. vii. 12.

Mal. iii. 15.

Matt. iv. 7. xvi.

1—8. Luke iv.

12. Acts v. 9.

xv. 10. 1 Cor. x.

9. Heb. iii. 9.

nature, a spirit of perverseness, which takes pleasure in acting contrary to the Lord’s commands; and by our conduct, as it were, declaring, that we will not submit to him: nor can we be his true servants, unless this proud self-will be mortified and subdued.—Whatever Providence in any honest way allots us, we should consider as “the “bread which the LORD giveth us to eat,” and be thankful, and contented with it.—But, if we cannot *merit* our bodily food, what claim can we have to that “Bread “which came down from heaven, to give life to our souls?” (Notes, John vi. 22—58.) Let us then with thankful hearts, early and diligently go forth to gather this heavenly provision, and joyfully feed upon it: let us seek earnestly for the grace of the Holy Spirit, to turn all our knowledge of the doctrine of Christ crucified, into spiritual nourishment for our souls by faith and love; that we may not rest in barren notions, feed on worldly vanities, or satisfy ourselves with former supposed experiences; but, living upon this Bread from day to day, in attendance on all the means of grace, we shall shew that our souls are nourished in all holiness, and fitted for unreserved obedience. And thus also, edifying others by the way, we shall in due time arrive at the heavenly Canaan, there to feast for ever on the rich provisions of our Father’s house above.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1, 2. There are other intermediate stages mentioned in Numbers; (*Marg. Ref. a*;) but here the sacred historian pointed out such places alone as were on some account made remarkable.—“The commandment “of the Lord,” respecting the journeys of the people, was made known by the moving of the pillar. They were, however, still disposed, after all they had seen and heard, even while marching under this guidance, and living upon the manna, on every new trial, to forget God, and to speak and act as if they thought, that Moses and Aaron had of themselves brought them out of Egypt! Thus they “tempted the LORD;” they put his omniscience and omnipotence to the trial; and behaved as if they would tempt him to take vengeance on them, or to leave them to the consequences of their perverseness and unbelief: or as if they would presumptuously prescribe to him, or limit him, and put it to the proof, whether he could perform their requirements or not; being disposed to reject his authority, and refuse to believe that he was among them, if he did not. (*Marg. Ref. e*.)

V. 3, 4. When the people wanted water, they imme-

against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this *that* 'thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children, and our cattle, with thirst?

4 And Moses <sup>g</sup>cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? They be <sup>h</sup>almost ready to stone me.

5 And the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>i</sup>Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel: and

<sup>k</sup>thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.

6 Behold, <sup>l</sup>I will stand before thee there upon the rock <sup>m</sup>in Horeb; <sup>n</sup>and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, <sup>o</sup>that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

7 And he called the name of the place <sup>p</sup>Massah and <sup>q</sup>Meribah, because of the <sup>r</sup>chiding of the children of

diately shewed great impatience and bitterness of spirit: but, when left for a while to experience the distress of unallayed thirst, in order to make them sensible of their entire dependence on God, and to prepare them to receive the miraculous supply intended, with the greater admiration of his power and goodness; they became so outrageous, that they were ready to stone Moses, in a popular tumult, as the author of their calamity, which they supposed would end in the destruction of the whole multitude! But he, in the meekness and confidence of faith, stated the case before the Lord, and calmly sought his direction, assured of his seasonable and effectual interposition.

V. 5, 6. It is observable, that each of the several extraordinary interpositions of the Lord, in behalf of Israel, was preceded by some remarkable discovery of their ungrateful and rebellious disposition; and this served exceedingly to illustrate the riches of his unmerited mercy towards them.—Instead of commanding Moses to lift up his rod, and call for some dreadful plague, like those inflicted on Egypt, to destroy the ringleaders of this tumult, and dismay the rest; God directed him to take, as his attendants, some of the elders of Israel, to be eye-witnesses of the miracle about to be wrought, which the people could only behold afar off; and also the rod with which the Nile had been smitten, when its waters became blood: and at mount Horeb, which lay at some distance, he and the elders should see the visible glory of God from the cloud, resting on one particular rock, which he must smite with the rod; and then water would burst from it, sufficient for the necessities of the people.—An immense quantity of water would be required for so large a multitude, and for their flocks and herds, even in *one day*: but we have reason to conclude, that this water followed them as a river in the wilderness from place to place, for a long time; and some think that it continued afterwards to water those parts of the desert.—The apostle calls this water “spiritual drink,” as the emblem of spiritual blessings; and he says, “that Rock was Christ;” that is, a type of him; and this should direct our interpretation of the passage. (Note, 1 Cor. x. 1—5.) It is also observable, that God is never in Scripture called a *Rock*, till after this event, but afterwards the expression often occurs. A rock is indeed firm and unshaken, as a foundation on which to build: but from a rock of flint, as this was, we might sooner expect fire than water: and thus Christ is a tried Foundation of immoveable power and stability; but sin-

ners had more reason to expect vengeance than happiness from him. The rock must be smitten by the rod of Moses, the giver of the law, even that rod by which the plagues were inflicted upon Egypt: thus Christ was made under the law, and bore its righteous curse, even that punishment which our sins deserved. The rock was smitten by Moses, *at the LORD's command, once, in the presence of the elders of Israel*, the people who were then full of rebellion, beholding at a distance, while the symbol of the Lord's presence and glory rested upon it: and thus Christ was crucified by the demand of the rebellious Jewish elders, the whole multitude consenting to his death, once for all, and by man's instrumentality; but by *his* determinate purpose, who said, “Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, against the Man who is my Fellow, saith the LORD of Hosts: smite the Shepherd;” (Zech. xiii. 7;) while evident tokens of divine majesty attended his crucifixion and death. (Matt. xxvii. 45—54.) After the rock was smitten, the waters flowed forth abundantly, without which supply Israel must have perished: and thus after Christ's crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and intercession, the Holy Spirit, in all his humbling, sanctifying, and comforting influences, as well as in his manifold gifts and operations, was abundantly communicated. For this seems to have been especially meant, though all the blessings of salvation are included.—Immense as the congregation of Israel was, there was water enough for them all, and a constant, abundant supply: and numerous as believers are, the Spirit of Christ suffices amply; yea, there is so large and inexhaustible a fulness in him, that millions of millions might drink and be satisfied, if so many were athirst for these living waters. The water flowed from the rock in streams to refresh the wilderness, and attended the people on their way to Canaan: and the water typified by it flows from Christ through his ordinances, in the barren wilderness of this world, to refresh our souls, and to purify and fructify them, until we come to glory.—Multitudes, however, who drank of the water which flowed from the rock, perished in the wilderness: but “whosoever drinketh of the Water which Christ shall give him, it shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.” (Note, John iv. 10—15.)

V. 7. The place, before called Rephidim, was afterwards, from the misconduct of the people, generally called Massah and Meribah, or *Temptation and Chiding*; for they had there *chided* with Moses, and *tempted* the Lord.

q Ps. xcv. 8. Heb. lii. 8, 9.

r xxxiv. 9. Deut. xxi. 17. Josh. xxi. 31. Is. xii. 6. Mic. iii. 11. John i. 14. Acts vii. 37—39.

s Gen. xxxvi. 12. 16. 1 Sam. xxx. 1. Ps. lxxxiii. 7.

t 13. xxiv. 28. Num. xi. 28. xiii. 16. Oshea. Jeshua, Deut. xxxii. 44. Hoshea.

\* Called Jesus. Acts vii. 45. Heb. iv. 8.

u Num. xxxi. 8, 4. iv. 2, 20.

y Josh. xi. 15. Matt. xxviii. 20. John ii. 6. xv. 14.

z 9.

a 12. xxiv. 14.

b Ps. lvi. 9. Luke xviii. 1. 1 Tim. ii. 8. Jam. v. 16.

c Matt. xxvi. 40—45. Mark xiv. 37—40. Eph. vi. 18. Col. iv. 2.

Israel, and because <sup>a</sup> they tempted the LORD, saying, 'Is the LORD among us, or not?

8 ¶ Then came <sup>a</sup> Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

9 And Moses said <sup>a</sup> unto <sup>a</sup> Joshua, "Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to-morrow I will stand on the top of the hill, with <sup>a</sup> the rod of God in mine hand.

10 So <sup>a</sup> Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: <sup>a</sup> and Moses, Aaron, and <sup>a</sup> Hur, went up to the top of the hill.

11 And it came to pass when <sup>a</sup> Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.

12 But Moses's <sup>a</sup> hands *were* heavy, and they took a stone and put *it* under

him, and he sat thereon: and Aaron and Hur <sup>a</sup> stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

13 And <sup>a</sup> Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

14 And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this *for* a <sup>a</sup> memorial in a book, and rehearse *it* in the ears of Joshua: <sup>a</sup> for I will utterly put out <sup>a</sup> the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.

15 And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it <sup>a</sup> JEHOVAH-NISSI.

16 For he said, <sup>a</sup> Because <sup>a</sup> the LORD hath sworn *that* the LORD <sup>a</sup> will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.

d Is. xxxv. 3. 2 Cor. i. 11. Phil. i. 19.

e Heb. xii. 12. Jam. i. 6.

f Josh. x. 28. 32. 37. 42. xi. 12.

g xlii. 14. xlii. 9. xxxiv. 27. Deut. xxxi. 9. Josh. iv. 7. Job xix. 23.

h Hab. ii. 2, 3.

i Num. xxiv. 20. Deut. xxv. 17—19. 1 Sam. xv. 2.

j 3. 8. 18. xxvii. 8. 2 Sam. i. 1, 8—16. 1 Chr. iv. 43.

k Job xviii. 17. Ps. ix. 6. Prov. x. 7.

l That is, The LORD my Banner. Gen. xlii. 14. xxxiii. 20. Judg. vi. 24. Ez. xlviii. 35.

m Or, Because the hand of Amalek is against the throne of the LORD, therefore, &c.

n Heb. the hand upon the throne of the LORD. Is. lxvi. 1. Acts vii. 49.

o Ps. xxi. 8—11.

V. 8—13. It is generally taken for granted, that the Amalekites were descended from Esau: yet there is no proof at all of this, except that Eliphaz, the son of Esau, had a son called Amalek, who probably was his youngest son; and this seems by no means a conclusive argument. (Note, Gen. xxxvi. 12.) The Amalekites, however, were not included among the nations whose land was granted to Israel, nor had they received any injury from them: yet, whether from enmity or policy, they attacked them unexpectedly, and smote some of the people, who were feeble, and followed the camp at a distance; (Deut. xxv. 18;) and in other respects they shewed a determination to wage war with them. Accordingly Joshua, (or Oshea, Note, Num. xiii. 16,) who already was an eminent person, was directed to choose a company of warlike men, and give battle to Amalek; while Moses would place himself on a hill, within sight of the combatants, lifting up the rod of God, which had been the token of so many miracles, wrought for Israel and against their enemies. No doubt Moses, Aaron, and Hur, (whom some conjecture to have been the husband of Miriam,) united their earnest prayers; and Moses especially was Israel's typical intercessor and mediator; yet the holding up of his *hands*, (probably first one and then the other,) with the rod of God, must chiefly be considered, as an avowed dependence, not on human valour, but on the power of JEHOVAH for victory. Thus, so long as Moses was able to hold up the rod, Israel prevailed; but when his hand drooped, then Amalek prevailed: yet, by proper assistance, he was enabled to hold it up till sun-set, by which time Joshua had obtained a complete victory. Perhaps Amalek was the name of the king, as well as of the people; or the Amalekites were aided by allies, or dependants.—This transaction tended to shew the nature and efficacy of faith, and the prevalence of prayer; and typified Christ's effectual intercession for his disciples in all their conflicts.—The people had just before quarrelled with Moses, as if he had meant to kill them; but he was now honoured by

holding up the rod of God, the token of their deliverance and triumph.

V. 14. This is the first time that writing is mentioned in Scripture; though it is generally thought that Moses had before this time written the book of Genesis. Some however imagine, that even this direction was given after the law had been delivered from mount Sinai: for they consider alphabetical writing, not so much a human invention, as a divinely appointed method of perpetuating revealed truth. They therefore are of opinion, that the law, written by God himself on the tables of stone, was the first alphabetical writing in the world; and that Moses was afterwards instructed in writing his books.—Yet this is only conjecture, no intimation of the kind being given in Scripture: but it may be stated more confidently, that the command given to Moses, first to write this account in a book, and then to rehearse it in the ears of Joshua, is an internal evidence that Moses wrote this history himself, and gave it to Joshua in that form before his death. As Joshua was chosen to command in the wars of Israel, it was proper that he should be informed of this sentence, that he might embrace every opportunity of executing it, and enjoin the same conduct to his successors: yet it was not accomplished till the reign of David, after whose time we seldom read of the name of Amalek.

[In a book.] Εἰς βιβλίον, Sept. *Biblion*, the word from which *Bible* is taken.

V. 15, 16. Moses ascribed the victory to JEHOVAH's banner, under which Israel fought; and he gave him the glory of it, and considered it as an earnest of many subsequent victories.—This is the first altar that we read of, since Jacob went down into Egypt; and it does not appear that publick sacrifices to JEHOVAH had been offered during the intervening period. This altar, however, was not intended for sacrifices, but as an additional memorial of God's purpose concerning Amalek.—The expression translated "The LORD hath sworn," is variously inter-

## CHAP. XVIII.

Jethro brings to Moses his wife and sons, 1—6. Moses entertains him; and relates the Lord's goodness to Israel, 7, 8. Jethro rejoices, blesses God, and offers sacrifices, 9—12. He gives good counsel to Moses, and Moses acts according to it, 13—26. He departs from Moses, 27.

a ii. 16. 21. iii. 1.  
iv. 18. Num. x.  
20. Judg. iv. 11.  
b Ps. xxxiv. 2.  
xiv. 1. lxxviii.  
d Jer. xxxiii. 9.  
Zech. viii. 23.  
Gal. i. 23, 24.

**WHEN** \*Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses's father-in-law, <sup>b</sup>heard of

interpreted: for some think it refers to an ancient method of taking a solemn oath, by laying hold on the throne, or tribunal, according to one of the marginal renderings, "The hand upon the throne of the LORD:" but others consider it as stating the reason of this denounced extirpating war, "Because the hand of Amalek is against the throne of the LORD." According to this latter marginal rendering, JEHOVAH had fixed his throne in Israel, and shewn his glorious power and majesty in bringing him out of Egypt: yet Amalek, unprovoked, had attacked this throne of the Lord, who therefore determined to take signal vengeance on him, for an example to all future generations.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

## V. 1—7.

When we are walking according to the commandments of the Lord, we may surely depend on him to supply our real wants, in his own time and manner; but we must expect trials, and learn to exercise patience as well as faith. Inordinate and impatient thirsting, even for needful things, puts the mind into a ferment; renders us forgetful of the power and goodness of the Lord, when we have most abundantly experienced them; and disposes us to quarrel with our best friends, and even presumptuously to tempt, distrust, and prescribe to God himself.—They who endeavour to do important good to others, must expect much unreasonable and ungrateful behaviour; and not only to be reproached, but exposed to danger, for their best services: they need therefore to be well armed with patience, prudence, and meekness; and to have constant and near communion with God, that they may spread every case before him, and seek from him guidance, comfort, and protection.—The Lord will honour those, who behave thus in trying circumstances, in the presence of their despisers, and perhaps make them instruments of their preservation.—When Moses, with the rod, so often the token of vengeance on Egypt, smote the rock to bring forth water for Israel, after all their base rebellions; how powerfully did he teach them "not to be overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good!" But this was far more emphatically enforced, when "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us," who might justly have sunk under that wrath, which the glorious Son of God willingly endured in our stead!—From this smitten Rock flow the streams of salvation, which follow us through the wilderness. Thence the believing soul receives in measure answerable, not only to his necessities, but to his largest expectations; while all who "are athirst," yea, "all that will," are invited to come, and take of them freely.—Indeed "where sin hath abounded, grace much more

all that ° God had ° done for Moses, and for Israel his people, and that the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt;

2 Then Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, took ° Zipporah Moses's wife, after he had sent her back;

3 And her 'two sons, of which the name of the one was ° Gershom, (for he said, I have been an alien in a strange land;)

c Acts vii. 35, 36  
xiv. 27. xv. 12  
xxi. 19, 20. Rom.  
xv. 18  
d vii.—xv. Josh. ii.  
10. ix. 9. Neh.  
ix. 10, 11. Ps.  
lxxviii. 14, 15.  
lxxviii. 50—53.  
cv. 36—41. cvi.  
9—11. cxcvii. 10  
—16. Is. lxxiii. 11  
—13.  
e ii. 21. iv. 25, 26  
f Acts vii. 20.  
g That is, A stranger  
there. ii. 22.  
Ps. xxxix. 12.  
Heb. xi. 13.  
1 Pet. ii. 11.

"abounds."—The Lord often meets the sinner with his converting grace, at the moment when it might have been expected that he would have made him an example of his vengeance; and the believer is sometimes surprised with the sweetest consolations, when most overwhelmed with a sense of his own unworthiness!—Yet this gracious Lord abhors iniquity; and, while he pardons sin, and blesses penitent sinners, he still shews his abhorrence of their crimes; and takes effectual methods, that they shall remember, for their humiliation, how they have tempted and provoked him.—But, happy are his people! They can never want, when He, who commanded food from the clouds, and sent water from the rock, engages to provide.—Let us then ask and receive, and drink, and rejoice, and live for ever.

## V. 8—16.

We should expect that our enemies will especially assault us, when drinking most abundantly from the living streams of salvation: these will, however, prepare us for the conflict; and, fighting under the LORD our Banner, we shall finally prevail, and give him the glory.—We may also observe that some men are useful in one way, and some in another; but none are so serviceable as they, who serve the publick by the fervent, persevering prayers of faith. Little do statesmen in the cabinet, or commanders in the field, understand, how much the success of their deliberations and efforts is influenced by the prayers of the true Christian in his closet, in his family, and in the house of God!—But alas! how soon we flag in those spiritual exercises, even sooner than the soldier wearies in the field of battle! and we have need to be supported, and animated by each other; but especially we need continual assistance from the Lord, that "we may pray always and not faint."—Oh! what cause have they to tremble, who have not only the sword of an enemy, but the prayers of God's people, and the memorials of his word, against them!—Nor let it be ever forgotten, that the complete salvation of the righteous is inseparable from the entire destruction of the wicked.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1—5. It is generally supposed, that Moses sent Zipporah to Jethro, when the Lord met him by the way in anger, because he had neglected to circumcise his son. (Note, iv. 24—26.) The dangers and difficulties to be encountered in Egypt were very great; and perhaps Moses was aware, that she did not possess adequate fortitude and patience: but as soon as the Lord had brought Israel forth out of Egypt, and led them near to the residence of Jethro, Jethro brought Zipporah and her two sons back to Moses; doubtless according to some pre-

4 And the name of the other was *Eliezer*, (for the God of my father, *said he*, was mine help, and *delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh*.)

5 And Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at the *mount of God*.

6 And he said unto Moses, I, thy father-in-law Jethro, am come unto thee, and thy wife and her two sons with her.

7 And Moses *went out to meet his father-in-law*, and *did obeisance*, and *kissed him*, and they asked each other of *their welfare*: and they came into the tent.

8 And Moses *told his father-in-law all that the LORD had done unto Pharaoh, and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, and all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and how the LORD delivered them*.

9 And Jethro *rejoiced for all the goodness which the LORD had done to Israel; whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians*.

10 And Jethro *said, Blessed be the LORD, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh, who hath deliver-*

*ed the people from under the hand of the Egyptians*.

11 Now *I know that the LORD is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, he was above them*.

12 And Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, *took a burnt-offering, and sacrifices for God: and Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel to eat bread with Moses's father-in-law before God*.

13 ¶ And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses *sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening*.

14 And when Moses's father-in-law saw all that he did to the people, he said, *What is this thing that thou doest to the people? Why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto evening?*

15 And Moses said unto his father-in-law, *Because the people come unto me to enquire of God*.

16 When they have *a matter, they come unto me, and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God and his laws*.

\* That is, My God is an Help. Ps. xlv. 1. Is. l. 7—9. Heb. xiii. 6. g. ii. 15. Pa. xviii. cide. 48. xxxiv. 4. Dan. vi. 22. Acts. xii. 11. 2 Cor. i. 8—10. 2 Tim. iv. 17.

h. iii. 1. 12. xix. 11. 20. xxiv. 16, 17. 1 Kings xix. 8.

i. Gen. xlv. 29. Num. xxii. 36. Judg. xi. 34. Acts xxviii. 16. k. Gen. xlviii. 2. xix. 1. xxxiii. 3—7.

l. Gen. xxix. 13. xxxi. 28. xlv. 15. Ps. ii. 12. Luke vii. 48. Acts xx. 37.

† Heb. peace. Gen. xliii. 27. 2 Sam. xi. 7. Margins.

m. See on 1.—Neh. ix. 9—15. Pa. lxxvi. 16. lxxi. 17—20. cv. 1, 2. cxlv. 4—12.

n. xv. 22—24. xvi. 3. xvii. 2.

o. Heb. found them. Gen. xlv. 34. Num. xx. 14. Neh. ix. 32. Margins.

p. Pa. lxxviii. 42. cvi. 10. cvii. 2.

q. Is. xlv. 23. lxxvi. 10. Rom. xii. 10. 1 Cor. xii. 26.

r. Gen. xvi. 20. 2 Sam. xviii. 28. 1 Kings viii. 15. Pa. xli. 13. cvi. 47, 48. Luke i. 68. Eph. i. 3. 1 Thes. iii. 9. 1 Pet. i. 3. Rev. v. 11—13. xix. 1—6.

ix. 16. 1 Kings xvii. 24. 2 Kings v. 15.

s. xv. 11. 1 Chr. xvi. 25. 2 Chr. ii. 5. Ps. xcv. 3. cxxxv. 5.

t. i. 10. 16. 22. v. 2. xiv. 8. 18.

u. See on ix. 17. x. 3.—1 Sam. ii. 3.

v. Neh. ix. 10. 16. 29. Job xl. 11.

w. Dan. iv. 37. Luke i. 51. Jam. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5.

x. xxiv. 5. Gen. iv. 4. vii. 20. xii. 7.

xxvi. 25. xxxi. 54. Job i. 5. xlii. 8.

xxiv. 11. Lev. vii. 11—17. Deut. xii. 7. xxvii. 7.

1 Chr. xxix. 21. 22. 2 Chr. xxx. 22. 1 Cor. x. 18.

21. 31.

z. ii. 20. Gen. xliii. 25. 2 Sam. ix. 7. Job xlii. 11. Dan. x. 3.

xxiv. x. 15. Luke v. 10. Job xlv. 7. Is. xvi. 5. Joel iii. 12.

Matt. xxiii. 2. Rom. xii. 8. xiii. 6.

b. 19, 20. Lev. xxiv. 12—14. Num. xv. 34. xxvii. 5.

c. xxiii. 7. xxiv. 14. Deut. xvii. 8—12. 2 Sam. xv. 3. Job xxxi. 13.

Acts xviii. 14. 1 Cor. vi. 1.

d. Heb. a man and his fellow. ii. 13.

Lev. xxiv. 15. Num. xv. 35.

xxxi. 6—9. Deut. iv. 5. v. 1.

vi. 1. 1 Sam. xii. 23. Matt. xxviii. 20. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2.

vious appointment.—The younger son of Moses seems to have been born but a short time before he set off to return into Egypt, and to have been circumcised by the way, as before related. But Moses, being at that time about to face the Egyptian monarch, recollected his deliverance from the power and anger of a former king of Egypt: and considering this as a pledge of his safety and success in the present undertaking, he called his son Eliezer, or *My God is a Help*, with reference to his past experience, and his present confidence.

V. 6—11. Jethro seems to have informed Moses, by messengers, that he was arrived at the borders of the camp; and by them he thus addressed him: (*Notes, Matt. viii. 5—9. Luke vii. 1—10*;) accordingly, Moses went forth without the camp to meet him, and gave him a very affectionate and respectful reception.—The joy and praise of Jethro, for the mercies shewn by the Lord to Israel, was a remarkable contrast to Israel's murmurs and rebellion. He declared, that his faith was greatly confirmed, and his heart encouraged in worshipping the God of Israel, as distinguished from all idols, by this decided victory, which JEHOVAH had obtained over the proud and presumptuous opposition of Pharaoh and the Egyptians and over the idols of Egypt, and by the redemption of Israel.

V. 12. The Aaronick priesthood was not yet esta-

lished: for there seems no ground at all for the opinion of the Jewish expositors, that these events occurred some time after the giving of the law. It is therefore evident that Jethro, as an ancient priest of the Lord, officiated in these sacrifices, in which, though not of Israel, he had fellowship with Israel: and this appeared favourable to the case of the Gentiles. Having offered a burnt-offering, which was wholly consumed, he sacrificed other sacrifices; and he and Moses and Aaron, with the elders of Israel, feasted together with thankfulness and cheerfulness, as before God. This was a representation of the life of faith in Christ, and the communion of the saints.

V. 13—16. Moses, the divinely appointed Deliverer of Israel from Egyptian bondage, was of course acknowledged as the Ruler, or chief Magistrate; and, in this capacity, he undertook to hear and decide all the controversies which arose among the people.—Besides the various revelations, which had been made in preceding ages, to Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and others, concerning the grand doctrines and requirements of true religion, which had been handed down by tradition to the descendants of Jacob; no doubt Moses had received much immediate instruction in these respects, before the solemn promulgation of the law from Sinai, and could thus answer those, who “came to him to enquire of God,” and “make them know his

\* Heb. *Fading from wilt fade.*  
 e 2 Cor. vii. 15.  
 Phil. ii. 30.  
 1 Thes. ii. 8, 9.  
 f Num. xi. 14—  
 17. Deut. i. 9—  
 12. Acts vi. 1—4.  
 g 24. Prov. ix. 9.  
 h iii. 12. iv. 12.  
 Gen. xxxix. 2.  
 Deut. xx. 1.  
 Josh. i. 9, 2 Sam.  
 xiv. 17. Matt.  
 xxviii. 20.  
 i See on 15.—iv.  
 16. xx. 19. Deut.  
 v. 5.  
 k 16. Deut. iv. 1.  
 5. v. 1. vi. 1, 2.  
 vii. 11. Neh. ix.  
 13, 14.  
 l 1 Sam. xii. 23.  
 Ps. xxxii. 8.  
 cxliii. 8. Is. xxx.  
 21. Jer. vi. 16.  
 xliii. 3. Mic. iv.  
 2. 1 Thes. iv. 1.  
 m Deut. i. 18. Ez.  
 iii. 17. Matt.  
 xxviii. 20. Mark  
 xii. 34. 2 Thes.  
 iii. 6—12.  
 n Deut. i. 13—17.  
 Acts xi. 3.  
 o 1 Kings iii. 9—12.  
 Pro v. xxviii. 2.  
 p xxiii. 2—9. Gen.  
 xxii. 12. xlii. 18.  
 2 Sam. xxiii. 3.  
 1 Kings xviii. 3.  
 12. 2 Chr. xix. 5.  
 —9. Neh. v. 9.  
 vii. 2. Ec. xii. 13.  
 Luke xviii. 2, 4.  
 q Job xxix. 18. Is.  
 xvi. 5. Ec. 4. 14.  
 15. Jer. i. 1. Zech.  
 vii. 9. viii. 16.  
 r xxiii. 8. Deut.  
 xvi. 18, 19. 1 Sam.  
 viii. 3. xii. 3, 4.  
 Ps. xxvi. 9, 10.  
 Is. xxxiii. 15. Ez. xdi. 12. Acts xx. 33. 1 Tim. iii. 3. vi. 9—11. 2 Pet. ii. 14, 15.  
 s Num. x. 4. Deut. i. 15. Josh. xxii. 14. 1 Sam. viii. 12.

17 And Moses's father-in-law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good.

18 \*Thou wilt surely \*wear away, both thou and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; \*thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

19 \*Hearken now unto my voice: I will give thee counsel, and \*God shall be with thee. \*Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God:

20 And thou shalt \*teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the \*work that they must do.

21 Moreover, \*thou shalt provide out of all the people, \*able men, \*such as fear God, \*men of truth, \*hating covetousness: and place such over them, to be \*rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

22 And let them judge the people

at all seasons; and it shall be, *that* every \*great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge; so shall it be easier for thyself, and \*they shall bear the burden with thee.

23 If thou shalt do this thing, and \*God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, \*and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.

24 So \*Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said.

25 And Moses \*chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

26 And they judged the people \*at all seasons: \*the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.

27 And Moses \*let his father-in-law depart: and he went his way into his own land.

“statutes and laws.”—The people were generally ignorant, and, we may well conclude, contentious, as well as numerous; Moses was very accessible and meek; and their suits were managed without expense to them: and therefore they would doubtless furnish him with abundance of employment.

V. 17—23. The earnestness of mind, with which Moses engaged in this important work, had caused him to overlook the consequences of such incessant application, which must have soon worn him down, and have eventually proved injurious to the people also; and it did not please the Lord to instruct him in this point of discretion immediately, but by the counsel of a wise and pious man, and a descendant of Abraham, though not an Israelite.—When Jethro therefore observed his method of procedure, he ventured to object to it, and to give him advice which he trusted God would approve and prosper.—Let him reserve himself for such causes as were more difficult; or such as more immediately referred to the ordinances and commandments of God, as far as then made known to him; and concerning which he would, by divine inspiration, receive more complete instruction that he might teach the people: and let him select proper persons for ability, piety, integrity, and disinterestedness, in due subordination to each other; who might judge and decide all those causes, to which they were competent, and only refer those to Moses which they knew not how to determine. (*Marg. Ref. n—s.*) But, in giving this wise counsel, Jethro intimated, that Moses should refer the matter to God, and only follow it in case he commanded him.

V. 24—26. (*Notes, Deut. i. 11—18.*) It is probable,

that Moses consulted the Lord on this subject; and, by his appointment, carried Jethro's counsel into effect, with the concurrence of the people. (*Note, Acts vi. 2—6.*) The magistrates, thus constituted over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, were distinct persons from the seventy elders chosen on another occasion, and far more numerous. (*Note, Num. xi. 16.*) Probably, this arrangement was permanent in Israel, at least as far as the rulers over thousands. (*Judg. vi. 15. marg. Mic. v. 2.*)

V. 27. It is evident, that after Jethro had given this counsel to Moses, and had continued some time longer with him, he returned home; where no doubt he did what he could to promote true religion, and probably with considerable success. (*Notes, Num. x. 29—32.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—12.

The report of the Lord's power and goodness, shewn in behalf of Israel, having reached distant places, confirmed the faith, and excited the joy and gratitude, of those who were not personally interested in these peculiar benefits: and the records of the same events handed down to these distant ages, should produce the same effects upon our minds; that we too may be established in the faith, and stirred up to trust and praise the Lord for his mercies to Israel.—Husbands and wives may, on some occasions, be obliged to separate for a time; but the sooner they meet again, and the more they live together, the better; and though it may be improper for the female sex to share the dangers and hardships of extraordinary undertakings; yet the wife should participate the ordinary cares, and every

## CHAP. XIX.

Israel arrives at mount Sinai, and encamps there, 1, 2. Moses hears the message of God, and delivers it to the people; they engage to obey, and he reports it to the Lord, 3—8. Preparations are made, regulations prescribed, and the time set, for the giving of the law, 9—15. The tremendous introduction to that solemn transaction, 16—25.

xii. 2. 6. Lev. xxiii. 16—18.

**IN** the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of

the land of Egypt, the same day <sup>b</sup> came <sup>b</sup> xvi. i. Num. xxxiii. 15. they *into* the wilderness of Sinai.

2 For they were departed from <sup>c</sup> Re- <sup>c</sup> xvii. 1. phidim, and were come *to* the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel <sup>d</sup> camped <sup>d</sup> xviii. 5. Act. viii. 24. before the mount.

3 And Moses <sup>e</sup> went up unto God, <sup>e</sup> xx. 21. xxiv. 15. and the LORD <sup>f</sup> called unto him out of <sup>f</sup> —18. xxiv. 2. the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou <sup>f</sup> Deut. v. 5. 31. iii. 4.

comfort and honour, of the husband. Nor should children be needlessly deprived of the great benefit, which they may derive from the instruction and example of pious and wise parents: and when the people witness how well they, who are entrusted with the administration of public affairs, and take care of the church of God, regulate their own families, the example will be peculiarly useful.—When we record our trials, we should be sure to record our mercies also: “persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;” exiles, but protected by the God of our fathers.—It is very becoming, when persons, employed in the most important public services, pay a proper attention to the duties and regards of private life; and when they, who are highly honoured of God, are very humble and affable, and shew all respect to superior relations, and gratitude to benefactors.—Our meeting, from time to time, with our friends on earth will be very comfortable and useful, if we converse together concerning the loving kindness and wonderful works of God; if we unite in praise and thanksgiving; and if, by sobriety, love, gratitude, and the fear of God, we turn every festive interview into a religious ordinance, “a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to the Lord.” What then will our final meeting in heaven be, where the love, and joy, and praise will be complete, uninterrupted, and eternal!

## V. 13—27.

Our affectionate attention to relatives and friends must not induce us to neglect our proper business; any more than the ingratitude, which we experience, should render us weary of doing good. The most exalted stations, if properly filled, have the heaviest work connected with them: for such is human nature, that it is not only an arduous undertaking to restrain men from ungodliness, but very difficult to keep them from devouring one another: and they, who would administer justice, keep the peace, and repress violence and fraud, will have enough to engross their thoughts, to burden their spirits, and to occupy their time. Yet, in “doing with our might whatever our hand findeth to do,” a prudent regard to our health is not only allowable, but a duty, which it is not good to neglect, however well we may be employed: and “wisdom is profitable to direct” men in high stations, what they *must* do themselves, and what they *may* do by others. The Lord hath also divided his gifts severally to different men; and an impartial observer, though of inferior endowments, may sometimes suggest a counsel, which the wisest may very profitably attend to: yea, his wisdom will dispose him to attend to it; for “give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser; but fools despise wisdom and in-

struction.” Yet we must not follow the wisest counsel, until we have, by attention to the Scriptures, and by prayer, consulted the Lord also; who often counsels us by the advice of our pious friends, that we may love and be united to them, as well as dependent on him, and thankful to him.—Magistracy, as well as the ministry of the Gospel, is an ordinance of God: they therefore, who are employed even in the most subordinate offices of government, should be chosen persons, “able men,” of clear heads and sound judgments; and such as “fear God,” and from a principle of genuine piety, are steadily “men of truth,” of integrity, and fidelity; and have learned to “hate covetousness,” that they “may shake their hands from holding of bribes,” and administer justice impartially. What then ought law-givers, supreme magistrates, and the ministers of religion to be! Happy indeed are the people, that are blessed with such rulers and teachers; “yea, blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God.”

## NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 1. *In the third month.*] Or, “on the third new moon.” The Israelites left Egypt on the fifteenth day of the first month, and it is supposed that they arrived at Sinai on the first day of the third month; and, computing by the space of time between one new moon and another, which is somewhat more than twenty-nine days and a half, this will appear to have been on the forty-sixth day after their departure. Probably, on the next day Moses went up to the mount, and three days afterwards the law was delivered; that is, on the fiftieth day, on which the feast of Pentecost was held, as it is supposed, in commemoration of this event.

V. 2. Rephidim could not be far from Horeb, or from some parts of the mountain so called; because when Israel was encamped at Rephidim, Moses, attended by the elders, and probably followed by numbers of the people, smote a rock in Horeb, which poured forth waters for them and their cattle. But the assault of the Amalekites might cause delay; and so they continued encamped at Rephidim, for some time after the rock was smitten, before they marched to that part of the mountain, generally called Sinai, from whence the law was delivered. (*Notes*, xvii.)

V. 3. Moses went up to mount Sinai, doubtless by the Lord’s command, who “had called to him out of the mountain” by an audible voice, requiring him to come up, in order to receive his message to the people. They were now to be incorporated, as a church and nation, under the government of God, and in covenant with him; having hitherto been, first a single family, and then a multitude of slaves.



THE APPROACH OF THE ISRAELITES TO MOUNT SINAI.

Exodus xix. 1, 2.



<sup>g</sup> vii—xiv. Deut. is. 9. 33—36. xxxix. 2. Is. lxiii. 9  
<sup>h</sup> Deut. xxxii. 11, 12. Rev. xii. 14.  
<sup>i</sup> xxxiii. 22. xxiv. 7. Deut. xi. 27. xxviii. 1. Josh. xxiv. 24. 1 Sam. xv. 22. Is. i. 19. Jer. vii. 23. xl. 4—7. Heb. xi. 8.  
<sup>k</sup> Deut. v. 2. Ps. xxv. 10. ciii. 17. 18. Is. lvi. 4. Jer. xxxi. 31—33.

say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel;

4 Ye have <sup>e</sup> seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and *how* <sup>h</sup> I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

5 Now therefore <sup>i</sup> if ye will obey my voice indeed, and <sup>k</sup> keep my covenant,

then ye shall be 'a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for <sup>m</sup> all the earth is mine.

6 And ye shall be unto me <sup>n</sup> a kingdom of priests, <sup>o</sup> and an holy nation. These *are* the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

7 And Moses came and called for

Deut. iv. 20. vii. 6. xiv. 2. xxvi. 18. xxxii. 9. Pa. cxxxv. 4. Jer. x. 16. Mal. iii. 17. Tit. ii. 14. m. ix. 29. Deut. x. 14. Job xli. 11. Pa. xciv. 1. i. 12. Dan. iv. 34. 56. 1 Cor. x. 28. 28. Is. lxi. 6. Rom. xii. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 6. 9. Rev. i. 6. v. 10. xx. 6. o. Lev. xi. 44. 45. xix. 2. xx. 26. xxi. 7, 8. 23. Deut. vii. 6. xxxvi. 19. xxxviii. 9. Is. lxiii. 12. 1 Pet. i. 15, 16

V. 4. *On eagles' wings.*] As the eagle carries her young upon her wings, out of the reach of those who would attempt their destruction; so the Lord had rescued the Israelites from Egypt, that they might be his people, dwelling under his protection, and devoted to his worship and service. (Note, Deut. xxxii. 11, 12.)

V. 5. *Covenant.*] The national covenant with Israel was here meant; the charter upon which they were incorporated, as a people, under the government of JEHOVAH. It was an engagement of God, to give Israel possession of Canaan, and to protect them in it; to render the land fruitful, and the nation victorious and prosperous, and to perpetuate his oracles and ordinances among them; so long as they did not, as a people, reject his authority, apostatize to idolatry, and tolerate open wickedness. These things constituted a forfeiture of the covenant, as their national rejection of Christ did afterwards.—True believers among them were *personally* dealt with according to the covenant of mercy and grace, even as true Christians now are; and unbelievers were under the covenant of works, and liable to condemnation by it, as at present: yet the *national covenant* was not strictly either the one or the other, but had something in it of the nature of each. It did not refer to the final salvation of individuals; nor was it broken by the disobedience, or even idolatry, of any number of them, provided this was not sanctioned or tolerated by public authority. It indeed, in many respects, prefigured the dealings of God with his people, under the Christian dispensation; in which the new covenant of grace and mercy, made with all true believers, is more clearly exhibited, than under any of the preceding dispensations; yet it "had not the very image," but only "a shadow of good things to come." When therefore, the nation had broken this covenant; the Lord declared that he would make "a new covenant with the house of Israel, . . . putting his law," not only in their hands, but "in their inward parts;" and "writing it," not upon tables of stone, "but in their hearts; forgiving their iniquity, and remembering their sins no more." (Jer. xxxi. 32—34. Heb. viii. 7—12. x. 16, 17.)—In the scriptures referred to, the covenant spoken of, "as ready to vanish away," is evidently not the covenant of works, but the national covenant with Israel, which the Israelites had vacated by their sins.—Unless we carefully attend to this distinction, we shall be liable to fall into perpetual mistakes in reading the Old Testament. Hardly any thing can be more absurd, than to suppose, that the whole nation of the Jews was under the covenant of works, which contains nothing about repentance, faith in a Mediator, forgiveness of sins, or grace: yet we often meet with language in Christian authors, which conveys this idea. And it is perhaps more common to hear the whole nation of Israel spoken of, as if they all bare the character, and

possessed the privileges, of true believers, actually interested in the covenant of grace; and conclusions are continually drawn from such premises, as if undeniable!—But in fact, the Israelites were under a dispensation of mercy, and had outward privileges and great advantages in various ways for salvation; yet, like professing Christians, the most of them rested in these and looked no further. "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." The outward covenant was made with the nation, entitling them to outward advantages, upon the condition of outward national obedience: and the covenant of grace was ratified personally with true believers, and sealed and secured spiritual blessings to them, by producing a holy disposition of heart, and spiritual obedience to the divine law.—In case Israel kept the covenant, the Lord promised, that they should be to him "a peculiar treasure," which is safely reposed because highly valued. The whole earth being the Lord's, he might have chosen any other people instead of Israel: and this implied, that as his choice of them was gratuitous, so, if they rejected his covenant, he would reject them, and communicate their privileges to others; as indeed he hath done, since the introduction of the Christian dispensation.

*A peculiar treasure.*] תִּשְׁכָּנָה. Deut. vii. 6. xiv. 2. xxvi. 18. 1 Chron. xxix. 3. Mal. iii. 17.—The LXX render it λαοπερισσος, "a peculiar people." See Tit. ii. 14. Gr.

V. 6. Israel was formed into "a kingdom of priests," an honourable, and sacred kingdom, under JEHOVAH himself as their King, who manifested his special presence among them, from above the Mercy-seat. They were also distinguished from other kingdoms, by laws and statutes immediately given them from God, and bearing the stamp of his holiness. He, in an especial manner, was their Protector against every foe; and they were his professed worshippers, according to the oracles and ordinances which he gave them. Thus they were a "kingdom of priests," and "a holy nation," separated from other people, consecrated to God, permitted to approach him, to offer sacrifices and supplications, and possessing a sacred character among the nations of the earth. Israel had these outward distinctions; but the nation was only a type of all true Christians, in their spiritual privileges and real character, in the sight of God, and before the world. (Notes, 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10. Rev. i. 4—6. v. 8—10.)

V. 7—9. "The elders of the people" seem to have been the principal persons, or seniors, in each tribe and family, who in some sense represented the rest: and Moses, having assembled them, plainly stated before them the terms of the covenant, which God was about to make with the nation, that they might propose them to the people at large; and these unanimously and at once acceded to them, probably without due consideration and with too

<sup>p</sup> See on iii. 16.  
<sup>q</sup> iv. 29, 30. 1 Cor.  
xv. 1.

<sup>p</sup> the elders of the people, <sup>q</sup> and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him.

<sup>r</sup> xx. 19. xxiv. 8.  
7. Deut. v. 27.  
28. xxvi. 17—19.  
Josh. xxiv. 24.  
Neh. x. 29.

<sup>r</sup> 8 And all the people <sup>s</sup> answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken, we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.

<sup>s</sup> 16. xx. 21. xxiv.  
15. 16. Deut. iv.  
11. 1 Kings viii.  
12. 2 Chr. vi. 1.  
Ps. xlviii. 11, 12.  
xxvii. 2. Is. xix.  
1. Matt. xvii. 5.  
Mark ix. 7.  
Luke ix. 34, 35.  
Rev. i. 7.

<sup>s</sup> 9 And the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>t</sup> Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, <sup>t</sup> that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and <sup>u</sup> believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the LORD.

<sup>t</sup> Deut. iv. 36.  
John xii. 29, 30.  
<sup>u</sup> xiv. 31. 2 Chr.  
xx. 20. Is. vi. 9.  
Luke x. 16.

<sup>u</sup> 10 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people and <sup>v</sup> sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes.

<sup>x</sup> 15. Josh. iii. 5.  
vi. 13. 1 Sam.  
xvi. 5. 2 Chr.  
xxix. 5. 34. xxx.  
17—19. Job i. 5.  
1 Cor. vi. 11.

<sup>y</sup> 11 And be ready against the third day: for the third day <sup>z</sup> the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.

<sup>y</sup> 14. Gen. xxxv.  
2. Lev. xi. 29.  
xv. 5. Num. vii.  
7. 21. xxxd. 24.  
Zech. iii. 3, 4.  
Heb. x. 22. Rev.  
vii. 14.

<sup>z</sup> 12 And thou shalt <sup>a</sup> set bounds unto the people round about, saying, <sup>b</sup> Take heed to yourselves, <sup>c</sup> that ye go not up into the mount, <sup>d</sup> or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount, shall be surely put to death.

<sup>z</sup> 18. 29. iii. 8.  
xxxiv. 5. Num.  
xi. 17. Deut.  
xxxiv. 2. Ps.  
xviii. 9. cxliv. 5.  
briv. 1, 2.  
Hao. iii. 2—6.  
John iii. 13. vi.  
38.  
<sup>a</sup> 21. 23. Josh. iii.  
4.  
<sup>b</sup> c. 28. xxxiv. 12.  
Deut. ii. 4. iv. 9.  
<sup>c</sup> Heb. xii. 20, 21.

13 There shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned or shot through; <sup>e</sup> whether it be beast or man, it shall not live: <sup>f</sup> when the <sup>g</sup> trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount.

<sup>e</sup> xxi. 23, 29. Lev.  
xx. 15, 16.  
<sup>f</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 52.  
<sup>g</sup> 1 Thies. iv. 16.  
Or, cornet.

14 And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, <sup>h</sup> and sanctified the people, and they washed their clothes.

<sup>h</sup> See on 10

15 And he said unto the people, <sup>i</sup> Be ready against <sup>j</sup> the third day; <sup>k</sup> come not at <sup>l</sup> your wives.

<sup>i</sup> Am. iv. 12. Mal.  
iii. 2. Matt. iii.  
10—12. xxiv. 44.  
2 Pet. iii. 11, 12.  
<sup>j</sup> 11. 16.  
<sup>k</sup> 1 Sam. xxi. 4, 5.  
Zech. vi. 8. xii.  
12—14. 1 Cor.  
vii. 5.

16 ¶ And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were <sup>m</sup> thunders and lightnings, and a <sup>n</sup> thick cloud upon the mount, and the <sup>o</sup> voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that <sup>p</sup> all the people that <sup>q</sup> was in the camp trembled.

<sup>l</sup> 1 Sam. xxi. 4, 5.  
Zech. vi. 8. xii.  
12—14. 1 Cor.  
vii. 5.  
<sup>m</sup> ix. 23, 28, 29. xx.  
18. 1 Sam. xii.  
17, 18. Job xxxvii.  
1—5. xxxviii. 25.  
Ps. xviii. 11—14.  
xxix. 3—11. l. 3.  
lxxvii. 18. xxvii.  
4. Heb. xii. 18.  
19. Rev. iv. 5.  
viii. 5. xii. 19.  
<sup>n</sup> See on 9. xl. 34.  
2 Chr. v. 14.  
<sup>o</sup> Jer. i. 10. iv. 1.  
m Jer. v. 22. Heb.  
xii. 21.  
<sup>p</sup> Deut. iv. 10. v. 5.  
xx. 18. Deut. iv.  
11, 12. v. 22.  
xxxiii. 2. Judg.  
v. 5. Ps. lxxvii.  
7, 8. civ. 32.  
cxliv. 5.—See on  
18.—Is. vi. 4.  
Hab. iii. 3. Rev.  
xv. 8.

17 And <sup>r</sup> Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the nether part of the mount.

<sup>q</sup> See on 9. xl. 34.  
2 Chr. v. 14.  
<sup>r</sup> Jer. i. 10. iv. 1.  
m Jer. v. 22. Heb.  
xii. 21.  
<sup>s</sup> Deut. iv. 10. v. 5.  
xx. 18. Deut. iv.  
11, 12. v. 22.  
xxxiii. 2. Judg.  
v. 5. Ps. lxxvii.  
7, 8. civ. 32.  
cxliv. 5.—See on  
18.—Is. vi. 4.  
Hab. iii. 3. Rev.  
xv. 8.

18 And <sup>t</sup> mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it <sup>u</sup> in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended <sup>v</sup> as the smoke

<sup>s</sup> xx. 18. Deut. iv.  
11, 12. v. 22.  
xxxiii. 2. Judg.  
v. 5. Ps. lxxvii.  
7, 8. civ. 32.  
cxliv. 5.—See on  
18.—Is. vi. 4.  
Hab. iii. 3. Rev.  
xv. 8.  
<sup>t</sup> 2 Thes. i. 8.  
2 Pet. iii. 10.  
<sup>u</sup> Gen. xv. 17. xix.  
28.

much confidence.—‘Upon the report made to God of the people’s consent, he proceeds...to declare the laws, by which they should be governed, (xx—xxiii;) and then in the twenty-fourth chapter these laws pass into a covenant between God and them.’ *Bp. Patrick*. In order that this might be rendered peculiarly solemn and affecting, the Lord declared that he would “come in a thick cloud,” much denser than that from which his glory had before been manifested, and indicating a tremendous tempest; for the Scriptures referred to in the margin shew, that most dreadful lightnings and fire continually burst from the cloud in the sight of the people. (*Marg. Ref. s.*) This was intended, among other reasons, to convince them, that the Lord spake by Moses, and to induce them to believe his testimony, and ever after willingly to receive the commands of God from his servant, rather than behold such a sight any more.—The thick cloud also represented the comparative darkness of that dispensation: and when Christ was transfigured, the voice came out of a *bright* cloud, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased, hear ye him.” (*Note, Matt. xvii. 5—8.*)

V. 10—15. Moses was ordered to “sanctify the people;” that is, he was to instruct them in what manner they should sanctify themselves, and to enforce the observance of his directions. It is probable, that the two days which preceded the giving of the law, and the day on which it was given, were observed in some respect as a season of solemn fasting and prayer.—The washing of the clothes by the people, and the other external observances, (similar to

what we meet with in the Scriptures referred to in the margin,) represented the inward purification of the heart by the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, when sin is repented of and renounced, sinful desires are mortified, and sinful thoughts are excluded with abhorrence; and when attention to the great concerns of religion renders men indifferent even about lawful satisfactions. All this was peculiarly proper, now that the people were about to be admitted into covenant, as a holy nation with a holy God; who also would display his glory among them, in the most evident and awful manner. The other regulations, and all the terrific solemnities of this transaction, were calculated to impress the minds of the people with a deep sense of the divine majesty and purity; to convince them of their own guilt and unholiness; and to shew them, that they could not stand in judgment before God by their own obedience to that law, which was about to be delivered.

V. 16—20. It is intimated, in several parts of Scripture, that these tremendous appearances and voices were effected by the ministration of angels, as attending on this sublime display of the glory of JEHOVAH. (*Acts vii. 53. Gal. iii. 19. Heb. ii. 2.*)—When the signal had been given, by the long and loud sound of a trumpet, Moses led the congregation, who trembled at what they saw and heard, to the foot of the mount; where they took their station, and waited, doubtless in great trepidation, to hear the Lord himself speak to them. But while they stood there, the appearances became more and more dreadful; the mountain itself trembled exceedingly, and every blast of the

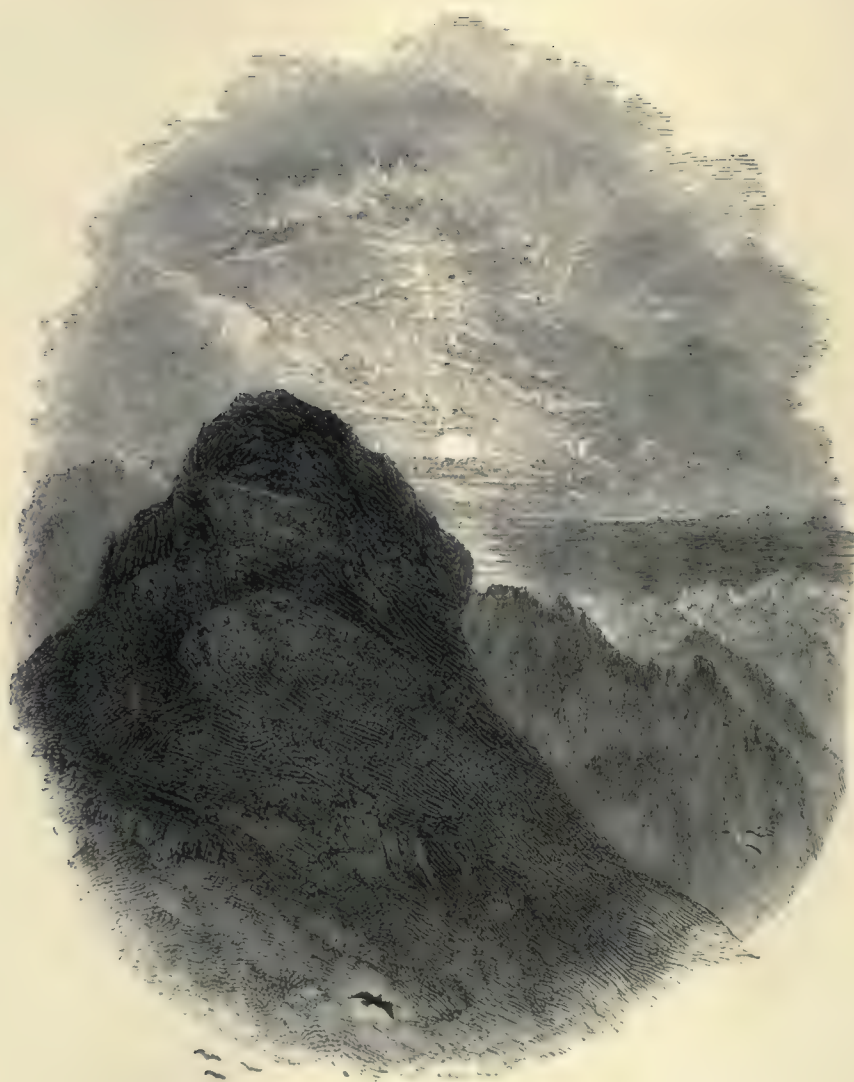


MOUNT SINAI IN THE DISTANCE.

NUMBERS X. 33.







SUMMIT OF MOUNT SINAI.

Exod. xix. 20; xxxiv. 2.





STEPS CUT IN THE ROCK, AND LEADING UP MOUNT HOREB.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Kings xix. 11, of a furnace, and the "whole mount quaked greatly.

<sup>12</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 8. <sup>13</sup> Jer. iv. 24. <sup>14</sup> Nah. i. 5, 6. <sup>15</sup> Hab. iii. 10. <sup>16</sup> Zech. xiv. 5. <sup>17</sup> Matt. xxiv. 7. <sup>18</sup> Heb. xii. 21. <sup>19</sup> Ps. lxxxi. 7.

<sup>y</sup> See on 11.—  
<sup>z</sup> Neh. ix. 13.

<sup>z</sup> 3. xxiv. 12, 13. <sup>18</sup> xxxiv. 2. <sup>4</sup> Deut. ix. 9.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. contest. 12, 13.

<sup>a</sup> in. 3. 5. 1 Sam. vi. 19. Ec. v. 1. Heb. xii. 28, 29.

<sup>b</sup> xxiv. 5. Lev. x. 1—3. Is. lii. 11.

<sup>c</sup> See on 5. 14, 15.

<sup>19</sup> And "when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, "Moses spake, and "God answered him by a voice.

<sup>20</sup> And "the LORD came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the LORD called Moses *up* to the top of the mount, and "Moses went up.

<sup>21</sup> And the LORD said unto Moses, Go down, "charge the people, lest they "break through unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish.

<sup>22</sup> And let <sup>b</sup> the priests also, which come near to the LORD, "sanctify them-

selves, lest the LORD "break forth upon them.

<sup>23</sup> And Moses said unto the LORD, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for thou chargedst us, saying, "Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it.

<sup>24</sup> And the LORD said unto him, Away, get thee down, "and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee: "but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the LORD, "lest he break forth upon them.

<sup>25</sup> So "Moses went down unto the people, and spake unto them.

<sup>2</sup> Sam. vi. 6. <sup>1</sup> Chr. xiii. 9—  
<sup>11</sup> xv. 13. <sup>2</sup> Chr. xxx. 8. <sup>5</sup> 18, 19. Acts v. 5. 10. <sup>1</sup> Cor. xi. 30—32.

<sup>c</sup> 12. Josh. iii. 4. 5.

<sup>f</sup> See on 20.

<sup>g</sup> See on 12. 21.—  
Matt. xi. 12. Luke xiii. 24. xvi. 16. John i. 17. Heb. iv. 16. x. 10—22. xii. 18—25. 29.

<sup>h</sup> See on d. 22.—  
Rom. iv. 18. 2 Cor. iii. 7—9. Gal. iii. 10, 11. 19—22. i. 24.

trumpet which continued sounding; was more terrible than those which had preceded; as announcing the presence of the Lord, and demanding an awful attention to his words.—It was at this crisis, no doubt, that Moses himself said, "I exceedingly fear and quake:" (Note, Heb. xii. 18—21:) for "he spake, and the LORD answered him by a voice," encouraging him not to fear, and calling him to come up into the mount.

*Voice of the trumpet.* (16) A voice, or sound, resembling that of a trumpet, made, as we must suppose, by some of the attendant angels. (1 Cor. xv. 52. 1 Thes. iv. 16. Heb. xii. 19. Rev. i. 10. iv. 1.)

V. 21—25. It might have been supposed, that the terror of this prospect would have checked all presumptuous curiosity: but it is continually demonstrated by undeniable facts, that the hard heart of sinners can trifle with the most terrible denunciations and judgments of an angry God; nay, convert them into diversion and amusement, or make them the subject of curious speculations!—It is evident that Moses went up into the mount, amidst all the tremendous appearances, which at first dismayed him; and the Lord ordered him to "go down, and charge the people." Some were therefore disposed to break through, while others were appalled with terror; and Moses must go and warn them, that if they did, God would certainly punish their presumptuous intrusion with immediate death.—It is much controverted among learned men, who the *priests* were, "that came near to the LORD:" but probably they were some of the chief persons in the several families, who generally took the lead in every act of religious worship, and perhaps had sometimes offered sacrifices. Presuming on this distinction, they were not suitably impressed by the solemn scene, and they had in some degree neglected the orders to sanctify themselves, in preparation for it: they were therefore warned to act with greater reverence of God. Moses, indeed, thought there was no danger that the people should attempt to break through; but he was mistaken, and was sent down to take proper precautions against such an interruption of the awful solemnity. He was also directed to bring Aaron up along with him; doubtless in order that the people might learn to honour their future high priest, by seeing him thus distinguished.—If Moses and Aaron went up into the mount directly,

before the law was given, as it seems they did; (for Aaron did not accompany Moses afterwards;) they soon descended again, as it appears in the next chapter. Every circumstance and expression, in this transaction, were suited to evince, that the law now about to be given, though "holy, "just, and good," could speak nothing but terror and destruction to *transgressors*; and to fill the heart of every sinner with horror, dismay, and desperation. In suberviency to the Covenant of grace, its uses are manifold, and of vast importance, as will presently be shewn. But it is extremely difficult to drive men from the absurd notion, that a *sinner* may and ought to seek justification before God by his imperfect, scanty, and external obedience. To counteract that propensity in fallen human nature, no doubt this tremendous scene was exhibited; as well as to teach the Israelites, that even in respect of their national covenant, though their obedience was required, yet the blessings were not merited by it, but *freely* given by a gracious God, in a way becoming his own holiness.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—15.

The blessedness of the Lord's people originates from his most free and plenteous mercy; yet, unless we yield ourselves to his service, and willingly walk in his commandments, we can bring no proof that we belong to that happy company.—What admirable and adorable condescension and compassion hath the God of glory shewn to us fallen sinners, in taking any of our apostate race to be unto him "a peculiar treasure!" But let us never forget, that he "purifies" every one of "them to himself, to be "a peculiar people, zealous of good works." If we have any scriptural reason to conclude that we are of this number, let us recollect, that he who has thus distinguished us is Lord of the whole earth, and might have chosen others and passed us by, had he seen good.—We should also "remember all the way that he hath led us," in redeeming us from our far worse than Egyptian bondage; and often meditate on the kind and effectual methods by which he accomplished our deliverance, notwithstanding the power of our enemies, yea, notwithstanding our own rebellious and unbelieving opposition to the conduct of his grace. Then shall we perceive, that he "bare us as on

## CHAP. XX.

The ten commandments are spoken in an audible voice, by JEHOVAH, to the whole congregation of Israel, 1—17. The people are alarmed, and confer with Moses, 18—20. Moses receives from God an

additional prohibition of idolatry, and rules for erecting an altar, 21—26.

AND <sup>a</sup> God spake all these words, <sup>a</sup> Deut. iv. 53. 26 v. 22. Acts vii. 88. 53. saying,

"eagles' wings, and hath brought us to himself." May we prove in all our future conduct, that we are indeed, "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; to shew forth the praises of him, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light." May we abound in "spiritual sacrifices, which are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ," yield ourselves to his service, and allow of nothing inconsistent with our holy profession and character!—But we are all naturally more disposed to profess and to *resolve*, than to practise. Let us not then say, that we will do these things; but beg of God to enable us to do them.—The ministers of the Lord are required, fairly and plainly to lay the whole of their message before the people, and in prayer they report before him the reception with which it meets; but they are not answerable for consequences.—The more seriously we prepare for divine ordinances, and the more our minds are abstracted from all earthly objects, the greater benefit shall we receive. But in approaching to God, we must never lose sight of his holiness and greatness, and of our own meanness and pollution.

## V. 16—25.

How could we sinners approach the Lord upon the terrible mount Sinai? Could we rush into the midst of the fire, tempests, and earthquakes? or can we stand in judgment before him, according to the tenour of his righteous law? If so tremendous tokens of the divine justice accompanied the promulgation of the law: what will that day be when the earth shall be encircled in flames; and when all who ever dwelt upon it through successive generations, shall be gathered before the tribunal of the Judge, to hear their final and decisive sentence! Happy they, who have discovered their need of a Mediator, have hearkened to the voice of the Saviour, and from him have obtained forgiveness of all their sins, and acceptance with God; who have received the law, disarmed of its curses and deprived of its terrors, from his loving, kind, and gracious hands, and have been taught by his grace to love it, and obey it in sincerity and truth. These, like Moses and Aaron, though at first they tremble at God's word, and are always humbled before him; yet, through Christ, will grow, as it were, familiar with mount Sinai. Fearless of condemnation, they will meditate on the terror of the sentence of the law, and thence draw arguments to increase their gratitude, and animate their willing services; and they will finally triumph, when the wicked shall be calling in vain to the rocks and mountains, to cover them from the wrath of their offended Judge.—Blessed be God, we are yet in the land of forgiveness, of prayer, of hope; and, in this favoured country, we are all under a dispensation of mercy, and have the oracles and ordinances of God continued to us. We are not come to mount Sinai, to tremble or despair; but to mount Zion, where our God reigns upon a mercy-seat, and waits to be gracious to every returning sinner.—Let us, however, remember his awful words: "See that

"ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not, who refused him that spake on earth, how much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven?" Let none then rest in outward advantages or distinctions; for "our God is still a consuming Fire," and will be sanctified by those who draw nigh to him: and let none indulge a presumptuous curiosity, by attempting to "intrude into things not seen, vainly puffed up by a fleshly mind;" lest the Lord in vengeance break forth upon him. Finally, let us "all fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it;" and perish after the manner, in which an immense majority of this vast multitude fell in the wilderness, when the Lord "swore in his wrath that they should never enter into his rest."

## NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1. After the preparations recorded in the former chapter, and the glorious and tremendous display of the special presence of God on mount Sinai, had solemnized the minds of the people, and excited their awful expectations; it may be supposed that the sound of the trumpet ceased, and JEHOVAH himself immediately spake, in a voice loud enough to be distinctly heard by the immense assembled multitude. For while it is evident, that many things, on this extraordinary occasion, were effected by the ministration of angels; and probably some other parts of the law were delivered to Moses by them; (*Acts vii. 53. Gal. iii. 19. Heb. ii. 2:*) the language, here and elsewhere used, is so express and decided, that it cannot reasonably be doubted that God himself, by his own immediate agency, without the intervention of angels, formed that awful voice by which the following words were delivered, from the midst of the fire, to the congregation of Israel. (*Deut. iv. 11, 12. 33. v. 4. 22.*)—The words spoken are generally called, 'The ten commandments;' and they are justly considered as the grand outlines of the holy law of God; of that law, which is commonly called *the moral law*, to distinguish it from the other injunctions of the Mosaic dispensation.—As the full and exact knowledge of this law is peculiarly important, in order to our clearly understanding the whole system of revealed religion, I shall introduce the exposition of it, by some observations on its nature, obligations, and uses. It is evident that there is a distinction between *moral precepts*, and instituted appointments. Some things are in themselves so indifferent, that the same authority which enjoined them, might, without impropriety, have prohibited them; as the use of bread and wine in one religious ordinance, and the use of water in another. But there are laws of a widely different nature: and it is absurd to suppose that God could have forbidden us to love him and one another, or to speak truth and do justice. Indeed, ritual precepts are for the time equally obligatory; except when they come in competition with moral duties,

<sup>b</sup> Gen. xvi. 7, 8. <sup>2</sup> I am <sup>b</sup> the LORD thy God, which have <sup>c</sup> brought thee out of the land of  
 Lev. xxvi. 1. 13. <sup>4</sup> have <sup>c</sup> brought thee out of the land of  
 Deut. v. 6. vi. 4. <sup>5</sup> 2Chr. xxviii. 9.  
 Ps. l. 7. lxxxi. 10. Jer. xxxi. 1. 33. Hos. xiii. 4. Rom. iii. 29. x. 12. c x—xv.  
 Lev. xix. 36. xxiii. 43.

Egypt, <sup>d</sup> out of the house of <sup>e</sup> bond-  
 age. <sup>d</sup> xiii. 3. Deut. v. 15. vii. 8. xii. 10. xv. 15. xxv. 6—8. <sup>e</sup> Heb. servants

and then the Lord “will have *mercy*, and not *sacrifice*.” But the ritual injunction is of temporary obligation; it had no existence before its express appointment, and it may be vacated by the same authority; or, having answered the purpose, its obligations may cease of course: while the moral precept is, on the contrary, of immutable and eternal validity. The different circumstances, indeed, in which rational creatures may be placed, occasion a variation arising from those changes of circumstances; as the entrance of sin and misery has rendered patience and forgiveness of injuries, exercises of our love to God and to our neighbour. These, and many other things required of us in our present situation, will cease entirely in heaven; yet the grand principles from which they are deduced would have been the same, had we never sinned, and they will remain the same to all eternity.—Some traces of the moral law are discoverable by our natural reason, and the whole perfectly accords to it. It has its foundation in the nature of God and of man; in the relations men bear to him and to each other; and in the duties which result from those relations: and on this account it is immutable and universally obligatory. Though given, on this particular occasion, to Israel, it demands obedience from all mankind; and the whole world will be judged according to this law, and to the opportunity which they have had of becoming acquainted with it, whether by reason and tradition alone, or by the light of the written word; except the believer who has obtained deliverance from its merited condemnation. The law is also *spiritual*: that is, it takes cognizance of our *spirits*, of our most secret thoughts, desires, intentions, and dispositions; and demands a holy regulation of the judgment, will, and affections. It principally requires LOVE, without which the best external obedience is condemned as mere hypocrisy. This is peculiar to the law of God, who alone can search the heart; and no other law ever attempted to enforce the obedience of the heart: but, in common with other laws, it demands perfect, unfailing, uninterrupted, and perpetual obedience; for no law can tolerate the transgression of itself. From the entrance to the close of life, God requires of us exact conformity to every precept: he that “keepeth the whole law, and offendeth in one point, is guilty of all:” (*Note, Jam. ii. 8—13*;) and the least deviation, whether by omission or commission, excess or defect, is *sin*; and every sin deserves wrath and needs forgiveness. (*1 John iii. 4*.)—The ten commandments are a compendium of the holy law, which is commented on in all the preceptive parts of Scripture; and the substance of its requirements is given, still more concisely, in the two great commandments, “Thou shalt love the LORD thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength:” and, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” We are authorized by the example of Christ, to interpret every one of these commands in the strictest, most spiritual, and extensive sense, of which it is capable.—Even repentance, faith in a Mediator, and all evangelical graces and duties, are exercises of this entire love to God, and are required of sinners placed under a

dispensation of mercy; though originally the law had no direct connexion with redemption, but lay at the foundation of another covenant. We may therefore wave the controversy concerning the *rule of duty*, whether this be the ten commandments, or the whole word of God; for the one, properly understood, will be found as broad as the other: seeing we cannot love God *with all our hearts*, unless we love every discovery which he is pleased to make of his glory; believe every testimony and embrace every promise which he gives; seek his favour in the use of all the means that he appoints; and employ ourselves in diffusing the knowledge of his glorious excellencies and wonderful works, according to our ability and opportunity, and the station which we occupy in society.—The Lord Jesus perfectly fulfilled the extensive requirements of this holy law: yet, *in his peculiar circumstances*, it actually required all that love for the Father, and for his brethren, and all those expressions of it, which, subsequent to his incarnation that he might be our Mediator, he manifested in his life and death. But no apostle or prophet ever reached, in one single instance, that degree of love and purity which it demands.—The uses of this holy law, in connexion with the gospel of Christ, and in subserviency to the covenant of grace, are many and important. “By the law is the knowledge of sin:” and if it were more fully understood, in the extent and excellency of its spiritual requirements, and the justice of its awful sanctions, sinners would be at once convinced of their guilt and danger; they would learn what they ought always to have been and to have done, and thus discover their real character and situation, of which most men are entirely ignorant; they would become acquainted with their wants, and prepared to understand and value the inestimable blessings of the gospel; and they would perceive their need of regeneration, and of that repentance, that life of faith in the Son of God, and sanctification by the Holy Spirit, which in general are disregarded, nay frequently ridiculed.—Believers may thence learn their obligations to the divine Redeemer: and receiving the law from his hands, as the rule of their grateful obedience and the standard of holiness; daily self-examination according to it serves to keep them humble, dependent on free mercy, diligent in pressing forward to the mark, and watchful against every temptation or suggestion to evil. It also directs them in acquiring an exact judgment and correct spiritual taste, in respect of every part of the Christian temper; and, in many other ways, it promotes their establishment, fruitfulness, and consolation.—Besides these uses, the law served to restrain the Israelites from gross transgression, by its strictness and terrors; and it still in a measure answers the same purpose even to wicked men, and, where known, serves to keep the world in some degree of order. It also discovers the holy character of God, the nature of his government of the world, and the rule and measure of the future judgment, that “day of wrath and perdition of ungodly men.”—On the other hand, the bad effects resulting from ignorance or mistakes concerning the holy law of God, are manifold and deplor-

<sup>e</sup> xv. 11. Deut. v. 7 vi. 5. 14. Jer. xxiv. 18—24. 2 Kings xxv. 28—35. Is. xxxix. 2. Jer. xxv. 25. Jer. xxvi. 4. xlv. 10. xlv. 8. xlv. 21, 22. xlv. 9. Jer. xxv. 6. Matt. iv. 10. 1 Cor. xiii. 4. 6. Eph. v. 5. Phil. iii. 19. Col. ii. 18. 1 John v. 20, 21. Rev. xix. 10, xxii. 9.

3 Thou shalt have 'no other gods before me.

able. The dreams of a purgatory, either before or after the day of judgment; the flattering illusions of the merit of human obedience; the palliating excuses that are made for sin; the objections to the sovereignty of divine grace in the gospel, and to God's method of justifying sinners; and all antinomian perversions of those precious truths of revelation, seem principally to arise from this source. Ignorance of the *extensive requirements* of the divine law supports careless presumption and Pharisaical self-confidence: ignorance of its *excellency* excites murmurs and objections against the severity of its awful sanction. The same ignorance has led some to frame, in imagination, a *new law*, which has been substituted in the place of the holy law of God, since by sin man became unable to obey it; and the same ignorance has occasioned innumerable objections to the doctrine, and mistakes about the nature, of regeneration; and indeed it has prevented many real Christians from glorifying God in that manner which they otherwise might have done. In short, were the law of God well understood, the person and office of the Saviour must appear most suitable and precious; and the genuine beauty of Christianity, as reinstating a lost sinner in his Maker's favour, and recovering him to his image, in a way honourable to all the perfections of the Deity, would shine forth with unclouded lustre.

We may consider the giving of the law from mount Sinai, either as a publication to mankind of the law of their reason and nature, as originally written in their hearts, but erased or obscured by sin; or as given to Israel, for the rule and foundation of their national covenant.—For want of adverting to this obvious distinction, it has been incautiously asserted, that the law itself was given only to the *redeemed*; which sentiment not only supposes the rest of JEHOVAH's universal kingdom without a law, but vacates redemption itself; for "where there is no law, there is no transgression," no condemnation, no occasion for redemption.—On the other hand, it is often asserted, or assumed, that the believer has in no sense any thing to do with the law; nay, it is sometimes even ranked among the *enemies*, from which Christ came to deliver us! "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." All rational creatures are bound by its authority, and all transgressors are under its condemnation: but since Christ has fulfilled its righteousness and borne its curse, all who hear the Gospel are under a dispensation of mercy, and have forgiveness *proposed* to them; and all true believers are actually pardoned and justified, and are required, and inwardly disposed, to render a sincere, unreserved, habitual obedience to the law, though not able to obey it perfectly.

V. 2. The great Lawgiver prefaced his injunctions, by proclaiming his own essential glory and perfection. "I am JEHOVAH." As the Source of existence, and consequently of all power, wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness, God is the Standard of excellence and beauty; from whom all created amiableness is an emanation, and of whose glory it is a feeble reflection. To him alone the throne belongs; he alone is qualified to be the Lawgiver

4 Thou 'shalt not make unto thee <sup>f</sup> xxxiii. 1. 8. 28. xxxiv. 17. Lev. xix. 4. xxvi. 1. Deut. iv. 16—19. xxi. 5. 8. xxvii. 16. 1 Kings xli. 28. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 7. Ps. xxvii. 7. civ. 4—8. cxxxv. 15—18. Is. xl. 18—20. xlv. 8. 17. xlv. 9—20. xlv. 16. xlv. 5—8. Jer. x. 3—5. 8. 9. 14—16. Ez. viii. 10. Acts xvii. 29. xix. 26—35. Rom. i. 23. Rev. ix. 20. xiii. 14, 15. xiv. 9—11. xvi. 2

any graven image, or any likeness of

and Judge of the universe; and he has the sole and unalienable right to that love and service which his law demands. To this he added, "THY GOD," to express Israel's relations and obligations to him. We are all his rational creatures; and every benefit, which he bestows, binds us more forcibly to love and obedience. But the Israelites were the children of the covenant made with Abraham; they had the external seal of circumcision in their flesh; his glorious presence was among them, and they had just consented to enter into covenant with him: and professed Christians, dedicated to God in the initiatory sacrament of baptism, favoured with the light of revelation, and avowing themselves his worshippers, stand in a similar relation to him.—The recent deliverance also of Israel from Egypt laid the Israelites under additional obligations to obedience, and afterwards rendered their disobedience more inexcusable. This was a type of our redemption from sin and Satan; and though all men ought to obey the law of God, yet none actually yield it any spiritual obedience, except his redeemed people.

V. 3. The commandments are addressed, in the singular number, to each person, because every one is concerned in them on his own account: and each prohibition implies a positive duty.—This first commandment requires a disposition and conduct, suited to the relation in which we stand to JEHOVAH, as our God. He alone is the adequate Object of our love, and able to satisfy our capacity of happiness: all we are and have, is derived from him; and he possesses an unalienable right to prescribe the use which we should make of all his gifts. He has so clear a title to our love, gratitude, and adoration, our reverence, submission, credence, confidence, and obedience, that we cannot withhold them from him, without the most palpable injustice. Considering *Who he is*, and *what he hath done for us*; except we love him to the utmost extent of all our *natural* powers, we do not render him his due: and if we thus loved him, all contrary affections would be excluded, all inferior affections subordinated. Admiring his excellency, desiring and delighting in him and his favour, being grateful for his loving-kindness, and zealous for his glory, with all the energy of our whole souls; it is evident that all our love to other objects would be for his sake; and according to his will; no creature could then rival him in our affections, or prevail with us to neglect his service; and, while we rendered him the tribute of adoring love and praise, we should possess unalloyed felicity in his favour. This is the reasonable state, in which things should be; thus it has always been with holy angels; thus it will be for ever with the redeemed in heaven; and all that deviates from it is SIN, and the effect of apostasy from God.—These reflections may prepare us for understanding the nature and extent of the prohibition, "Thou shalt have 'no other gods before me.'" Mankind in general, as reasonable creatures, though fallen, have required some object of worship, and some kind of religion; but, disliking the holy attributes and spiritual worship of the true God, they have been led to substitute deities and religious rites more congenial to themselves. Thus, (to the disgrace of

*any thing, that is in heaven above,  
or that is in the earth beneath, or*

*that is in the water under the  
earth:*

the human understanding,) the grossest idolatry has been almost universal; while a more refined and plausible kind of idolatry has often supplanted it, in the few places where something more rational has prevailed; and that proud ambitious Spirit, who is the enemy of God and man, has been gratified in the success of his presumptuous attempts to become, by these means, "the god of this world." This worship of creatures, whether actually existing, or only supposed to exist, is the principal violation of the commandment; as it ascribes to *them* the glory of those perfections which JEHOVAH incommunicably possesses, and seeks those blessings from them which he alone can confer. The immensely varied idolatries of the Gentiles, which the Israelites were constantly disposed to imitate, are always in Scripture spoken of with decided abhorrence, as flagrant transgressions of the letter of this command: and it is impossible for those professed Christians, who render religious worship to saints and angels, to shew that their practice is not so too, or to disprove the charge of ascribing the glory of the divine perfections to mere creatures.—All pretences to witchcraft likewise, or to magick, fortune-telling, charms, astrology, or enchantments, deeply partake of the same guilt; as in these ways men expect that information or assistance from other beings, which God alone can afford.—But this spiritual precept reaches much further. To love, desire, delight in, or expect good from, any forbidden indulgence, even in the smallest degree, is evidently a violation of it; and to suffer the most valuable and excellent creature to rival God in our affections, must be a proportionable contempt of him. By atheism and irreligion, men set up themselves as gods, aspire at independence, reject subordination, and refuse to render homage, worship, love, or praise, to any superior or benefactor; as if they had created themselves, and were sufficient for their own happiness! The proud man idolizes himself, offers incense to his own deity, and expects others to do the same; therefore "God resists him" as his rival. The ambitious pay homage to the opinions of men, and seek happiness in their applause, or in such distinctions as they can bestow. The revengeful usurp the throne of God, and invade the prerogative of him "to whom vengeance belongeth." The covetous man deifies his wealth; the sensualist, his vile appetites; and the rapacious lover, his mistress: he lives on her smiles, his heaven is placed in her favour, and her frown would make him the most miserable of creatures. Nay, the doating husband, and the fond parent, may deify the objects of their affections: for though they ought to love them tenderly; yet this affection, and the manner in which it is exercised, should be absolutely subordinated to the will and glory of God.

But no comment can equal the extent of this command. Whatever does not consist with the most perfect love, gratitude, reverence, submission, and devotedness to God, is a transgression of it; and it requires us to love the Lord and all his creatures, according to their real worthiness; not more nor less, except as finite beings cannot love infinite excellence in an adequate manner. Obedience to this precept would perfectly enthrone the

Lord in our judgment and affections: and the whole of our love being thus given to him, we should love all others for his sake, and according to the measure which he had enjoined: while the violation of it destroys this regular subordination, and gives the creature the throne in our heart. Well therefore may it stand foremost in the Decalogue; for our obedience in all other things depends upon it. Other transgressions injure the subject, and affront the Sovereign; but the violation of this law is high treason against the majesty of heaven, and is therefore called "an abomination." At the same time it is entirely destructive to the transgressor, who "forsakes the Fountain of living waters, to hew out broken cisterns which can hold no water." Its reasonableness and excellence, therefore, are equal to its strictness and spirituality; and without conformity to it in its fullest extent, the glory of God and the felicity of rational creatures cannot be secured.—The expression, "before me," implied, that Israel might be considered as immediately in the presence of God, who in an especial manner dwelt among them; that idolatry would daringly insult him to his face; and that it could not be kept so secret, but he would detect and punish it.

V. 4. The second commandment requires us to render to the LORD our God a worship and service, suited to his perfections, and honourable to his name. His incomprehensible nature cannot be represented by any similitude.—The most exquisite painting or sculpture can only give an *external* resemblance of a *man*: even animal life with its several functions cannot be thus exhibited, much less can a likeness be made of the soul and its operations. How dishonourable then must be every attempt to represent the infinite God, "by silver or gold, graven by art" and man's device!" The general disposition of mankind, to form images of the Deity, proves that low apprehensions of him are congenial to our fallen nature; and the practice has exceedingly increased the grossness of men's conceptions concerning him. The more stupid of the heathen alone worshipped the picture or image itself; others used it as a visible representation of the invisible *Numen*, or Deity: and all that ingenious papists have urged, in behalf of their images, is equally applicable to Israel's worship of the golden calves, or to that rendered by the Ephesians to "the image of Diana which fell down from Jupiter."—A material image of the Deity is likewise an affront to the Person of Christ, the only adequate "Image of the invisible God:" and the worship of saints and angels, as mediators and *present deities*, by images, in every respect robs him of his mediatorial glory.—The commandment does not prohibit the *making* of images and pictures, for other purposes, as some have ignorantly supposed: for God commanded several of these to be made even in the construction of the tabernacle: but the *making* of them, in order to men's bowing down before them, and worshipping them; and in this case, both the maker and the worshipper of the image are involved in the guilt. The prohibition includes every kind of creature, because all are utterly unfit to represent the infinite Creator: and there are some devices common among us, as emblematick

5 Thou shalt not <sup>a</sup> bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: <sup>b</sup> for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, <sup>c</sup> visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation <sup>d</sup> of them that hate me:

xviii. 24. Lev. xxi. 1. Josh. xxi. 7. 16. Judg. ii. 19. 2 Kings xvii. 35. 41. 2 Chr. xxxv. 14. Matt. iv. 8. xxi. 14. Deut. ix. 24. vi. 15. xxiii. 21. Josh. xxi. 19. Ps. lxxviii. 59. Prov. vi. 34, 35. Ez. viii. 3. Neh. i. 2. 1 Cor. x. 22. i xxxiv. 7. Lev. xx. 5. xxi. 29. 30, 40. Num. xiv. 18. 33. 1 Sam. xv. 2, 3. 2 Sam. xxi. 1. 6. 1 Kings xxi. 29. 2 Kings xxiii. 26. Job v. 4. xxi. 19. Ps. lxxix. 8. cix. 14. Is. xiv. 20, 21. Jer. ii. 9. xxxiii. 18. Matt. xxi. 34—36. j Deut. vii. 10. xxxii. 41. Ps. lxxxi. 15. Prov. viii. 36. John vii. 7. xv. 18. 23, 24. Rom. i. 30. vii. 7. Jam. iv. 4.

of the Trinity, which do not accord to the strictness of this injunction.—But the spiritual import of the commandment reaches much further. Superstition of every kind is an evident violation of its spirit and intent: and so are all human appointments in religious worship, when at all relied on as acceptable with God. The use of things indifferent in religion, without command from God, leads men's minds to gross conceptions of him; as if he delighted in that outward splendour, or those external forms, which excite in them lively but false affections, that are often mistaken for devotion: and it is commonly connected with a false dependence; it substitutes something else in the place of the appointments of God; and it tends to the usurpation of authority over men's consciences.—But, many *circumstances* of worship must be regulated by human discretion: every man therefore should judge for himself which regulations tend to these evils, and which do not; and be candid in judging such as differ from him.—Hypocrisy and formality, arising from unworthy apprehensions of God, together with all unscriptural delineations of the divine character, are certainly here prohibited: for men, forsaking the light of revelation, and “not liking to retain God in their knowledge,” frame notions of a deity according to their own opinions of excellence, warped by their predominant vicious inclinations; and then dignify this creature of their fancy with the title of the Supreme Being. But this object of their love and worship, is altogether unlike “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;” especially in respect of *justice* and *holiness*, being in general deemed so clement that he cannot hate or punish sin.—The Jews of old supposed they worshipped the God of their Fathers, yet they were declared by our Lord neither to have known nor loved him; nay, in “*hating* the Son, to have *hated* the Father that sent him:” and it will at last be proved in this case also, that the worshippers of these ideal deities were as real idolaters, as they who adored the work of their own hands. In short, the second commandment requires us to conceive of God, in all respects, as far as we are able, according to the revelation which he has made of himself to us: to realize his glorious presence to our minds, *by faith, not by fancy*: and to worship him as a Spirit “in spirit and truth;” not with corporeal representations of him before our eyes, or low conceptions of him in our minds; but sincerely, inwardly, with the most fervent affections, and profound reverence of his infinite majesty; in *all* his appointed ordinances, and in them alone; and with constancy and frequency, as performing a service reasonable in itself, and most pleasant to our own souls, as well as most honourable to his great name.

V. 5. God is so tenacious of his honour, in respect of idolatry, that the least approach to it, especially in the

6 And <sup>a</sup> shewing mercy unto thousands of them that <sup>b</sup> love me, and keep my commandments.

7 Thou shalt not <sup>c</sup> take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold him <sup>d</sup> guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

conduct of his professed worshippers, excites his hottest displeasure: even as the *jealous* husband is exasperated, and roused to seek vengeance, by whatever leads him to suspect his wife of adultery.—If then Israel, or any Israelites, should revolt to idolatry, they would be deemed “haters of God;” as the wife would be supposed to hate her husband, when she preferred any worthless stranger to him.—It is observable, that throughout the Scriptures, the words *fury*, *indignation*, *jealousy*, as ascribed to God, and *hatred*, *abomination*, *detestable things*, and other strong expressions of abhorrence, in respect of man's conduct, are principally used when idolatry is spoken of.—It is evident that children in general are sufferers by the crimes of their parents; but Israel was under a peculiar covenant, which idolatry violated in its primary condition. If then the parents forfeited the covenant-blessings, their posterity must suffer the effects of the forfeiture. As this was intended to restrain them from sin, by means of natural affection, the third and fourth generation only are mentioned; for they could not expect to see more of their descendants, and would be less concerned about their remote posterity: or it may imply, that the Lord being ready to forgive, the effects would cease after that period, unless the children persisted in the sins of their parents.—In every age, whatever brings any family into the visible church and under the means of grace, is a benefit to that family, and often to its remote posterity; and whatever excludes any from the church, is a heavy loss to them.

V. 6. The law, as given to sinners in subserviency to the covenant of grace, (as well as to Israel with reference to their national covenant,) makes mention of the *mercy* of God, though not properly belonging to its own nature; and this with an especial reference to his character; and in order to manifest how deserving he is of that love and service, which according to it he claims as his unalienable right.—This mercy is promised unto thousands; not only unto great multitudes, or to the third or fourth generations, but to successive generations to the end of time. The Lord's dealings with the posterity of Abraham, who believed his word, loved him, and kept his commandments, illustrates this promise.

V. 7. The worshippers of the Lord must have frequent occasion to mention his name; and sometimes it will be requisite for them to call him to witness the truth of their words, and to bind themselves by vows and engagements as in his sight. This third commandment therefore forbids us to “take the name of the LORD our God in vain;” that is, to use it irreverently, or profanely, or in fraud, dissimulation, and hypocrisy. It forbids all rash and unlawful vows, and such as relate to things uncertain or impracticable. But perjury of every kind is the capital transgression of it: for by this men appeal to the omnis-

o xvi. 23—30. xxxi.  
13, 14. Gen. ii.  
3. Lev. xix. 8.  
30. xxxiii. 3. xxvi.  
2. Deut. v. 12.  
13. Is. lvi. 4—6.  
lvii. 13. Ez. xx.  
12.  
p xxxiii. 12. Luke xiii. 14—16.

8 \* Remember the sabbath-day, to keep it holy.

9 \* Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work.

10 But 'the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it ' thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, ' thy man-ser-

q xxxi. 15. xxxiv.  
21. Lev. xxxiii. 3.  
xvi. 27. 28. xxxv.  
2. 3. Num. xx.  
32—36. Luke  
xxiii. 56.  
Lev. xxv. 6, 7.  
Deut. v. 14, 15.

cient, heart-searching God, for the truth of what they testify or assert, or for their sincerity in what they engage to do; when they do not know the truth of the one or even think that it is false, and are consciously insincere in the other. This is one of the most atrocious and provoking crimes imaginable, though common among us in this land to an inconceivable degree, so that it is little noticed unless accompanied with flagrant injustice! But, alas! it is very closely connected with other instances of disregard to this law, by the unnecessary multiplication of oaths in all judicial transactions and commercial regulations, even on the most frivolous occasions; and by being administered with extreme irreverence, instead of all the solemnity of a religious ordinance, which every thinking person must allow to be reasonable.—All appeals to God in common conversation, with such expressions, as 'the Lord knows,' when the matter attested is either not true, or not important, involves a measure of the same guilt.—All cursing and swearing is a most horrid violation of this commandment.—The use of the words, 'God, Lord, Christ,' or such like, without necessity, seriousness, and reverence; whether in *improper* religious discourse, or as expletives, in talking about other matters: every expression that takes the form of an adjuration or imprecation, though the name of God be not used: indeed, all that is more than "yea," "yea, nay nay," that is, every thing which, in common conversation, goes beyond a simple affirmation or denial; all jesting with the word of God or sacred things; all irreverence to whatever relates to him; and the use of his tremendous name, in religious worship, in a heedless or hypocritical manner:—all these, I say, are violations of the spirit of this law. It likewise implies a command to remember habitually the infinite majesty, purity, and excellency of God; and to behave towards him, in word and deed, with that awe and reverence of his perfections, which becomes such mean and worthless creatures, in his infinitely glorious presence.

To this law it is added, that JEHOVAH "will not hold" the transgressor guiltless." Men may not discover, or they may neglect to punish, this crime; and the sinner's conscience may scarcely trouble him about it: but let him know, that God will certainly detect and punish that atrocious affront, which is thus put upon him, often without even the plea of temptation, or expectation of profit or pleasure; unless men can find pleasure in disobeying and defying their Creator! But when it shall at last be said to the daring transgressor, "Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD?" his profane trifling will be turned into terror and despair.

V. 8—10. The form of the fourth commandment implies, that it had been previously known to the patriarchs and their descendants, though they were prone to forget it. (Note, Gen. ii. 3.)—The separation of a portion of our time, to the immediate service of God, is doubtless of *moral* obligation; for his glory, and our good, personal and social, temporal and eternal, are intimately connected with

it, and therefore it is inserted in the moral law: but the exact proportion, as well as the particular day, may be considered as of *positive* institution. Yet one day in seven seems to have been fixed upon, by infinite wisdom, as the most proper, in every age of the world; though the change of the dispensation, after the resurrection of Christ, has occasioned an alteration of the day, and an addition to the topicks which call for peculiar commemoration and contemplation, on this season of sacred rest.—It is plain that the words, "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work," were merely an *allowance*, and not an *injunction*; for the Lord forbid, by other precepts, all labour on some of these days: but they were assigned for the diligent performance of the business which relates to this present life, while the seventh was consecrated to the immediate service of the Lord. The concerns of our souls must indeed be attended to, and God worshipped, every day, that our business may be regulated in subserviency to his will; but on the other days of the week "we should do *all our work*," reserving none for the sabbath, except works of charity, piety, and necessity; for these alone consist with the holiness of that sacred day of rest, and are allowable, because "the sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath." All works, therefore, which arise from avarice, distrust, luxury, vanity, and self-indulgence, are entirely prohibited. Our affairs should be previously so arranged, that the sacred duties of the Lord's day may be interrupted as little as possible. Buying and selling, paying wages, settling accounts, writing letters of business, reading books on ordinary subjects, trifling visits, journeys, excursions, dissipation, or conversation which serves only for amusement, cannot consist with "keeping a day holy to the LORD:" and sloth is a *carnal*, not a *spiritual* rest. The sabbath should be a cessation from worldly labour, and a rest in the service of God. Serious self-examination; perusal of the Scriptures; private, social, and publick worship; instruction of children and servants; meditation and pious conversation, should occupy our time from morning till evening; except as these duties are suspended by attention to such things, as really conduce to our own good, or that of others. Servants and some others may, however, be under a *real necessity* of doing things which are not *necessary* in themselves: though good management might often greatly lessen the evil; and the pious servant will prefer a place of less emolument, where he can have more entire liberty of keeping holy the sabbath-day. Were our love to God and spiritual things as intense as it ought to be, we should deem a day thus spent our great delight; for heaven will be an eternal rest, not essentially differing from it. All our aversion from such strictness arises from "the carnal mind, which is enmity against God:" and the advantages which would accrue from thus hallowing the sabbath, to the morals, health, liberty, and happiness of mankind, are so many and so obvious, that they who doubt its obligation often allow its expediency.—But parents and masters are required, not only themselves to hallow the sabbath, and

11. 48. 49. xxi. 21. xxiii. 9—12. Gen. xvi. 12. 13. 23. Lev. xix. 33. 34. xxi. 25. Num. xv. 14—16. 26. 29. 30. Deut. xvi. 11. 12. xxiv. 14—22. Neh. x. 31. xii. 15—2.

11 For in "six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath-day, and \*hal-  
lowed it.

x Lev. xxii. 32. Jer. xvii. 20—27. Ez. xx. 20. xlv. 24. Matt. vi. 9. Luke xi. 2.

not to employ their children, servants, or slaves, in any needless work; but they should also with authority require them to keep holy the Lord's day, which is greatly intended for their benefit; and they are responsible to God for it, if those under their care violate this holy rest, by their command, or connivance, or negligence.—The cattle must also be allowed to rest from the hard labour of husbandry, journeys, and all employments connected with trade or pleasure; though doubtless we may employ them too in works of necessity, piety, and charity, and thus they may properly be used for the gentle service of conveying those to places of public worship, who could not otherwise attend, or perform the duties to which they are called. (Note, 2 Kings iv. 23.) Yet, alas! ostentation and self-indulgence so multiply violations of the Lord's day in this respect, that it is with hesitation that this observation is admitted; and the true Christian would wish to adhere to the letter of the prohibition in all cases, when it did not interfere with its intention.—The stranger likewise, though not of the same religion, was not only to be persuaded and encouraged to hallow the sabbath; but prohibited from externally violating its sacred rest, while he resided among the Israelites: for this was the law of their land, as well as of their religion. (Notes, xxxv. 2, 3. Num. xv. 32—36.) And, though the government of Israel differed from that of other people, yet there seems a great propriety in nations professing Christianity making it a part of their law likewise. But, alas! how often do such laws lose their energy, for want of being sanctioned by the example of the legislators themselves, and by that of those whose office it is to carry them into execution!

V. 11. The sabbath was originally instituted in remembrance of the completion of the work of creation, and in honour of the great Creator; the Israelites had additional reasons assigned them, why they should observe it; and Christians have some of a still more important nature: but all the perfections of the Lord, as displayed in creation, providence, redemption, or in any of his works of power and love to us or to his church, should be remembered and adored by us, on this solemn and joyful day.

This compendious exposition of the first table of the law suffices to prove its requirements to be very extensive, spiritual, reasonable, and beneficial; yet it must be owned to be entirely contrary to the disposition of our hearts, and diverse from the tenour of our lives. We all therefore need mercy, redemption, and a new creation to holiness, in order that we may please God and be made fit for heaven.—We now proceed to the second table.

V. 12. According to the principle, which has hitherto directed our interpretation, this commandment must be

12 \* Honour thy father and thy mother: \*that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

13 \*Thou shalt not kill.

20. xv. 5. xix. 26. xx. 20. xxiii. 22—25. xxviii. 24. xxx. 11. 17. Is. iii. 5. Jer. xxxv. 18, 19. Mal. i. 6. Matt. xv. 4—6. xix. 19. Mark vii. 10—12. xii. 17. Luke xviii. 20. Rom. xii. 7. Eph. v. 21. vi. 1—3. Col. iii. 20. 1 Tim. v. 1, 2. 4. 17. vi. 1, 2. Heb. xii. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 17. 2 Kings iv. 23. Jude 8. z Deut. iv. 26. 40. vi. 2. xvii. 20. xxv. 15. xxxii. 47. Prov. i. 1—7. v. 5, 6. Jude 8. z Deut. iv. 8—15. 28. ix. 5, 6. xviii. 41. 43. xlix. 6. ml. 16. a xxi. 14. 20. 29. xxii. 21. 31—34. Deut. v. 17. xix. 11—13. xxi. 1—9. 2 Sam. i. 1. 1 Kings ii. 4, 6. 2 Kings xxi. 16. 2 Chr. xxiv. 22. Ps. x. 8—11. Prov. i. 11. 19. xlviii. 17. Is. i. 15. xxvii. 21. Jer. xxvi. 15. Matt. v. 21, 22. John viii. 44. Acts xxviii. 4. Rom. xiii. 9. Gal. v. 21. 1 Tim. i. 9. Jam. ii. 11. 13. iv. 1, 2. 1 John iii. 12—15. Rev. xvi. 6. xvii. 6. xxi. 8. xxii. 15.

considered as the abstract of relative duties. All other relations spring from that of parents and children, or partake in a measure of its nature; and this most nearly resembles our relation to the great Creator.—Children are required to honour their parents; which implies, that it is the duty of parents to behave honourably, by diligently performing the several parts of their important charge, as entrusted with the care of their offspring, both in body and soul; and by a becoming deportment in all other respects. Yet children are not absolved from their duty by the misconduct of their parents, for which they must answer to God: and such a limitation, in this and other relative precepts, would absurdly constitute all the inferior relations, judges and lords over their superiors. Children, under God, derive their being from their parents: and they are generally taken care of by them, with much labour and expense and self-denial, during helpless infancy and inexperienced youth. It is therefore reasonable, that they should so long obey them unreservedly in all things lawful; and afterwards in all things which are not manifestly injurious to them, though they may be disagreeable. They ought to love their parents; to respect their characters, counsels, and instructions; to consult their interest, credit, and comfort; to conceal their infirmities; to bear with their tempers and humours, alleviate their sorrows, and rejoice their hearts as far as possible: and when they are grown old, or become in any way incapable of maintaining themselves, children are bound, if able, even to labour for their support, as their parents did for them when infants. In all these respects, both parents are equally included; and should alike be honoured and obeyed, and not in opposition to one another; which should teach the parents to set their children an example of impartiality, and to be harmonious in their conduct towards them.—By parity of reason, every one, who has acted a parent's part, is entitled to a correspondent respect and deference; and all the superior and inferior relations have their several reciprocal duties, which may be referred to this command, but will hereafter be considered. (Notes, Rom. xiii. 1—7. Eph. v. 21—33. vi. 1—9. Col. iii. 18—25. iv. 1. 1 Tim. vi. 1—5. 1 Pet. ii. 13—25. iii. 1—7.)—The annexed promise of long life to obedient children, might have a peculiar reference to the covenant of Israel; yet, careful observers of mankind have noted its remarkable fulfilment in other nations. Subordination, in the family and community, tends to personal and public felicity; and the dislike which the human heart bears to submission renders it proper to enforce it by motives of every kind.

V. 13. The sixth commandment requires us to "love our neighbour as ourselves," in respect of his person and

b Lev. xviii. 20. 14 <sup>b</sup>Thou shalt not commit adultery.  
 xix. 29. xx. 10.  
 Deut. xxii. 21—24. 2 Sam. xi. 4, 5, 27. xii. 9—11. Job xxxi. 1, 9, 10. Ps. l. 18. Prov. ii.  
 5—18. v. 15—20. vi. 24—26. vii. 18—27. Jer. v. 8, 9. vii. 9. xiii. 27. xxi. 14. xxix. 22.  
 23. Ez. xviii. 6, 11, 15. xxii. 9—11. Mal. iii. 5. Matt. v. 27, 28. xix. 8. Mark x. 11, 12.  
 John viii. 9—11. Rom. i. 24—29. vii. 2, 3. 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. vii. 4. Gal. v. 19, 20. Eph.  
 v. 3—5. 1 Thes. iv. 4—7. Heb. xiii. 4. Jam. iv. 4. 2 Pet. ii. 14, 18. Rev. ii. 20—22.  
 xvii. 1—5. xxi. 8. xxii. 15

15 <sup>c</sup>Thou shalt not steal.

c xxi. 16. xxi. 1—  
 5. 7—13. Lev.  
 vi. 1—7. xix. 11, 13, 35—37. Deut. v. 19. xix. 14. xxii. 24, 25. xxiv. 7. xxv. 13—16. Job  
 xx. 19—22. Ps. l. 18. Prov. i. 13—15. vi. 30, 31. xi. 1. xx. 10. Jer. v. 26—29. vii. 8—11.  
 Amos iii. 10. v. 11, 12. vii. 4—6. Mic. vi. 10, 11. vii. 3. Zech. v. 3, 4. Mal. iii. 6. Matt.  
 xv. 19. xix. 18. xxi. 13. xxiii. 14. Mark x. 19. Luke iii. 13, 14. xviii. 20. xix. 8. John xii.  
 6. Rom. xiii. 9. 1 Cor. vi. 10. Eph. iv. 28. 1 Thes. iv. 6. 1 Tim. i. 10. Jam. v. 4.

life.—Magistrates, as “God’s ministers in executing vengeance,” are in some cases *commanded* to put men to death; and in others it may be *allowable*, because conducive to the publick good.—Witnesses or executioners may also concur in such capital punishments without the guilt of murder. We may doubtless take away another’s life in defence of our own: for he who assaults another’s life, by that action forfeits his own; and there is no opportunity of referring the cause to the civil magistrate. Perhaps, in peculiar circumstances, the same may be allowable in defence of our property; especially when violence is menaced.—Some wars are necessary and unavoidable to one party, because of the injurious conduct of the other; and the blood shed in them is not imputed as murder to those who shed it: yet the guilt of it must rest somewhere; and few wars indeed are so entered upon and conducted, as to leave any of the contending parties free from blood-guiltiness.—A man may by misfortune kill another: yet God condemns, as *wilful murder*, many of those actions by which life is taken away, but which are called by our law *manslaughter*. Furious passions, excited by sudden provocation or drunkenness, is no where in Scripture excepted from the general rule, “He who sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed.” The duellist is a proud and revengeful murderer of the most atrocious kind; and, in general, he is distinguished from all other criminals, by an habitual determination to commit the sin, whenever he shall be tempted to it.—All fighting for wagers, or prizes, or renown, violates this command; and the blood thus shed is *murder*.—Whatever, by force or stratagem, deprives another of his life, is prohibited. All the slaughter committed by oppressions, persecutions, or attempts to deprive of liberty, or confine in slavery, our unoffending fellow-creatures, on any pretence whatever, is wilful, cruel murder. What then shall we think of the accursed slave-trade, and how thankful should we be, that it is at length abolished!—Even laws, needlessly sanguinary, involve the persons concerned in this enormous guilt: and they, who ought to punish the murderer, and yet suffer him to escape, will be numbered among the abettors of his crime at the tribunal of God. But capital punishments are denounced, in this land, in so very many instances, that they counteract their own intention; and yet are executed in such numerous instances, and for offences so different in the degree of criminality, as almost to obliterate in the minds of numbers the disparity of crimes, and to lessen exceedingly the horror of committing murder: and impartial judges must allow, that our criminal code is in this respect both unscriptural, impolitical, and unreasonably severe.

This commandment likewise prohibits us to assault, maim, or wound others, or to assist those who do; to tempt men to crimes that destroy their constitutions, or endanger their lives, either from the sword of justice, or the resentment of the injured party; nay, to entice them, by the prospect of a large reward, to such enterprises and labours, as are known generally to shorten life. Many parents and wives are murdered by the gross

misconduct of their children and husbands; and numbers will be found guilty of transgressing this commandment, by covetously or maliciously wishing the death of others. The spiritual import of it prohibits all envy, revenge, hatred, or causeless anger; all that insulting language, which provokes to wrath and murder; and all the pride, ambition, and covetousness, which prompt to it. Nay, that man will be condemned as the hater and murderer of his brother, who, seeing his life endangered by the want of food, raiment, or medicine, and having ability to relieve him, selfishly neglects to do it. (Notes, 1 John iii. 13—17.)—But the murder of the soul is still more heinous. This is committed by seducing men to sin; by a bad example; by disseminating poisonous principles; by terrifying others from religion by persecution, or by reviling or ridiculing such as attend to it; by withholding instructions, needful warning, and counsels, especially such as are due from parents to their children, or ministers to their people: and it is tremendous to think, what numbers will be thus condemned as the murderers of the souls of men.—The heinousness of *suicide* likewise should be especially marked. It is in reality the most malignant of all murders; and, as scarcely ever repented of, it combines the guilt of murdering both soul and body at once. We were not the authors, and are not the lords, of our own lives: nor may we leave our assigned post, or rush without a summons into the presence of our Judge, any more than we may execute vengeance on our neighbour, or send him to the tribunal of God. Self-murder may be easily shewn to be a complication of ingratitude, contempt of the Lord’s gift of life, impatience, pride, rebellion, and infidelity: nor is it generally the effect of *insanity*, (as verdicts, in which perjury is deliberately committed from false tenderness, would lead us to suppose;) except as all are in some sense *insane*, who are hurried on by fierce passions and Satan’s temptations. That original murderer knows this present life to be the only season, in which salvation can be obtained: and therefore he tempts men to such excesses, as destroy the constitution, or render life miserable; and he urges them on to suicide, that he may destroy both body and soul by *their hands*, not being permitted to do it by his own power. Extravagance, discontent, and despondency should therefore be most carefully shunned; and gratitude, patience, and hope most diligently cultivated.—In a word, this command requires enlarged benevolence, kindness, long-suffering, and forgiveness; and a disposition to seek, in all respects, the welfare of every human being.

V. 14. The seventh commandment regulates our love to our neighbours, in respect of their *purity, and domestick comfort*; and requires the proper government of those inclinations, which God hath implanted in order to the increase of the human species.—The marriage of one man with one woman was the original institution of the Creator; and not merely a *civil contract*, as some state it to be: one man and one woman “became one flesh” in this respect, as if they formed one body, actuated by one soul; in order to promote and share one another’s satisfactions, and with

d xxxiii. 6, 7. Lev. xix. 11, 16. Deut. v. 20, xix. 15—21. 1 Sam. xxi. 8—19. 1 Kings xxi. 10—13. Pa. xv. 3. 1. 20. in. 2—4. ci. 5—7. Prov. x. 18. xi. 13. xxviii. 8. xix. 5, 9. xx. 19. xxx. 23. xxxvi. 20—22. Is. lxx. 3, 4. Jer. ix. 4. Ez. xxii. 9. Matt. xxv. 59, 60. Acts vi. 13. Rom. i. 30. 1 Cor. vi. 10. Eph. iv. 31. 1 Tim. i. 10. in. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 3. Tit. ii. 3. Jam. iv. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 1. 2 Pet. ii. 10, 11. Rev. xii. 10. xxxii. 15.

16 \*Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

united attention to educate their common offspring. (Note, *Mal. ii. 13—16.*) The entrance of sin and death made way for the dissolution of this union, a variety of evils began to embitter the relation, and abuses were soon introduced. Some things were under the preceding dispensations connived at, which did not accord to the original institution; but Christ refers his disciples to *that* standard of honourable marriage, as far as the change of circumstances can admit of it.—The force acquired by men's passions, in consequence of sin, renders the "prevention of fornication" one express end of marriage; mutual forbearance and reciprocal compliances are now needful and incumbent; the sorrows of the female sex, as well as the afflictions of life, require peculiar sympathy, to alleviate the anguish of the suffering party; and the separating stroke of death leaves the survivor free to take another companion. We as Christians therefore must not explain adultery, as prohibited in this commandment, according to the *judicial* law of Moses, which will afterwards come under consideration; (*Lev. xx. 10. Deut. xxii. 22;*) but, by the decisions of Christ, with which polygamy and divorces (except for unfaithfulness) are utterly incompatible. It is evident, that marriage, recognized in some appointed way, to distinguish it from illicit connexions, gives each party such a property in the other's person and affections, that every violation of conjugal fidelity, on either side, is *adultery*, according to the New Testament; and is far more deserving of death, (if we estimate crimes by their mischievous effects,) than many offences which are capitally punished. (Notes, *Matt. xix. 3—9. Mark x. 2—12. 1 Cor. vii. 1—5.*) On either side, it is a violation of this spiritual commandment; it militates against the ends and intentions of marriage; is inconsistent with that union of hearts and interests which it implies; is a breach of the marriage-compact; mars domestic peace; prevents the harmonious agreement in training up children; and forms an alienation of that property, which both husband and wife have in the persons and affections of the other, and which is scarcely ever lost without the bitterest anguish and keenest resentment. Adultery on the woman's side is indeed *more generally* chargeable with the injustice of introducing a spurious offspring to inherit the husband's property: but, *his* infidelity is not seldom productive of a similar effect, when the husband has the disposal of that, which was the property of the wife. And though jealousy is especially "the rage of man," and produces the most fatal effects; yet sometimes female passions overpower female timidity, and dreadful consequences ensue on that side also. So that, in the impartial judgment even of reason, the difference of the injury and of its effects in the two cases is not very great.—All other commerce between the sexes is prohibited by the spirit of this law; from the lowest scenes of prostitution, to the temporary connexions, that are formed and dissolved at pleasure. The difference between the *tempters* and the *tempted*, and other circumstances, vary the degree of guilt contracted; for the seducer's character is diabolical: but fornication is found in almost every black cata-

17 \*Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy

logue in the Scripture; and, however men may be deceived by vain words, its dire effects on the human species prove the *goodness* of God, as well as his *justice*, in thus strictly forbidding it, and threatening those who violate the prohibition, with his severest indignation.—Under the word *lasciviousness*, various transgressions are denoted, which cannot be mentioned without offence: and every thing, which does not comport with the design of marriage, though sanctioned by that name, violates the spiritual meaning of the prohibition.—All impure discourse, imaginations, or desires, are likewise condemned by this law. "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."—Writing, publishing, vending, circulating, or reading, obscene books; exposing to view indecent pictures or statues, or whatever else may excite men's passions, must partake of the same guilt: and wit, elegance, and ingenuity only increase the mischief, wherever the specious poison is administered.—All the arts of dress, motion, or demeanour, which form temptations to heedless youth; with all those blandishments, insinuations, amorous looks and words, which subserve seduction, and make way for criminal indulgence, fall under the same censure.—In short the commandment requires the utmost purity, both of body and soul, in secret as well as before men; with a holy indifference to animal indulgences, and the strictest government of all the appetites, senses, and passions. And it enjoins the desire and endeavour of preserving the same disposition and behaviour in all others also, as far as we have it in our power.

V. 15. This commandment is the law of love in respect of *property*. The productions of the earth are obtained and prepared for use by labour: this gives property, which justly descends to the owner's posterity or heirs. From this and similar causes, combining their effects for ages, the difference in men's worldly circumstances originates. That portion which we honestly obtain, is "the bread that God hath given us;" and with this we should be satisfied. But men's passions crave more; and sloth refuses to labour: hence force and fraud are employed to get possession of the property of others, without their free consent fairly obtained. It is not necessary to enumerate those violations, of which human laws take cognizance; but men may, in various ways, break the divine law, and yet escape present punishment. Fraudulent bargains, which impose on the ignorant, credulous, or necessitous; abuse of confidence; extortion; exorbitant gain; deceitful combinations to enhance the price of goods or labour, or to lower the wages of the poor; will be all condemned at the tribunal of God as violations of this command, though perhaps hardly censured in human society.—The overgrown ravager of nations and provinces, who smiles defiance at human justice, will be adjudged a principal robber, without any other distinction. *Defrauding the publick* constitutes a most atrocious transgression of this law; whether it be done by oppressive rulers, who burden the people with merciless exactions; or by those who embezzle the

12 Sam. xi. 2-4. neighbour's 'wife, nor his man-servant,  
 Job xxxi. 1. 9. nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor  
 Prov. iv. 23. vi. 24, 25. Jer. v. 8. Matt. v. 28. Jam. i. 14, 15. 2 Pet. ii. 14.

his ass, nor any thing that 'is thy g Matt. xx. 15  
 neighbour's. Acts v. 4  
 2 Thes. iii. 12.

treasures committed to their stewardship; or by smuggling, and in various ways evading the payment of taxes. Contracting debts to support vanity and luxury, or in pursuit of some scheme of aggrandizement, or for any thing not absolutely necessary, without a fair prospect of paying; taking advantage of humane laws, to evade payment, when the insolvents are again able to do it; all extravagance, beyond the sober allowance of a man's income; and slothfulness, or unnecessary subsistence upon charity, are violations of it in different ways. Nay, for men to withhold from real objects of compassion proper relief; or to squeeze the poor so low in their wages, as hardly to allow them a subsistence, in order that their employers may live in affluence and enrich their families, is absolutely inconsistent with its evident demands.—In short, the spirit of it prohibits inordinate love of the world, covetousness, luxury, and the pride of life; and requires industry, frugality, sobriety, submission to Providence, and a disposition "to do to all others," in respect of worldly property, as we "would they should do unto us."

V. 16. The ninth commandment is the law of love, as it respects our neighbour's *reputation*; though, in the connexion of human affairs, the violation of it may likewise affect his property or life; and bearing false witness, in a court of justice in this land, may be perjury, robbery, and murder, as well as calumny. In such important concerns, we should attest nothing of which we have not the fullest assurance; and all human passions should be watched over, that our evidence may not be warped by any of them. We should be exact to a word in reporting what we know, and in speaking the truth, and no more than the truth; while equal caution is required in juries, and in the judge who decides the cause.—The malicious invention and circulation of slanderous reports, to the injury of a man's character, is a very heinous violation of this commandment. To do this in sport is an imitation of "the madman, who throws about firebrands, arrows, and death," for his diversion. To spread stories which others have framed to the discredit of our neighbour, when we suspect them to be false or aggravated; or even if we suppose or know them to be true, when there is no real occasion for it, (such as the detection of a mischievous hypocrite, or designing villain,) is prohibited by this law: for this practice results from pride, self-preference, malevolence, or affectation of wit and humour.—Severe censures, bitter sarcasm, ridicule, harsh judgments, ascribing good actions to bad motives, inuendos, misrepresentations, collecting and circulating in any way family-anecdotes, or anecdotes of persons in high life or conspicuous station, unfavourable to the reputation of those concerned, or exposing them and their connexions to ridicule, and various other practices of the same nature, can never consist with it.—This commandment is very frequently violated by authors: a lie or a slander is far worse when printed, than when only spoken; and religious controversy is too generally disgraced by the most abominable calumnies: for bigots, of all parties, agree in mis-stating the actions, misquoting the writings, and misreporting the words, of their opponents.—All lies are a violation of this law. They are in every

possible case an abuse of speech, and of our neighbour's confidence, and a derogation from the value of truth; and almost always hurtful to mankind.—Even injurious thoughts, groundless suspicions, and secret prejudices, or envy of the praises and commendations which others receive, do not consist with the spirit of this precept. For it requires sincerity, truth, fidelity, candour, and caution, in all our conversation and conduct; and a disposition to honour in every man what is honourable, to commend what is commendable, to vindicate and excuse what can be vindicated and excused, and to conceal what may lawfully be concealed; and in every respect to consult his reputation, and even to rejoice in his credit and renown, as we should were it our own, and as we might reasonably desire he also should. In our own case, we all feel the excellency and reasonableness of the precept, in its strictest sense; we value and are tender of our reputation; and expect, nay demand, to be treated with candour, respect, and sincerity; and we are greatly pained and affronted when we are imposed upon, or held forth to scorn, ridicule, and censure, by the tongues or pens of others. But, through the exorbitancy of self-love, and want of love to others, we are prone, in an amazing degree, to violate the rules which we should impose on our neighbours, in our own conduct towards them, and that without much remorse, or sense of guilt. Nor can words express how heinously this reasonable commandment is every day transgressed, in almost every company, and among persons of all characters!

V. 17. This concluding commandment forbids us to covet any thing that is our neighbour's. This restriction is placed as the fence of all the rest. The apostle's reference to it, (*Note, Rom. vii. 7, 8*), shews that it comprises the utmost spirituality of the law; and it is a perpetual confutation of all those systems, by which the outward, gross crime is considered as the only violation of each command.—We are here expressly, and in the most forcible language, prohibited so much as to desire what is withheld from us by the command or providence of God; and, so far from wanting to level property, or seize violently on our neighbour's possessions, we may not so much as at all hanker after them.—The most secret wish for another man's wife violates this precept; but, to desire an union by marriage with an unmarried woman, becomes sinful only when it is excessive, and when it is not submitted to the will of God, if he render it impracticable. We may desire that part of a man's property, which he is inclined to dispose of, if we mean to obtain it only on equitable terms; but what he chooses to keep we may not covet. The poor man may desire moderate relief from the rich; but he must not covet his affluence, or repine even if he do not relieve him. Men exposed to equal hazards, may agree to a proportionable contribution to him who suffers loss; for it accords with the law of love to help the distressed. This exculpates insurance when fairly conducted. But every species of gaming originates from an undue desire and hope of increasing our property, by proportionably impoverishing other men; and is therefore a direct violation of this law.—Publick gaming by LOTTERIES, so far from being less criminal than other species of that vice, is the

18 ¶ And <sup>a</sup>all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw <sup>b</sup>it, <sup>c</sup>they removed and stood afar off.

19 And they said unto Moses, <sup>d</sup>Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

worst of them all: for it abets and sanctions, as far as example and concurrence by statute can do it, a practice, which opens the door to every species of fraud and villainy; which is pregnant with the most extensive evils to the community and to individuals; which seldom fails annually to bring several to an untimely end, by suicide or the sentence of the law; which unsettles an immense multitude from the honest employments of their station, to run in quest of imaginary wealth; and which exposes them to manifold temptations, unfits them for returning to their usual mode of life, and often materially injures their circumstances, breaks their spirits, sours their tempers, and excites the worst passions of which they are susceptible. Indeed, the evils, political, moral, and religious, of *lotteries*, are too glaring to be denied, even by those who plead *necessity* for continuing them; and too numerous to be recapitulated in this place. Can it therefore consist with the law of God, "Thou shalt not covet," or with the character of a Christian, to concur in so iniquitous and injurious a system, from a vain desire of irregular gain? Whatever argument proves it unlawful for two or three men to cast lots for a sum of money, or to game in any other way, is much more strongly conclusive against a million of persons gaming publicly by a lottery, to the stagnation in great measure of every other business: while the gain made by government, and by individuals, from the stakes deposited with them, renders it as imprudent as it is sinful in the adventurers; for every individual stakes at least *three to two on an even chance*, if a covetous appeal to Providence may be called chance. (Note, *Prov.* xvi. 33.)—Even *Tontines* are by no means to be justified; as they constitute a kind of complicated wager about longevity, to be decided by Providence in favour of the survivors; and must therefore partake of the nature of other games of chance. Coveting the property of our neighbours contrary to the law of love, and enriching the survivors, commonly at the expense of the relatives of the deceased, are intimately connected with them: while they lead men into strong temptation secretly to wish the death of others, for the sake of advantages which they inordinately desire, and irregularly pursue.—In fine, discontent, distrust, love of wealth, pleasure, and grandeur, desire of change, the habit of wishing, and every inordinate affection, are the evils here prohibited; and we know them to be the sources of all other crimes, and of man's misery. The command requires moderation in respect of all worldly things, submission to God, acquiescence in his will, love to his commands, and a reliance on him for the *daily* supply of all our wants, as he sees good. This is right and reasonable, fit for God to command, and profitable for man to obey;—the very temper and felicity of heaven itself: but it is so

20 And Moses said unto the people, <sup>e</sup>Fear not: for God is come to <sup>f</sup>prove you, and that <sup>g</sup>his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.

21 And <sup>h</sup>the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the <sup>i</sup>thick darkness where God was.

22 And the LORD said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children

contrary to the disposition of our heart *by nature*, and so superior to the actual attainment of the best Christians on earth, that it is very difficult to persuade men in general, that God requires such perfection; still more difficult to satisfy them, that it is indispensable to the happiness of rational creatures; and most difficult of all to convince them, that every thing inconsistent with this, or short of it, is *sin*; that it deserves the wrath of God, and cannot be taken away, except by the mercy of God, through the atonement of Christ.—We cannot close this brief explication of the divine law, (in which we find nothing redundant, nothing defective, nothing injurious, but all things "holy, and just, and good,") more properly, than by the words of our church-service, "Lord, have mercy upon us," (forgive all our past transgressions,) "and write all these 'thy laws in our hearts, we beseech thee.'"

V. 18—20. The thunderings and lightnings continued during the whole of this awful solemnity; and we may suppose, that as soon as the Lord had ceased to speak, the trumpet again sounded loudly, as before. The people therefore, witnessing such a continuance or succession of tremendous scenes, removed in trepidation to a greater distance; and requested that Moses would, from that time, deliver the commands and will of God to them, promising to be attentive and obedient.—"They could not endure 'the things which were spoken,' any more than the tremendous manner in which they were delivered: and though their request to Moses was rather the language of terror than of judgment; yet it implied that they needed a Mediator, and could not stand before God without one. Moses however encouraged them, not to fear immediate death, which they seem to have expected: for these solemn displays were not intended for their destruction; but to prove them, whether they would be obedient or not, and to impress them with reverential fear of the authority and majesty of JEHOVAH, that they might be restrained from sinning against him.—The distinction between servile fear, and the dread of immediate vengeance, on this particular occasion, and the salutary fear of God, which habitually influences the conduct, is very observable in this passage.

V. 21—25. At this time Moses directed the people to return to their tents, while he approached nearer to that thick darkness, from which the Lord had especially manifested his presence, and had spoken the ten commandments. There he received the following directions, enforcing what had been delivered, especially the commandments prohibiting idolatry of every kind, as being the most essential of all: particularly stating, that the precious materials, of which images might be made, would not diminish the guilt of the maker or worshipper.—It must be supposed

<sup>6</sup> Deut. iv. 38. of Israel, Ye have seen that 'I have  
<sup>7</sup> Neh. ix. 13. Heb. talked with you from heaven.

<sup>8</sup> 3-S. See on 23 Ye 'shall not make with me gods  
<sup>9</sup> xxxii. 1-4— of silver, neither shall ye make unto  
<sup>10</sup> 1 Sam. v. 4, 5. you gods of gold.  
<sup>11</sup> 2 Kings xvi. 33.  
<sup>12</sup> 41. Ez. xx. 39.  
<sup>13</sup> xliii. 8. Dan v.  
<sup>14</sup> 4. 23. Zeph. i. 5.  
<sup>15</sup> 1 Cor. x. 21, 22.  
<sup>16</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 14—  
<sup>17</sup> 16. Col. ii. 18, 19.  
<sup>18</sup> 1 John v. 20, 21.  
<sup>19</sup> Rev. xii. 15.

<sup>20</sup> 24 An 'altar of earth thou shalt  
<sup>21</sup> John iv. 24. make unto me, and shalt sacrifice  
<sup>22</sup> u Lev. i. iii. thereon thy 'burnt-offerings, and thy  
<sup>23</sup> Deut. xii. 5, 11. peace-offerings, thy sheep and thine  
<sup>24</sup> 21. xvi. 5, 6. xxvi. oxen: 'in all places where I record  
<sup>25</sup> 2. 1 Kings viii. 29, 43. ix. 3.  
<sup>26</sup> 2 Chr. vi. 6 vii. 16. xii. 18. Ezra vi. 12.  
<sup>27</sup> Neh. i. 9. Ps. lxxiv. 7. lxxvi. 2. lxxviii. 68.  
<sup>28</sup> cxxxii. 13, 14. Jer. vii. 10-12. Mal. i. 11.  
<sup>29</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 8. Matt. xviii. 20. xxviii. 20. John iv. 20-23.

they would now bring sacrifices, as an act of worship, which had been in use from the beginning: and in sacrificing, either burnt-offerings to be wholly consumed, or peace-offerings on part of which they were allowed to feast, they must make no other altar than one of sods or rough stone. In due time another altar would be formed, according to special directions about to be given: in the mean while, they must remember that God principally looked to the heart and intention of the offerer, and to that Saviour whom the sacrifices typified. But he would afterwards record his name, or fix places where he would display his glory, and accept their worship; and there he would meet and bless them.—The rules prescribed about the altar might refer to some usages of the Gentiles, or in several ways be intended to exclude superstition: and they seem to have been of permanent obligation, as to occasional altars, raised on any emergency at a distance from the places where the Lord recorded his name; of which we shall hereafter meet with several instances.

V. 26. The Heathen worship was frequently attended by shameful indecencies, from which the Lord would keep his people at the utmost distance; and, as they wore loose garments, this precaution was very proper.—It is supposed, that the ascent to the altar at the tabernacle, and even at the temple, was by a gentle slope.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—17.

Though we neither hear the thunders, nor see the lightnings, nor witness the awful circumstances, with which the holy law was given; and though we are not appalled by the voice of God himself, speaking to us from the top of blazing Sinai: yet, if we attend to the things then spoken, we shall perceive, that we have as much occasion to tremble, as the Israelites had, when they stood at the foot of the mountain. This law, which is so extensive that we cannot measure it, so spiritual that we cannot evade it, and so reasonable that we cannot find fault with it, will be the rule of the future judgment of God, as it is of the present conduct of man. Nor would it consist with the glory of the Lord's perfections, the honour of his government, the interests of his universal and everlasting kingdom, or even with the felicity of his rational creatures, to reverse, repeal, or relax one precept of it; for it is all perfectly "holy, just, and good."—Comparing the state of the world with its spiritual requirements, we see most evidently that man is a fallen creature; for his character, disposition, and conduct, so far from being perfectly con-

my name, I will come unto thee, and I will 'bless thee.

25 And 'if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not 'build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.

26 Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine altar, that 'thy nakedness be not discovered there-on.

y Gen. xii. 2.  
 Num. vi. 24—  
 27. Deut. vii. 13.  
 2 Sam. vi. 12.  
 Ps. cxxviii. 3.  
 cxxxiv. 8.  
 z Deut. xxvii. 5.  
 6. Josh. viii. 31.  
 \* Heb. build them  
 with hewing.

a Lev. x. 3. Ps.  
 lxxxix. 7. Ec. v.  
 1. Heb. xii. 28.  
 29. 1 Pet. i. 16.

formable to this holy law, are quite contrary to it: "The carnal mind" of man "is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be." Examined by this rule, our own past lives appear a continued series of transgressions; our best actions, defective in their principle, end, and measure, and defiled with sin; and our judgment, will, and affections, the reverse of what they ought to be: so that, while we behold ourselves in this mirror, we cannot but use the language of the prophet, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." And we may learn to what imminent danger of hopeless misery, every one is exposed, from the words of the apostle, or of the Lord by Moses, "Cursed is every one, that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law to do them:" (Note, Deut. xxvii. 26 :) especially, as our Lord assures us that, at the solemn day of judgment, he will thus address those on his left hand, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels;" and that "these shall go away into everlasting punishment."—Yet, if we impartially consider the excellency of every commandment, we shall gradually be constrained to approve of the whole; to allow the evil of transgression; and, in some degree, to perceive the equity of that "wrath of God, which is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." For if transgression of human laws, in any case, justly merits the death of the body, the utmost punishment which man can inflict; transgression of God's law, (considering who he is, and what are our obligations to him,) may surely be allowed justly to merit the utmost effect of his power, "who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell." Thus the law, when applied by the convincing Spirit of God, shews men their lost estate, their guilt, danger, and misery; and effectually demonstrates to their consciences, that their own righteousness cannot justify them, their own arm cannot save them. Under these convictions, who can despise the gospel of Jesus Christ? Pardon of sin, justification by faith, access unto God upon a mercy-seat, the renewal of our souls to holiness, and eternal life as the free gift of a gracious God, can appear superfluous or despicable, only to him, who knows not the extent, spirituality, or excellency of the divine law; or who has never carefully examined his heart and life according to it, with the day of judgment placed before his eyes.—In the person, undertaking, obedience, and death of Christ, this law was magnified and made honourable, and the justice of God satisfied; so that his hatred of sin now harmonizes with his

## CHAP. XXI.

Laws concerning the release or detention of Hebrew slaves, 1—6; the treatment of female slaves, 7—11; murder, manslaughter, smiting or cursing parents, man-stealing, maiming any person, killing or wound-

ing a slave, hurting women with child, and other injuries, 12—27; mischiefs by cattle, and by pits, 28—36.

Now these *are* <sup>a</sup> the judgments <sup>b</sup> which thou shalt set before them.

b xix. 7. xxiv. 3, 4. Deut. iv. 5. 8. 14. 45. vi. 20. Matt. xxviii. 20. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2.

love to sinners. Here he “gives the knowledge of salvation to his people by the remission of their sins;” for “Christ hath redeemed them from the curse of the law, “being made a curse for them.”—If we view the character of Christ, in human nature, in the midst of temptations and sufferings, even unto the death upon the cross; we shall learn that he was perfectly obedient to this law in its fullest extent: and on this obedience his divine nature stamped infinite value. This, O self-condemned sinner, is the provision God hath made for thy justification! This righteousness, being commensurate with the largest demands of the divine law, is “the righteousness of God, which is unto “all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference:” and, through the atoning blood of Christ, and his intercession, we have open access to a reconciled God and Father, notwithstanding our guilt and unworthiness.—But can it be imagined, if the law is so holy and excellent, and such honour has been put upon it, by the obedience and sufferings of the incarnate Son of God, that any redeemed sinner should be allowed to disobey it? It is absurdity, impossibility, blasphemy! The knowledge of the law shows our need of repentance; the knowledge of Christ crucified is inseparably connected with repentance. In every believer’s heart sin is dethroned and crucified, the law is written, and the image of God is renewed; Christ is “made sanctification” to him: the Holy Spirit disposes, inclines, and enables him to hate and flee from sin; to love, delight in, and keep this law in sincerity and truth; and to copy daily the example of him who perfectly fulfilled it. Nor will the believer ever cease to exercise repentance, or to follow after holiness, till he becomes “holy, as he who hath called him is holy.” May this be indeed our religion: and while “we count all things but loss for the “excellency of the knowledge of Christ,” that “we may “be found in him,” and “made the righteousness of God “in him;” may his holy precepts be “our delight and our “counsellors,” and may we be careful to “adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things!”

V. 18—26.

The language of men, under terror of conscience, or in the prospect of immediate death, is often entirely opposite to their habitual conduct and character at other times; and therefore very little to be depended on.—When thus alarmed, they frequently apply with respect and earnestness to the ministers, whom they before treated with neglect, or loaded with reproaches! And they make many promises and resolutions, how attentive and obedient they will be, if spared at that time; which they soon after violate without scruple. Not that they are always, or generally, *insincere* in these protestations: but they speak the language of their terrors, which form the predominant passion at the time; but which soon subside, and leave the heart under the influence of other passions, which habitually enslave them to sin.—Indeed, all convictions, which leave the heart

unrenewed, and consequently alienated from God, tend eventually to drive men from him; and often terminate in a wilful and studied forgetfulness of all those subjects which have excited them: so that dissipation, excess, open impiety, and even infidelity, are not seldom the refuges, to which convinced sinners flee, to escape the reproaches of a guilty conscience. On the other hand, a presumptuous confidence in the mercy of God quiets the fears of numbers, though they continue strangers to “repentance, and works “meet for repentance.”—The ministers of Christ, however, must use all proper methods of warning men against these delusions; and they should endeavour to abate the terrors of awakened sinners, when verging to despondency, by shewing them the purposes of God in giving the law, in revealing his wrath from heaven against transgressors, and in alarming their consciences; and by holding forth the invitations and encouragements of the gospel. Thus they may expect that, in many instances, these terrors will make way for that holy, habitual fear of God, which, united with faith, and hope, and grateful love, will preserve them from sinning against him. It is in this manner, that our God “seeks men to worship him in “spirit and truth,” and forms “a holy priesthood, to offer up “spiritual sacrifices,” unto their reconciled God, “through “Jesus Christ;” such as attend wherever he records his name, to give him praise and honour, while “he comes “unto them and blesses them.” (Note, Matt. xviii. 19, 20.)—But we must remember, that all uncommanded endeavours to decorate and embellish divine ordinances, by ingenuity, magnificence, or human devices of any kind, tend to superstition, false affections, and low thoughts of God; and so in fact pollute what they were intended to improve. “For the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for “man looketh at the outward appearance, but the LORD “looketh at the heart.” Yet purity of heart will shew itself in purity of manners; and while simplicity is most suited to our spiritual worship, surely we should carefully avoid every thing in the least inconsistent with the rule laid down by the apostle, “Let all things be done decently and “in order.”

## NOTES

CHAP. XXI. V. 1. *Judgments.*] (*Marg. Ref.*) This word here evidently, and by general allowance, means *judicial laws*, or rules of judgment, by which the magistrates and judges of Israel should proceed, in determining causes and trying criminals. And, making some allowance for the circumstances, varying in different ages and nations, there is a spirit of equity in these laws, which is well worthy of being transfused into those of any state.—This chapter, and the two following, continue the narrative of what the Lord spake to Moses, when “he drew near to “the thick darkness,” after the people had removed from the mount. The whole of the judicial, or *political*, law of Israel, except some injunctions about the Sabbath, was

<sup>c</sup> xli 44. <sup>xxii.</sup> 3. <sup>Gen. xxxvii.</sup> 28. <sup>36. Lev. xxv.</sup> 39. <sup>44. 2 Kings iv</sup> 1. <sup>Neh. v. 1—6.</sup> 8. <sup>Matt. xviii.</sup> 25. <sup>1 Cor. vi.</sup> 20. <sup>d</sup> Lev. xxv. 40—43. <sup>45. Deut. xv.</sup> 1. <sup>12—15.</sup> 18. <sup>xxxii.</sup> 10. <sup>Jer. xxxiv.</sup> 8—17. <sup>e</sup> Heb. *with his body.*

2 If thou buy <sup>e</sup> an Hebrew servant, <sup>sin</sup> six years he shall serve: <sup>d</sup> and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing.

3 If he came in <sup>e</sup> by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him.

4 If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children

shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself.

5 And <sup>e</sup> if the servant <sup>†</sup> shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children, I will not go out free:

6 Then his master shall bring him unto <sup>e</sup> the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door-post: and his master shall <sup>e</sup> bore his ear

<sup>e</sup> Deut. xv. 16, 17. <sup>1a.</sup> xxvi. 13. <sup>2 Cor. v.</sup> 14, 15. <sup>†</sup> Heb. *saying shall say.* <sup>f</sup> 22. <sup>xviii.</sup> 21—25. <sup>xxii.</sup> 8, 9, 28. <sup>Num. xxv.</sup> 5—8. <sup>Deut. i.</sup> 16. <sup>xvi.</sup> 18. <sup>xix.</sup> 17, 18. <sup>1 Sam. viii.</sup> 1, 2. <sup>Is i.</sup> 26. <sup>Zeph. iii.</sup> 3. <sup>Ps. xl.</sup> 6—8.

either given on this occasion, or afterwards spoken to Moses from above the mercy-seat in the tabernacle; whence also a great part of the *ceremonial* law was delivered. (*Lev. i. 1.*) For little seems to have been prescribed to Moses, during his continuance for forty days in the mount, as afterwards recorded; except what related to the tabernacle and its sacred furniture, and to the holy garments for Aaron and his sons; the manner of their consecration to the priesthood; and the composition of the holy oil and of the incense.

V. 2. The Israelites sometimes sold themselves or their children, through poverty; magistrates sold some persons for their crimes; and creditors were, in certain cases, allowed to sell their insolvent debtors. In these ways slavery had been, or would soon be, introduced among the Israelites, even that of their brethren as well as of strangers; and God did not see good, in the *judicial* law, totally to prohibit this, and several other things, which are not agreeable to the perfect demands of the *moral* law.—In the government of nations, legislators must judge how far it is practicable, expedient, or conducive to the grand ends of magistracy, to require *all* that is right, and forbid *all* that is wrong, *under penal sanctions*: and in this respect Israel was like other nations. Indeed, the moral and judicial law were enacted by the same Lawgiver, and coincided, as far as infinite wisdom saw it to be conducive to the grand ends in view; but, as they were intended for very distinct purposes, they must in many things vary. The *moral* law commanded every thing spiritually good in its utmost perfection, and tolerated nothing wrong in the smallest degree; but the sentence of it was reserved “to that day, when God shall “judge the *secrets* of men by Jesus Christ.” The *judicial* law commanded nothing morally bad, and forbade nothing morally good; but, as sentence according to it would be pronounced by the civil magistrate, it did not insist on the same perfection: and besides that it enjoined nothing concerning the state of the heart, except as the intentions could be judged of by words and actions; it had also respect to the situation, character, and peculiar circumstances of the nation to be governed; and supposed the existence of some evils, which could not be eradicated without a constant miracle; and it provided against their worst effects.—This distinction, carefully attended to, will account for many things, *tolerated* in the Mosaic law, which are condemned in the New Testament; and not only there, but, in the moral law of “loving our neighbour as ourselves.” They are not sanctioned, but merely “suffered because of the hardness of the people’s hearts,” or on some account to prevent worse consequences.

Slavery was almost universal in the world: and though, like wars, it always proceeded of evil, and was generally

evil in itself; yet the wisdom of God deemed it better to regulate, than to prohibit it. We should not, however, judge of the practice itself by these *judicial regulations*, but by the *law of love*. Slavery, like war, may in some cases, in the present state of things, be lawful: for the crime which forfeits life, no doubt forfeits liberty; and it is not inconsistent even with the moral law, for a criminal to be sold and treated as a slave, during a term of time proportioned to his offence. In most other cases, if not in all, it must be inconsistent with the law of love.—The plain meaning of this verse is, that on what account soever a Hebrew was bought as a slave, he should be set at liberty at the end of six years, or at the beginning of the seventh, whether that were the sabbatical year or not: and he was not entitled to his liberty till that time, even if the sabbatical year intervened. But the Jewish expositors, (on whose authority some learned men build very much,) both here, and all through these laws, make so many distinctions, additions, and exceptions, that they almost abrogate the very statutes which they profess to elucidate. Our blessed Lord, in vindicating the law from the corrupt glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees, and asserting its authority in opposition to their traditions, (which often vacated it,) does not much countenance his disciples in paying deference to such commentators; and the successors of these scribes, in after ages, have by no means proved themselves entitled to more implicit credence. In matter of fact, respecting the usages and customs of the nation in their own times and in preceding ages, they may be useful; and we may learn how they understood the several laws: but it seems, to me at least, that they generally perplex the subject which they attempt to explain; as a quibbling lawyer causes the meaning of the plain statute to appear doubtful or obscure, by his frivolous distinctions and exceptions.

V. 3—6. If the person sold for a slave had a wife, and she, either by choice or compulsion, accompanied him; she must not be detained when her husband was liberated.—Many expositors state that the person, who bought a married man for a slave, was bound to maintain his wife and children during the term of his servitude: but if so, it is reasonable to suppose, that he had the advantage of their labour. If the person sold had no wife, or his wife did not accompany him, and his master gave him one of his female servants to wife during his servitude; she was not set at liberty with him at the end of the six years, and the children were considered as the property of the master. It is generally thought that an Israelitish woman could not on any account be thus disposed of; and that the slaves, thus given in marriage for the time, were *Gentiles*. Yet this can hardly be supposed, as the prohibitions against intermarriages with the heathen were so express.—It does not

through with an awl; and he shall serve him <sup>b</sup> for ever.

7 And if a man <sup>1</sup>sell his daughter to be a maid-servant, she shall not go out as the men-servants do.

8 If she <sup>2</sup>please not her master, who hath betrothed her to himself, then shall he let her be redeemed. To sell her unto a strange nation he shall have no power, <sup>3</sup>seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with her.

9 And if he have betrothed her unto his son, he shall deal with her after the manner of daughters.

10 If he take him another wife: <sup>4</sup>her food, her raiment, and her duty of marriage shall he not diminish.

11 And if he do not these three unto her, <sup>5</sup>then shall she go out free without money.

12 ¶ He that <sup>6</sup>smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death.

13 And if a man <sup>7</sup>lie not in wait, but <sup>8</sup>God deliver him into his hand; then <sup>9</sup>I will appoint thee a place whither he shall flee.

14 But if a man come <sup>10</sup>presumptuously upon his neighbour to <sup>11</sup>slay him with guile; thou shalt <sup>12</sup>take him from mine altar, that he may die.

15 And he that <sup>13</sup>smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death.

16 And he that <sup>14</sup>stealeth a man, and

<sup>n</sup> See on 2.  
<sup>o</sup> xx. 13. Gen. ix.  
6. Lev. xxiv. 17.  
Num. xxxv. 16  
—20, 30, 31.  
Deut. xix. 11—  
13. 2 Sam. xii.  
13. Matt. xxvi.  
52.  
<sup>p</sup> Num. xxxv. 11.  
Deut. xix. 4—6.  
11. Mic. vii. 2.  
<sup>q</sup> 1 Sam. xxiv. 4.  
10. 18. 2 Sam.  
xvi. 10. Is. x. 7.  
<sup>r</sup> Num. xxxv. 11.  
Deut. iv. 41—  
43. xix. 1—3. 9.  
Josh. xx. 2—9.  
Num. xv. 30, 31.  
Deut. i. 43. xvii.  
12, 13. xviii. 22.  
Ps. xix. 13. Heb.  
x. 26. 2 Pet. ii.  
10.  
<sup>t</sup> Num. xxxv. 20.  
21. Deut. xxxv.  
24. 2 Sam. iii.  
27. xx. 9, 10.  
<sup>u</sup> 1 Kings i. 50.  
51. ii. 28—34.  
2 Kings xi. 15.  
<sup>x</sup> Deut. xxi. 18—  
21. Prov. xxx. 11.  
17. 1 Tim. i. 9.  
<sup>y</sup> Gen. xl. 15.  
Deut. xxiv. 7. 1 Tim. i. 10.

appear, that children born in slavery, (as this very statute shews some would be,) were entitled to liberty, at any time before the year of jubilee: of these, there might be women of Hebrew extraction, to be given as wives for the time to Hebrew slaves; and others, originally of Gentile extraction, might be proselyted to the religion of Israel.—If however in any case, the slave, whose time was expired, deliberately and constantly avowed such an affection to his wife and children, and such an attachment to his master, that he preferred his present situation to “going out by himself;” it was enacted, that he should, by solemn process before the magistrates, have his ear bored at his master’s door, intimating that he was from that time to be considered as a part of his household, entirely under his authority; and he must then continue his servant for ever, or perpetually, either to his death, or to the year of jubilee.—As we find from a parallel passage, (Deut. xv. 17,) that female servants were under the same law; there might, among such as chose to continue with their masters, be found wives for the Hebrew slaves.

The judges. (6) ἄγγελοι gods. (το κριτηριον τῆ Θεοῦ. Sept.) Notes, Ps. lxxxii. 1. 5, 6. John x. 32—39.

V. 7—11. A parent might sometimes be induced to sell his daughter, in her youth; but this seems not to have been allowed, except he was compelled by poverty; and except there was either some engagement or expectation that the person who bought her, would take her, when of age, as his wife or concubine. (Note, Gen. xxv. 5, 6.) If therefore the person who bought her changed his mind, and did not espouse her, or if he afterwards grew weary of her; he was required to let her “be redeemed” at any time by her friends, at a reasonable price: and if this were not done, he was not allowed to marry her, to any other person, or to sell her into another family. Thus the words rendered “a strange people,” are generally understood, because it is supposed no Hebrew slave could be sold to a Gentile: yet perhaps they mean, that he must not sell her to one of another nation, who desired to have her as his concubine, where she would be in danger of forgetting the true religion; and having already deceived her, he must not be permitted to add one injury to another.—

If he had betrothed her to his son, he must act towards her as a father to his daughter, not as a master to his slave: and whether he or his son had married her, and then afterwards took another wife; he must either maintain her suitably, and give her some recompence for the injury, or else freely set her at liberty.—It is evident this case was very different from that of a woman sold for theft, or who sold herself because of her poverty; for there is no proof, that that might not be the case of a woman, as well as of a man. (Deut. xv. 12.) But a daughter sold by her father, in expectation that she should be espoused by her master or one of his sons, was entitled to peculiar tenderness, and must be dealt with by other rules than slaves of another description.

V. 12—14. If a man smote another wilfully, so that he died, whether out of previous resentment, or sudden anger, it was to be deemed murder; but when it was merely by accident, which is here called “God’s delivering him into his hand,” (as God was thus pleased to take away the life which he gave,) the cities of refuge would be appointed for him to flee to. (Marg. Ref. r.) Yet so far would they be from affording a security to the wilful, presumptuous, deliberate murderer, that he was to be taken by the officers of justice even from the altar of God itself, and put to death. ‘Though he was the high priest, and in the act of sacrifice, he was to be taken away without delay, if he had committed wilful murder.’ Bp. Patrick. (Note, 1 Kings ii. 26, 27.)—The heathen altars and temples were generally refuges for criminals: but God would not have his altar profaned, by protecting those who deserved punishment; nor did he appoint any sacrifice for murder. (Note, 1 Kings ii. 28—34.)—It is thought, that there was some place appointed in the camp, as a refuge for the unfortunate manslayer, while the Israelites were in the wilderness.

V. 15—17. To smite either father or mother, in a manner which indicated contempt or malice, or left marks of violence, was deemed a proof of so ungrateful and unnatural a disposition, that no provocation was admitted as an excuse, but the offence was made capital: nay, he who cursed his father or mother, who uttered imprecations, ill-

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xxxvii. 23. <sup>b</sup> selleth him, or if he be <sup>a</sup> found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.

<sup>b</sup> Lev. xx. 9. <sup>c</sup> 17 And <sup>b</sup> he that <sup>c</sup> curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death.

<sup>c</sup> Deut. xxvii. 16. <sup>d</sup> 18 ¶ And if <sup>d</sup> men strive together, and one smite <sup>d</sup> another with <sup>d</sup> a stone, or with <sup>d</sup> his fist, and he die not, but keepeth <sup>d</sup> his bed :

<sup>e</sup> 19 If he rise again, and walk abroad <sup>e</sup> upon his staff, then shall he that smote <sup>e</sup> him be quit : only he shall pay <sup>e</sup> for <sup>e</sup> the loss of his time, and shall cause <sup>e</sup> him to be thoroughly healed.

<sup>f</sup> 20 And if a man <sup>f</sup> smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die

under his hand ; <sup>g</sup> he shall be surely <sup>g</sup> punished.

<sup>h</sup> 21 Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished : for <sup>h</sup> he is his money.

<sup>i</sup> 22 ¶ If men <sup>i</sup> strive and hurt a wo- <sup>i</sup> man with child, so that her fruit depart <sup>i</sup> from her, and yet no mischief follow ; he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him ; and he shall pay <sup>k</sup> as the judges <sup>k</sup> determine.

<sup>l</sup> 23 And if <sup>l</sup> any mischief follow, then thou shalt give <sup>l</sup> life for life,

<sup>m</sup> 24 <sup>m</sup> Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,

wishes, or revilings, against a parent, was included in the same sentence ; though few crimes were made capital by the law of Moses ! The authority of God, as delegated to parents, is honoured when they are honoured, and despised when they are despised. To rebel against the lawful exercise of this authority is rebellion against God : and in any case, where not only obedience is refused, but revenge and malice expressed, or violence attempted against the person of a parent, it must be considered as one of the highest crimes both against God and man, which can be conceived. (*Note*, Matt. xv. 3—6.)—The same honour is as expressly required by the divine law, to be rendered to rulers, as the ministers of Providence in governing nations : yet both rulers and parents may often be very faulty, both in their general conduct, and in the exercise of their delegated authority.—Between these two capital offences, another is very remarkably inserted ; namely, that of stealing a man in order to sell him for a slave ; whether the thief had actually sold him, or whether he continued in his possession, having had no opportunity of selling him before his crime was detected.—The Jewish writers assert, that it was not a capital crime to steal one of another nation, but only when the person stolen was a Hebrew : yet this is by no means consistent with the text, which certainly implies, that he who stole any one of the human species, in order to make a slave of him, should be punished with death. It can scarcely be supposed, that the Israelites in general would purchase their brethren of those who stole them : so that this crime would commonly be aggravated, by sending them away into foreign countries, to be slaves to idolaters, at a distance from the worship and ordinances of God.—The Septuagint reverse the order, and place the two judgments concerning parents together, in the most natural order.

V. 18, 19. If on any sudden quarrel two men fought together, and one smote the other, either with his fist, or a stone, or whatever came to hand ; he was not to be punished as a murderer, provided the wounded person so far recovered as to walk abroad again ; because, if he died afterwards, it might be supposed that his death arose from some other cause.—This exception forcibly establishes the general rule ; and shews that, even in *unpremeditated* encounter, if one man killed another, either on the spot, or

by a mortal wound, he was adjudged a murderer, and punished as such ; without even determining who was the aggressor in the quarrel : nor is there any exception, in this case, in the laws respecting the cities of refuge.—Even if the person smitten recovered, the other must pay him for his loss of time, and the expenses of his being thoroughly cured.—It may be proper to notice the contrariety of this law to the usages in this nation ; according to which, even those, who fight duels with weapons of death, or contend in pitched battles for prizes or renown, and in them kill their opponents, in general escape almost, if not entirely, without punishment !

V. 20, 21. The killing of a slave, by any weapon of death, was not distinguished in the law from other murders : and if a slave died, while his master was correcting him with a *rod*, or *staff*, the master must be *surely punished*. It is not said, “He shall surely be put to death :” and it is therefore supposed, that a discretionary power was lodged with the magistrates, to punish him according to circumstances, which might make his cruelty appear more or less atrocious. It could not however be supposed, that he meant to commit murder, and the death of his slave would be a considerable loss to him : so that if the slave lived a day or two afterwards, the master was not to be punished by the magistrate, but left to the judgment of God.

V. 22—25. In case two men strove together, and the wife of one of them, being pregnant, interposed, and received a hurt which caused her to miscarry, but produced no further mischief ; the other party must be punished for the injury, by a fine laid on him to be paid to the woman's husband, who might lay his damages for the mischief ; yet the magistrates must determine what compensation should actually be paid. But if any further detriment followed to the woman, the magistrates were authorized to punish the offender, even so far as to put him to death if the woman died ; and in case of lighter injuries, to inflict an exact retaliation on him. These were not allowances made to private revenge ; but laws to regulate the magistrate's decision, who might go thus far if the heinousness of the offence required it, but not further : and it seems reasonable to suppose, that they were also allowed to abate of this rigour, when alleviating circum-

25 Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

26 And if a man <sup>a</sup> smite the eye of his servant, or the eye of his maid, that it perish; he shall let him go free for his eye's sake.

27 And if he smite out his man-servant's tooth, or his maid-servant's tooth; he shall let him go free for his tooth's sake.

28 ¶ If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die: then <sup>o</sup> the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox *shall* be quit.

29 But if the ox were wont to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and <sup>p</sup> his owner also shall be put to death.

30 If there be laid on him a sum of money, then he shall give <sup>q</sup> for the ransom of his life, whatsoever is laid upon him.

31 Whether he have gored a son or have gored a daughter, according to this judgment shall it be done unto him.

32 If the ox shall push a man-servant, or maid-servant; he shall give unto their master <sup>r</sup> thirty shekels of silver, <sup>s</sup> and the ox shall be stoned.

33 ¶ And if a man shall <sup>t</sup> open a pit, or if a man shall dig a pit, and not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall therein;

34 The <sup>u</sup> owner of the pit shall make it good, and give money unto the owner of them; and the dead *beast* shall be his.

35 And if one man's ox hurt another's that he die, then they shall sell the live ox, and divide the money of it, and the dead *ox* also they shall divide.

36 Or <sup>x</sup> if it be known that the ox <sup>y</sup> hath used to push in time past, and his owner hath not kept him in; he shall surely pay ox for ox, and the dead shall be his own.

stances rendered it proper.—As a variety of mischiefs are stated, some of which could scarcely happen in the case referred to; it is likely, that various other suits for personal injuries were determined by the same rule. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 26, 27. It is obvious, that this merciful restraint on the passions of those who possessed slaves, though it only mentioned the *eye* and the *tooth*, was meant to extend to every other material personal injury; and that all slaves, whether Israelites or not, were to have the benefit of it. The degree of melioration, which the condition of slaves would receive from such a law impartially executed, can scarcely be conceived.

V. 28—32. To shew the value of the life of man, in the judgment of God; to enhance the horror at the thoughts of murder, in the mind of every Israelite: and to increase circumspection in guarding against every thing which might cause death; it was enacted, that the ox, or bull, which gored any person so that he died, should be stoned. For similar reasons, and that the owner's loss might be the greater, it was added that his flesh should not be eaten.—It is obvious, that the spirit of this statute would apply to a variety of similar cases. If this was the first instance, in which the owner had been fairly acquainted with the mischievousness of his ox, or bull, he was not liable to any further punishment: but if he had been informed of preceding instances of the same kind, and had neglected to take care of the animal, and through his neglect any one lost his life; not only must the ox be stoned, but the owner might be punished as a murderer. Yet, in case of alleviating circumstances, the magistrates were permitted

to change this punishment into a pecuniary mulct, as *the ransom of his life*. And this statute was to be enforced, not only if a grown man or woman was killed, but also if it was a male or a female child, provided it were not a slave. But in case the person gored was a slave, the owner, besides the loss of the ox, must pay the fine of thirty shekels to the proprietor of the slave.—This valuation of a slave was precisely the sum, for which Judas betrayed Christ!—As a compensation in this law is expressly allowed, we may conclude that it was not allowed where it is not mentioned.

If there be laid, &c. (30) “If an atonement (חַטָּאת) be laid upon him, he shall give a ransom of his life, &c.” *Εαν δε λυτρα επιβληθη, κ. τ. λ. Sept.*

V. 33—36. It must be supposed, that these compendious statutes were intended as general rules, according to which an immense number of particular causes would be decided by the magistrates: for it is impossible to multiply laws to meet all the vast variety of cases, which occur in the course of human affairs. But if the spirit of these laws were observed, every litigation might equitably be terminated, by a due consideration of the degree in which carelessness or selfishness had been concerned, in the injuries which one man suffered by the cattle or other property of his neighbour.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

##### V. 1—11.

The commandments of God, as well as his providential dispensations, not only relate to the grand outlines of his administration, but descend to minute particulars and the

## CHAP. XXII.

Laws concerning theft and fraud; kindling fires which occasioned damage; breach of trust; and things borrowed and hired, 1—15. Concerning seducers, witchcraft, bestiality, idolatry, and the treatment of strangers, widows, and orphans, 16—24. Against usury and reviling rulers: concerning the first-fruits and firstlings, and against eating the flesh of torn animals, 25—31.

<sup>a</sup> Or, goat.

<sup>a</sup> Lev. vi. 1—6.  
Num. v. 7. 2 Sam.  
xii. 6. Prov. vi.  
31. Luke xix. 8.

**IF** a man shall steal an ox, or a <sup>a</sup> sheep, and kill it, or sell it; <sup>a</sup> he shall

meanest objects; especially when righteousness, goodness, and truth, are concerned. With a condescending regard, he particularly watches over those, who are most exposed to oppression, injustice, or damage; and he has respect to all ranks, from the poorest beggar to the mightiest monarch; and to all the stages of human existence, from the newly-conceived embryo in the womb, to decrepit old age. Though he no longer reigns over any single nation, in that peculiar sense in which he reigned over Israel; yet he is King over all the earth, and will at his awful tribunal arraign and condemn those violations of his law, which here escape notice, or elude or outbrave the sword of human justice.—Having his precepts and example before our eyes, and this future judgment in our remembrance; with what equity, sincerity, and humanity should we treat our servants, dependents, and inferiors! Indeed we ought so to behave towards our domesticks, that, though free from other bonds, they may be attached to us by the ties of love, and count it their privilege to spend and close their days in our service.—Let us also recollect, that now the gospel “proclaims liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound:” nothing but love to our hateful and ruinous bondage, and to our associates in it, can keep us from enjoying true freedom in the service and favour of God. But, if we deliberately choose slavery, we must serve sin and Satan for ever. Let us then, as the redeemed of the Lord, break off every sinful connexion, and leave all for his sake: and from love to his name, let us have our ears, as it were, nailed to the posts of his door, that we may be his happy servants for ever and ever.—But, if we are his willing people, we shall be far from behaving deceitfully, in the important concern of marriage. How much then shall we abhor the baseness of consigning to lasting disgrace or misery, for the sake of our own indulgence, an unhappy object, over whom in any way we have acquired an ascendancy! On the contrary, while purity, sincerity, and equity, mark our whole conduct, we shall learn habitually to sacrifice our own inclinations, even in things lawful, to the general interests of humanity, or the particular advantage or comfort of the individuals, over whom we have the greatest influence or authority.

V. 12—36.

Let children hear, with trembling, the sentence denounced by the unchangeable God, against such as are ungrateful and rebellious: and let them remember, that if they dare to lift a hand, on any account, against their parents, or to curse them in their hearts, or slander their characters, or needlessly publish their faults, either while

VOL. I.

restore <sup>b</sup> five oxen for an ox, and four <sup>b</sup> sheep for a sheep. Prov. xiv. 4.

2 If a thief be found <sup>c</sup> breaking up, and be smitten that he die, *there shall* <sup>c</sup> no blood *be shed* for him. Job xxiv. 14. xxx. 6. Hos. vii. 1. Joel ii. 8. Matt. vi. 19, 20. xxiv. 43. 1 Thes. v. 2.

3 If the sun be risen upon him, *there shall be blood shed* for him; *for* he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, <sup>e</sup> then he shall be sold for his theft. See on xxi. 2.—Judg. ii. 14. x. 7. 1s. i. 1.

4 If the theft be certainly <sup>f</sup> found in

they live, or after their death; God will severely punish them, except they repent. And let parents also hence learn to redouble their care, in educating their children, giving them good instructions, praying for them, and setting them a good example, especially in restraining their passions: and let them likewise avoid that harshness or severity, which might provoke them to wrath, and tempt them to such heinous crimes.—While we rejoice that, in this island, laws concerning slavery are not wanted; let us remember, that if we are true Christians, we shall have no occasion for penal statutes to restrain us from stealing or enslaving our brethren of the human species; or of such varied methods to inspire us with horror of the sin of murder: for, so far from lying in wait to shed blood, or trading in the bodies of men, we shall watch for, and gladly embrace, the opportunity of preserving the liberty or life of our enemy; still repressing the rising emotions of anger, pouring out our prayers for them, and attempting acts of kindness under the greatest provocations: and, instead of enforcing the law of retaliation, we shall ever be ambitious of “overcoming evil with good.”—We shall also guard, though with trouble and loss, against whatever can endanger the life or property of another; and while ready in any way to make up, to the utmost of our power, the damage which we have indiscreetly, or even without blame, occasioned to others, we shall be very backward in demanding such satisfaction to ourselves.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1—4. The instances here adduced, to fix the principles on which the magistrates of Israel must proceed in regard to theft and robbery, are taken especially from the cattle; because in these their property chiefly consisted, and these would likewise be most exposed to depredation.—If any person had stolen a sheep or goat, and had proceeded so far as to kill or sell it, he was sentenced to restore *fourfold*; if an ox, which besides its value was very useful for labour, *fivefold*. Yet, in case his theft was detected while the animal was still alive in his possession, he was only required to restore it *double*; probably, because in this case, he seemed to discover more hesitation, and less subtlety or industry, in dishonesty, than if he had proceeded to sell or kill it. The ass is also mentioned in this clause (4), and no doubt the camel, and other useful animals, were included in the design of the law.—But if the thief voluntarily confessed, and restored the property which he had stolen, he was only required to add a fifth part to it. (Lev. vi. 4, 5).—In case, however, any one was detected *in the night*, endeavouring forcibly to

2 K

his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; <sup>g</sup> he shall restore double.

5 ¶ If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten, and shall put in his beast, and shall feed in another man's field: of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own vineyard, <sup>h</sup> shall he make restitution.

6 If fire break out, and catch in thorns, <sup>i</sup> so that the stacks of corn, or the standing corn, or the field be consumed *therewith*; <sup>k</sup> he that kindled the fire shall surely make restitution.

7 ¶ If a man shall deliver unto his neighbour money or stuff to keep, and it be stolen out of the man's house; <sup>l</sup> if the thief be found, <sup>m</sup> let him pay double.

8 If the thief be not found, then the master of the house shall be brought unto, <sup>n</sup> the judges, *to see* whether he

have put his hand unto his neighbour's goods.

9 For all manner of <sup>o</sup> trespass, *whether it be* for ox, for ass, for sheep, for raiment, *or* for any manner of lost thing, which *another* challengeth to be his, <sup>p</sup> the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; *and* whom the judges shall condemn, he shall <sup>q</sup> pay double unto his neighbour.

10 If a man <sup>r</sup> deliver unto his neighbour an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast to keep; and it die, or be hurt, or driven away, no man seeing it:

11 *Then* shall <sup>s</sup> an oath of the LORD be between them both, <sup>t</sup> that he hath not put his hand unto his neighbour's goods: and the owner of it shall accept *thereof*, and he shall not make it good.

12 And if it be <sup>u</sup> stolen from him, he

<sup>g</sup> 1. 7. 9. Prov. vi. 31. 18. xl. 2. Jer. xvi. 18. Rev. xviii. 6.

<sup>h</sup> 3. 12. Job. xx. 18.

<sup>i</sup> Judg. xv. 4. 5. 2 Sam. xiv. 30. 31.

<sup>k</sup> 9. 12. xxi. 33. 34.

<sup>l</sup> Prov. vi. 30. 31. Jer. ii. 26. John xii. 6. 1 Cor. vi. 10.

<sup>m</sup> See on 4. n 28. Marg. xxi. 6. Deut. xvi. 18. xix. 17. 18. 1 Chr. xxiii. 4. Ps. lxxviii. 1.

<sup>o</sup> Num. v. 6. 7. 1 Kings viii. 51. Matt. vi. 14. 15. xviii. 15. 35. Luke xvii. 3. 4.

<sup>p</sup> xviii. 21. 22. xxvii. 6-8. Deut. xvi. 18. 19. xix. 16-18. xxv. 1. 2 Chr. xix. 10.

<sup>q</sup> 4. 7. r Gen. xxxix. 8. Luke xii. 48. xvi. 11. 2 Tim. i. 12.

<sup>s</sup> Lev. v. 1. vi. 3. 1 Kings iii. 42. 43. Prov. xxx. 9. Heb. vi. 16. 9 xxiii. 1.

<sup>u</sup> 7. Gen. xxxi. 39.

break into a house, it might be considered as an assault on the lives of the inhabitants, as well as an attempt to plunder their property; and if, in repelling the assault, the robber was slain, the person who killed him was not punishable. But if he was slain *after sun-rise*, his death must be punished as murder; because there was another method of securing or recovering the property; and it is supposed that no assault was made on the life of any one.—In all cases, when the thief, or robber, could not make the stipulated restitution, he was sold for the theft for a limited time, not exceeding six years: and, without doubt, the injured person received the emolument arising in either way, at least when moderate expenses had been deducted.—It is not stated what restitution should be made by him, who forcibly plundered goods from a house; so that it must be supposed, that the magistrates were authorized to decide according to circumstances.

Such statutes would be deemed, at present, very inadequate to the security of property. But though the state of society in this age and nation is very different, yet human nature is the same; and we have no reason to consider the Israelites as more tractable than the rest of our species. It may in some cases be urged, that robbery among us, is more commonly connected with the avowed purpose of murder, in case of resistance, which enhances the crime exceedingly: but it requires more serious consideration, how far this arises from the punishment of theft being made equal to that of murder, which confounds the disparity of the two crimes in the minds of men, and removes the restraint arising from the dread of a severer penalty. This plea however, in very many cases, cannot be advanced; and not only the *equity*, but even the *policy*, of multiplying capital offences, is very questionable; nay, facts prove that it defeats its own end. Humane persons are reluctant to be concerned in taking away the life of one, who has only deprived them of property: and therefore they will not prosecute if it can be avoided. And, in

various ways, compassion allows the young offender to escape with impunity: this encourages him to proceed with greater confidence; and having corrupted many others, as well as multiplied crimes more and more atrocious, he at last perhaps is sentenced to die.—But frequent escapes give boldness in perilous attempts of all kinds; and the same self-flattery, which soothes every adventurer in a lottery with the hope of the highest prizes, though very few can gain them; far more powerfully operates on the minds of the dishonest, to expect impunity, while so very many in proportion actually escape.—The dread of a lighter punishment, yet exposing the culprit to much present pain or hard labour, and total exclusion from all congenial society, and so constantly inflicted as to appear unavoidable, would probably be far more effectual in preventing crimes, than a *remote possibility* of an ignominious death; especially as a future state of retribution has seldom much place in the thoughts of these unhappy men.

V. 5, 6. It is evident that these instances were intended, as illustrations of the general principles of equity, by which many similar cases were to be determined. We may suppose that the fire, which did the mischief, was kindled *carelessly*, or on a man's own ground for some *special purpose*, and that for want of proper attention, it spread so far as to injure others: for *wilfully* and *maliciously* to kindle a destructive fire, is a crime deserving of far severer punishment.

V. 7—15. If money, plate, or furniture, were entrusted to any one, from which he derived no emolument, and it was lost *out of his house*, where he had placed it for security; he was not bound to make it good, in case it was stolen and could not be recovered. Yet if any suspicion rested on him, that he had secreted the property entrusted, the magistrates were authorized to examine the evidence, and decide accordingly.—In this and other matters of trespass or trust, their sentence was final; and breach of trust, as well as theft, was punishable by *double restitution*.

shall make restitution unto the owner thereof.

<sup>x</sup> *Ex. iv. 14. Am. iii. 12. Mic. v. 8. Nah. ii. 12.* 13 If it be <sup>x</sup> torn in pieces, *then* let him bring it *for* witness, *and* he shall not make good that which was torn.

<sup>y</sup> *Deut. xv. 2. xxi. 19, 20. Neh. v. 4. Ps. xxxvii. 21. Matt. v. 42. Luke vi. 35.* 14 And if a man <sup>y</sup> borrow *ought* of his neighbour, and it be hurt, or die, the owner thereof *being* not with it; he shall surely <sup>z</sup> make *it* good. <sup>z</sup> *11. xi. 34. Lev. xxiv. 18.*

15 *But* if the owner thereof *be* with

When an ox, sheep, or ass, was committed to another's care, (probably with a compensation for its subsistence, or wages for tending it,) if it happened to die, or to receive any hurt, or to be driven away with other cattle by an invading enemy, or by robbers, when none were present to bear witness, the person entrusted, on making oath that he had not been accessory to the loss, was freed; but if it was stolen from among his cattle, and there was any reason to suppose he had not taken proper care of it, he must make it good. If, however, it had been torn in pieces by a wild beast, and he could bring any remains of the carcase in proof of it, he was not answerable.—He who gratuitously used the labour of his neighbour's ox, or ass, or camel, if it died or was hurt in the absence of the owner, must make it good; for it might be thought he had caused it to labour excessively, or been cruel to it; but if the owner was present, this could not be suspected, and he must not be compelled to make it good. When hire was paid for the labour of an animal, and any harm came to it, the owner could not demand restitution, at least unless he could prove that it had been abused.—The more attentively these statutes are examined, the more clearly will it be seen; that the spirit of them is equitable, reasonable, mild, and humane, in no common degree.

V. 16, 17. This statute relates to a case, which must carefully be distinguished from some others, that may be confounded with it. It is assumed, that no *force* was used, but merely *persuasions* and *blandishments*; and that the young woman was not betrothed to another man. In general, it might be supposed, that promises, or at least intimations, of marriage would be made by the seducer; and therefore he was bound to "endow her to be his wife." Some expositors are of opinion, that he must either *endow* her, that is, give her a sum of money for the injury, or *marry* her: but the obvious meaning of the law is, that he must take her for his wife, and *endow* her, or provide for her suitably according to his station. It does not appear, that either the seducer, or the person seduced, was allowed a negative; but the young woman's father might refuse his consent, and in this case the seducer must pay "a certain sum of money as a compensation for the injury. This sum is generally supposed to have been fifty shekels: but the passage from which this conclusion is made, seems to refer to a rape; and then the money was paid to the father; though the offender was obliged to marry, and not allowed to divorce, the injured damsel. (*Deut. xxii. 28, 29.*)—The option here granted the father, shews, that great deference is owing in respect of marriage to parental authority; and it also demonstrates, that *marriage* is en-

it, he shall not make *it* good: if it be an hired *thing*, "it came for his hire."

16 ¶ And if <sup>b</sup> a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie with her; he shall surely endow her to be his wife.

17 If her father <sup>c</sup> utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall <sup>d</sup> pay money according to the <sup>e</sup> dowry of virgins.

18 Thou <sup>f</sup> shalt not suffer a witch to live.

<sup>a</sup> *Zech. viii. 10.*

<sup>b</sup> *Gen. xxxiv. 2—4. Deut. xxii. 28, 29.*

<sup>c</sup> *Deut. vii. 3, 4.*

<sup>d</sup> *Heb. weigh.*

<sup>e</sup> *Gen. xxiii. 16.*

<sup>f</sup> *Gen. xxxiv. 12.*

<sup>g</sup> *1 Sam. xviii. 25.*

<sup>h</sup> *Lev. xix. 28, 31.*

<sup>i</sup> *xx. 6, 27. Deut.*

<sup>j</sup> *xviii. 10, 11.*

<sup>k</sup> *1 Sam. xxi. 3. Acts*

<sup>l</sup> *viii. 9—11. xvi.*

<sup>m</sup> *16—19. xix. 19.*

<sup>n</sup> *Gal. v. 20.*

tirely a distinct matter, in the word of God, from any voluntary intercourse between a man and a woman, however *privately* accompanied by reciprocal assurances, if not avowedly sanctioned by some *public recognition*.—It is not here stated, whether the seducer, if previously married, was bound to take the seduced damsel also as his wife; nor is it material to us. Polygamy was then an *existing evil*, concerning which many regulations were made; but Christianity has in general terminated it, as far as its authority has been acknowledged.—Nothing could be conceived more equitable, than some regulation like this statute, if properly restricted to *real seduction by an unmarried man*. But it is matter of fact, capable of full proof, that, in these licentious days, young women in inferior circumstances, and even encouraged by their parents, (shocking as it may seem,) employ their utmost address to attract the attention of young men of better circumstances; in order that, *under the pretence of seduction*, they may be married to greater advantage! And, in attempting to remedy the grievous evil of real seduction, this should by no means be encouraged and increased. It is, however, highly reasonable, that every unmarried man, whatever his circumstances be, who debauches a virgin with *promises of marriage*, or any engagements which have the same effect upon her mind, should be obliged actually to marry her; and that, if a married man, professing himself unmarried, should thus seduce a virgin, he should be obliged to maintain her, while she continues unmarried. But a young woman, who suffers herself to be enticed by a man, whom she knows to be married, seems not entitled to the same compensation, whatever punishment *he* may deserve.

V. 18. Witchcraft is generally understood to mean, "a compact with evil spirits, by whose agency and assistance, applied for by certain incantations, effects of various kinds may be produced, by which malice, or covetousness, or other corrupt passions, may be gratified." A vast variety of practices, with different degrees of aggravation, which will hereafter be considered, agree in common with witchcraft, in avowedly making Satan "the god of the world," and the god of those who thus apply to him for information or assistance.—It is readily allowed that much imposture on the one hand, (which forms a very singular kind of hypocrisy,) and much superstition, folly, and cruelty on the other, have taken place, in respect of these practices, whether real or pretended. But it seems one of the most flagrant absurdities of modern Sadduceism, to suppose that God himself would repeatedly command the magistrates of his people to punish with death a crime which never was committed! If it should be said, that

19 Whosoever <sup>1</sup>lieth with a beast, shall surely be put to death.

20 He that <sup>2</sup>sacrificeth unto *any* god, save unto the Lord only, he shall be <sup>3</sup>utterly destroyed.

21 ¶ Thou shalt neither <sup>1</sup>vex a stranger, nor oppress him: <sup>2</sup>for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

22 Ye <sup>1</sup>shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child.

23 If thou afflict them in any wise, and they <sup>3</sup>cry at all unto me, <sup>4</sup>I will surely hear their cry;

24 And <sup>5</sup>my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; <sup>6</sup>and I will hear; <sup>7</sup>for I *am* gracious.

Lev. xviii. 23. xx. 15, 16. Deut. xxvii. 21. Num. xxv. 2-6. Deut. xiii. 1-15. xvi. 2-9. xviii. 20. Num. xxi. 8. Josh. xxiii. 15, 16. xiii. 9. Lev. xix. 33. xxv. 35. Deut. x. 19. Jer. vii. 6. xxii. 3. Zech. vii. 10. Ex. xx. 2. xxiii. 9. Deut. x. 19. xv. 15. xxiii. 7. Deut. x. 18. xxiv. 17. xxvii. 19. Ps. xciv. 6. Is. i. 17. 23. x. 4. Ez. xiii. 7. Zech. vii. 10. Jam. i. 27. Deut. xv. 9. xxiv. 15. Job xxxi. 28, 29. xxxv. 9. Luke xviii. 7. Job xxxiv. 28. Ps. x. 17, 18. xviii. 6. cxi. 12. cxvi. 7-9. Prov. xxii. 22, 23. xxiii. 10, 11. Jam. v. 4. Job xxxi. 23. Ps. lxxvi. 7. xc. 11. Nah. i. 6. Rom. ii. 5-9. Heo. x. 31.

mere pretences to witchcraft might warrant laws against it; I would only desire the reader to examine the marginal references, and judge for himself, whether it be not spoken of in Scripture as a real practice.—The existence, sagacity, malice, ambition, and power of evil spirits, are sufficiently declared in Scripture: there can be no doubt, that they are both able and willing thus to interpose, if permitted: and that human nature is capable of such wickedness, as even *knowingly* to combine with them. That witchcraft may be, that it hath been, and that it still is in some parts of the world, actually practised, seems capable of proof, were any collateral evidence necessary to confirm the truth of the divine testimony. But as, by certain degrees of cultivation, wild beasts are banished or extirpated; so, in some stages of civilization, the practice of witchcraft is nearly excluded. The truth is this; in such circumstances it no longer so well answers Satan's grand purpose of deception and destruction: he therefore changes his ground, and varies his attack; nor is he any loser, by exchanging the practice of witchcraft for the prevalence of scepticism.—Though *witch*, in the feminine, is the word here used; yet in other places, the masculine word is employed, and various things of the same nature are prohibited on the penalty of death.

V. 20. Idolatry was universally prohibited in the *moral* law; but by the *judicial* law, it was punishable by death, when committed by an Israelite, or by one that dwelt among the Israelites: for to these exclusively, laws given to the magistrates of Israel could extend. Sacrificing, being the principal act of religious worship at that time, was selected as the open act of idolatry, which constituted the capital offence. The expression *utterly destroyed* implies, that the offender should be devoted to entire destruction, as an accursed thing, or a sacrifice to the awful justice of God. Whole cities involved in the guilt of idolatry were afterwards sentenced to utter destruction, by an universal execution of the inhabitants: (*Notes*, Deut. xiii.) for this crime especially was a breach of the national covenant; but, so long as the judges punished it according to the law, it would not be accounted a national forfeiture.

V. 21—24. It was desirable that strangers should be allured by kind usage to live among the Israelites, provided they did not practise idolatry, or violate the requirements

and <sup>1</sup>your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.

25 If thou <sup>2</sup>lend money to *any* of my people *that is* poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.

26 If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment <sup>1</sup>to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down:

27 For that *is* his covering only, it *is* his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep? And it shall come to pass, <sup>2</sup>when he crieth unto me, that I will hear; <sup>3</sup>for I *am* gracious.

of the judicial law; in order that they might thus be induced to think favourably of true religion, and at length to embrace it. They must not, therefore, be harassed by any injury, or reproach, or vexation, which might harden them in prejudice, or drive them back among idolaters.—In thus behaving kindly to strangers, the Israelites should call to mind their late situation in Egypt, and the anguish of spirit which they had endured under oppression in a strange land.—The subsequent verses, in which JEHOVAH avows himself the Husband of the widow, and the Father of the orphan, are peculiarly illustrative of the kind and compassionate spirit of the Mosaic law; though special reasons rendered some statutes needful and salutary, which at present appear rigorous to the superficial reader. No penalty was enjoined to be inflicted by the magistrates, on those who oppressed the stranger, the widow, and the orphan, unless some violation of other statutes could be proved: because the Lord himself undertook to avenge their cause, by a just retaliation on their oppressors and their families.

V. 25—27. Usury, as here stated, properly consists in taking interest from the poor, on what they borrow for present subsistence, or in urgent need; which tends to enrich the lender by still more impoverishing the borrower. This was frequently carried to such a pitch among the ancients, and even the Israelites, that the creditors constrained their debtors to sell themselves or their children for slaves; which was an aggravated violation of the law of love. (*Note*, Neh. v. 1—5.)—The Israelites were but little engaged in commerce; and their law was not only suited, but *intended*, to keep them from mingling by any means with other nations. Their land also was divided by lot, and they were not allowed to alienate their inheritances. They were not, therefore, greatly in the way of lending or taking up money upon interest, to employ in trade, or expend in estates: in which cases, and in those of the like nature, it does not appear inconsistent with either equity or love, for the lender to receive a proportion of the profits from the borrower. The original is indeed remarkable; for it may be rendered, "If thou lend money *to my people, even to a poor man, &c.*" yet it is generally thought, that the Israelites were not allowed in any ordinary case, to take *interest for money*, or usury of any

\* Or, *judges*. 9. 28 Thou shalt not revile the \* gods,  
Ps. lxxxii. 1—7. nor curse the ruler of thy people.  
cxviii. 1. John x. 34, 35.  
† 29 Thou shalt not delay to offer  
xxi. 17. 1 Sam. xxi. 6. 10.  
xxvi. 9. Ec. x. 20. Acts xxiii. 5.  
Rom. xiii. 2—7. the first of thy ripe fruits and of thy  
Tit. iii. 1, 2. liquors: † the first-born of thy sons  
1 Pet. ii. 17. shalt thou give unto me.  
2 Pet. ii. 10.  
Jude 8. x xxiii. 19. Deut. xxvi. 2—10. 2 Kings iv. 42. 2 Chr. xxxi. 5. Prov.  
iii. 9. 10. Ez. xx. 40. Matt. vi. 33 Rom. viii. 23. Jam. i. 18. † Heb. thy fulness.  
† Heb. tear. y xiii. 2. 12.

30 Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen, and with thy sheep: \* seven days it shall be with his dam: on the eighth day thou shalt give it me. a xix. 5, 6. Lev. xi. 45. xix. 2. Deut. xiv. 21. 1 Pet. i. 15, 16. b Lev. xvii. 15, 16. xx. 28. xxii. 8. Deut. xiv. 21. Ez. iv. 14. xlv. 51. Acts x. 14. xv. 20.

31 And ye shall be \* holy men unto me: † neither shall ye eat *any* flesh that is torn of beasts in the field: ye shall cast it to the dogs.

other kind, from their brethren. As, however, they were permitted to take it of the Gentiles, though expressly required not to oppress them; it is evident that interest on lent money is not in itself unjust, or contrary to the divine law, when not attended by oppressive circumstances. (*Deut.* xxiii. 19, 20.)—But, besides the practice of exacting exorbitant interest of the poor, it was also customary to take a pledge for the payment of the money advanced; and this was commonly either the garment which they wore by day, or the covering under which they slept at night. But if an Israelite in any case took such a pledge, he was required to restore it before night; not by compulsion of the magistrate, but as a matter of conscience towards God. The language assigning the reasons, why this should be done, is a very beautiful appeal to the tenderest emotions of pity for the distressed: and the concluding sentence,—“And it shall come to pass when he crieth “unto me, I will hear; for I am gracious,”—gives a most endearing view of the perfections and government of God, for the encouragement and imitation of his worshippers. Yet the tender compassion and mercy of the Lord are stated, to be perfectly consistent with his severest vengeance, on the cruel oppressor of the needy who cry unto him.—How far the business of a pawnbroker, in the present state of society, consists with the spirit of these precepts, is a question which involves much difficulty. Some are of opinion, and argue with considerable plausibility, that the very practice is *radically* injurious to society, and inconsistent with Christianity; and certainly, as it is frequently conducted, it is so. But, as *receiving interest* is not in all cases absolutely prohibited, it may be doubted whether taking pledges be *always* unjust or improper. It is not, however, an employment to which a real Christian can be supposed so partial, as to choose it either for himself or his children, after he has become acquainted with the truth, power, and spirit of the gospel. But should the grace of God meet with a person already engaged in this business, as having been educated to it, or accustomed to get his subsistence by it; and should his disposition be really formed to strict uprightness, benevolence, and conscientiousness; it may be questioned whether by rendering his employment much less lucrative, he may not make it even beneficial, or at least not oppressive, to others; so as to have the prayers of the poor for him, not their cries against him. In *this* case the employment may be consistent with the principles of Christianity, and perhaps in no other. If such a person should, after serious examination and fervent prayers to God for direction, find himself at liberty to continue in his calling, he will “abide therein “with God;” he will consider it as his cross, and take it up as such; and, disdaining the prospect of heaping up wealth by every profit which the laws of the land may

allow, he will carefully consult the law of God, of equity, of humanity, and of love; and will only go so far in his employment, as he verily deems consistent with these rules. And if a man's heart be upright, the Lord will either satisfy him to proceed, or encourage him to cast himself upon his providence in renouncing it.

V. 28. The word (עֲרִיצָה) here rendered *gods* is repeatedly used for *judges* in this chapter; and it is therefore probable, that the former clause of the verse referred to the magistrates of Israel in general; and the latter to their chief magistrate, who was also the high priest, when Paul before the council quoted this statute. (*Note*, *Acts* xxiii. 1—5.) The language used is very similar to that, by which *cursing* a parent was denounced a capital crime: only no particular punishment is appointed, that being left to the discretion of the magistrate; or rather these precepts towards the close of the chapter were proposed, as binding on the conscience in the sight of the Lord.—But, as the word generally translated *God*, is used, many think that blasphemy against God, as well as reviling or cursing the magistrate, was intended; and some even contend that the Israelites were by that clause forbidden to revile or curse the gods of the heathen.

V. 29—31. These were ceremonial appointments, some of which have been in part considered, (*Notes*, xiii. 2—16,) and others will be more fully spoken of afterwards.—The first-fruits of the orchard and vintage, being presented to God, were used by the priests: but the proportion was left to the liberality of the offerer.—No animal must be presented to God before the eighth day from its birth, the day fixed for the circumcision of the male child; and probably this referred to that institution.—As a holy people, the Israelites must not eat any thing torn by beasts; for it had the blood in it. (*Marg. Ref.* b. *Note*, *Matt.* vii. 6.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—15.

A careful comparison of these ancient statutes, given to Israel, with the most celebrated productions of heathen lawgivers, whether in Greece, Rome, India, or China, must effectually convince any impartial person, that Moses had a right to say, “Keep therefore and do them; for this is “your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of all “the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, “Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding “people!—And what nation is there so great, that hath “statutes and judgments so righteous, as all this law, “which I set before you this day?” Nay, were he on earth at present, he might safely make the same challenge, in respect of the municipal laws of any country in the world; and a full investigation of the subject would evince, that the laws enacted by him were uniformly more wise, equi-

## CHAP. XXIII.

Laws forbidding slander, false witness, wresting judgment, bribery, and oppression; and requiring kindness to enemies, 1—9. The law of the sabbatical year and the weekly sabbath, with a caution against idolatry, 10—13. The three great annual feasts appointed, 14—19. The Lord promises to conduct

Israel safe to Canaan, to put them in possession of it, to enlarge their borders and destroy their enemies; and adds some cautions and precepts, 20—33.

a 7. xx. 16. Lev. xix. 16. 2 Sam. xvi. 3. xix. 27. Ps. xv. 3. ci. 5. cxx. 3. Prov. x. 18. xvii. 4. xxv. 23. Jer. xii. 10. Matt. xxviii. 14. 15. Rom. iii. 8. Or, receive.

**THOU** 'shalt not 'raise a false report: put not thine hand with the

able, humane, mild, and salutary in their tendency, than the complex body of laws of the most civilized nations; even of those where Christianity has most flourished. For the former bear the evident stamp of a divine original; the latter are invariably tarnished by the infirmities and passions of our fallen nature.—According to the spirit of the divine law, we should, as the worshippers of God, always be inclined to mildness and mercy; tender of the lives and souls even of thieves and robbers; and not value our property so highly, as to put it in competition with concerns of such immense importance. We ought never to be willingly accessory to the death of another, except in the defence of our own lives, or in the execution of publick justice: and then we should go about it as a most painful duty, with reluctance, and sorrow of heart; not urged on by resentment or self-interest, but by conscience, to sacrifice the life of an individual to the general good. We should likewise remember that we are answerable in the sight of God, for the consequences not only of what we do *maliciously*, but of what we do *heedlessly*; and are chargeable with injustice, for abuse of confidence, double dealing, carelessness of things borrowed, and various kinds of selfishness, which are not punishable by human laws. If then we are conscious of having injured our neighbour in any of these ways, and are truly penitent, we shall endeavour to make restitution to the utmost of our ability, though not compelled to it by the sentence of the magistrate.

## V. 16—31.

If the fear of God rule in our hearts, and his law be written there; a humble recollection of our own transgressions, and a thankful sense of the Lord's unmerited mercies to us, will induce an habitual disposition to shew kindness and mercy, as well as to do justice, to our neighbours; to subject all our passions and appetites to the will of God; and to shun all evil, and every occasion and appearance of evil. Kindness and humanity to the stranger, the widow, and the fatherless; and liberal compassion to the poor and needy, will freely flow from the principle of genuine love implanted in our hearts, and from a desire of adorning our holy religion, and recommending it to those who are without. And while we study to submit to those who are placed over us, and shew due respect to all men; we shall not forget to "honour the Lord with our substance and with the first-fruits of all our increase," and to devote ourselves to be a holy people unto his name.—What a contrast do such characters form to those, whose selfish and filthy hearts are capable of crimes far more than

wicked to be 'an unrighteous witness.

2 Thou shalt not 'follow a multitude to *do* evil; neither shalt thou 'speak in a cause, 'to decline after many to wrest judgment.

3 Neither shalt thou 'countenance a poor man in his cause.

4 If thou meet 'thine enemy's ox or

xy. 9. 24. 1 Kings xix. 10. Job xxxi. 34. Prov. i. 10, 11, 15. iv. 14. Mark. xv. 15. Luke xxi. 24, 51. John vii. 50, 51. Acts xxiv. 27. xxv. 9. Rom. i. 32. Gal. ii. 11—13. † Or, answer. d Lev. xix. 15. Deut. i. 17. Ps. lxxii. 2. Jer. xxxvii. 15, 21. xxxviii. 6, 9. Ez. ix. 9. Hab. i. 4. *Margina.* c Ps. lxxxii. 2, 3. Jam. iii. 17. ‡ Deut. xxii. 1—4. Job xxxi. 29, 30. Prov. xxiv. 17, 18. xiv. 21. Matt. v. 44. Luke vi. 27, 28. Rom. xii. 17—21. 1 Thes. v. 15.

b Deut. v. 20. xix. 16—21. 1 Kings xxi. 10—13. Ps. xxvii. 12. xxxv. 11. Prov. vi. 19. xii. 17. xix. 5. 9. xxi. 28. xxv. 18. Matt. xix. 18. xxvi. 50—61. Luke iii. 14. xix. 8. Acts vi. 11—13. 2 Tim. ii. 8. 1 Pet. iii. 16. Rev. xii. 10. c xxxi. 1—5. Gen. vi. 12. vii. 1. xix. 4. 7—9. Num. xiv. 1—10. Josh. xiv. 15. 1 Sam. xxiv. 15. 1 Matt. xxvii. 24—xxv. 9. Rom. i. 17. Ps. lxxii. c Ps. lxxxii. 2, 3. Jam. iii. 17. ‡ Deut. xxii. 1—4. Job xxxi. 29, 30. Prov. xxiv. 17, 18.

brutal, nay, truly diabolical! who need to be held in, with strict laws and dreadful punishments, from the most detestable crimes, and yet burst through even these restraints! who have the cries of the oppressed, the widow, the orphan, and the poor, with the wrath of God, against them, and who must be cut off by the avenging sword of human justice, to prevent further mischief! The one is human nature unchanged and unrestrained: the other is the effect of true grace converting and ruling in the heart.—"Turn thou us, O LORD, and we shall be turned," that we may be "unto thee a peculiar people zealous of good works," through Jesus Christ. Amen.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 1—3. These verses seem especially to relate to the trial of causes, and to the conduct of all parties concerned on such occasions; though they also contain general rules of universal application. He who invents a slander, or first raises a *vain report*, and he who receives and propagates it, (*marg.*) are at all times very criminal: but the iniquity is most atrocious, when the calumny is advanced or taken up in a court of justice; and when the witnesses thus "put their hand with the wicked," to give success to an unrighteous cause, by lying testimony, or by attesting as fact the vain rumours circulated against the other party. Even if such reports had obtained general credit, the witnesses must "not follow a multitude to do evil," in sanctioning them, not knowing them to be true; nor the judges, in deciding according to them; nor the pleader, in adducing them to prejudice the minds of the magistrates or audience. In no case must any party be influenced to act contrary to strict equity and impartiality; either by publick opinion, or by the sentiments or inclinations of the great and powerful; or even by compassion for the poor man, whose cause was unjust.—The word rendered *countenance*, signifies *adorn*, and seems to refer to the arts of oratory and the sophistry of law, by which the badness of a cause is varnished over.—'Neither parties, friends, judges, witnesses, nor vulgar opinions, must move us, to lessen great faults, aggravate small ones, vindicate offenders, accuse the innocent, or misrepresent any thing, to procure an unjust sentence.' Brown.

V. 4, 5. The connexion of these verses has suggested to several expositors the observation, 'That there are ways innumerable of shewing pity and kindness, without supporting a poor man in an iniquitous cause.' Yet, the precepts do not specify the poor, but an *enemy*, and one that

\* Or, *Wilt thou cease to help him? or, wouldst thou cease to leave thy business for him: thou shalt surely leave it to join with him.*

2, 3. Deut. xvi. 19. xxvii. 19. 2 Chr. xix. 7. Job xxii. 13, 21. 22. Ps. lxxviii. 3. 4. Ec. v. 8. Is. x. 1. 2. Jer. vi. 23. vii. 6. Am. v. 11, 12. Mic. iii. 1—4. Zeph. iii. 1—4. Mal. iii. 5. Jam. ii. 5, 6.

1. Lev. xix. 11. Deut. xix. 16—21. Job xxii. 23. Prov. iv. 14, 15. Is. xxxiii. 15. Luke iii. 14. Eph. iv. 25. Thes. v. 22.

Rom. i. 18. ii. 5, 6. xv. 27. xvii. 8. 23. xix. 6. xxix. 4. Ec. vii. 7. Is. i. 23. v. 23. Ez. xxii. 12. Hos. iv. 18. Am. v. 12. Mic. vii. 8. Acts xxiv. 26.

1 Deut. xxvii. 25. j xxxiv. 7. Prov. xvii. 15. Nah. i. 8

k Deut. xvi. 19. 1 Sam viii. 3. xii. 3. Ps. xxvi. 10. Prov.

xv. 27. xvii. 8. 23. xix. 6. xxix. 4. Ec. vii. 7. Is. i. 23. v. 23. Ez. xxii. 12. Hos. iv.

18. Am. v. 12. Mic. vii. 8. Acts xxiv. 26.

18. Am. v. 12. Mic. vii. 8. Acts xxiv. 26.

*hateth*: and no doubt persons of every nation and character were included, though the Jewish writers expound them only of Israelites.—Besides the reluctance men naturally have to a laborious and troublesome action, from which no advantage is likely to arise; the circumstance of the owner being an *enemy*, an *unreconciled*, *bitter enemy*, would have much influence. Yet regard to the interest even of *such an enemy*, as well as mercy to a poor animal, and above all, the will of God thus made known, would induce every conscientious Israelite to bring back the ox or ass that had gone astray; nay, to assist an injurious and malicious adversary, whose very presence would be uneasy to him, to lift up the animal which had sunk under his burden! It does not appear, whether the magistrates were authorized to punish those who neglected this duty. The spirit of these laws entirely coincides with the precepts of Christ, though the Jews in general do not acknowledge it; and many Christians speak, as if there was no marked coincidence, and affirm that love and kindness to enemies are peculiar to the New Testament dispensation.

V. 6—9. It may reasonably be supposed, that the preceding verses implied an instruction to the judges; as they are included between two passages, which evidently relate to them in particular.—There might in some cases be danger, lest compassion should induce unjust partiality to a poor man in a legal process; but far more instances must occur, in which the magistrates would be tempted to neglect or pervert his cause, either to oblige a rich opponent, or to save trouble, or because the poor man had not money to pay the requisite expenses; or finally, because nothing could be gained by doing him justice, and nothing risked by deciding against him. But the expression, *thy poor*, is supposed to imply an answer to such evil thoughts and surmises. ‘He is of the same nature, of the same blood, and the protection of him in his right is committed, O magistrate, to thee especially, by the great Judge of the world: therefore “wrest not his cause,” and refuse not on any account to do him justice.’—In order to enforce this general principle, of doing impartial justice without respect of persons, and without fear, favour, or affection; the judges were reminded, that if they *wilfully* or *incautiously* hearkened to false testimony, or decided wrong in a case of life and death, either directly or by consequence, they would be deemed the murderers of the *innocent* and *righteous*.

the gift blindeth † the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous. + Heb. *the seeing*.

9 Also † thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for <sup>m</sup>ye know the <sup>†</sup>heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

10 ¶ And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof.

11 But <sup>a</sup>the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still; that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave, the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, and with thy <sup>†</sup>olive-yard. † Or, *olive-trees*.

*eous*. Did they tremble at the thoughts of such an atrocious crime? They should remember, that the righteous God would not judge according to the frivolous distinctions, which men invent to shade the malignity of their conduct; but would consider every man as a murderer, who aided, from corrupt motives, or wilful negligence, in putting an innocent man to death: for “he would not justify the “wicked.” And, by parity of reason, they who thus concurred in depriving others of their property, would be guilty of theft or robbery.—In order to keep at a distance from such wickedness, the magistrates were forbidden to take any *gift* from the persons whose cause they were about to decide, though no express condition were annexed to the acceptance of it: for such is human nature, that a *gift* tends exceedingly to blind the understanding of the most sagacious, and to pervert the words, or decisions, even of those who were otherwise righteous.—It is recorded of Sir Matthew Hale, that upon his circuit as a judge, he refused to try the cause of a gentleman, who had sent him the *customary present* of venison, until he had paid for it: for he well understood the *spirit* of these excellent laws.—The concluding verse is nearly the same as one before considered: (xxii. 21:) but it seems here introduced as a caution to the judges, to beware of prejudice against foreigners, in deciding causes in which they were concerned; and to be sure not to oppress them; for they knew how strangers *felt* on such occasions, having themselves been oppressed by Egyptian magistrates.—The glosses of the Jewish expositors on these laws, which almost totally invalidate them, shew the need there was for this caution: but alas! it seems to have been but little noticed. (Note, Matt. v. 43—48.) The very question of the lawyer, “But “who is my neighbour?” with our Lord’s answer, may give some faint idea of those corrupt glosses, by which the scribes explained away, and made void, the law of love, as to their whole conduct towards strangers. (Notes, Luke x. 25—37.)

V. 10, 11. The Israelites were commanded to commemorate the creation of the world, not only by sanctifying one day out of seven, as a holy rest to the Lord, but also by intermitting the culture of their land every seventh year. Yet a promise was implied in this command, that the ground should, even in that year, produce spontaneously a considerable increase; which they were required to allow

o See on xx 8—  
11.—xxxii. 15,  
16 Luke xiii. 14.  
p Deut. v. 13—15.  
Is. lvi. 3.  
q Deut. iv. 9. 15.  
Josh. xxi. 5.  
xxiii. 11. 1 Chr.  
xxviii. 7—9 Ps.  
xxxix. 1. Eph.  
v. 15. 1 Tim. iv.  
16. Heb. xii. 15.  
r Deut. xii. 3.  
Josh. xxi. 7.  
Ps. xvi. 4. Jer.  
x. 11. Hos. ii.  
17. Zech. xiii. 2.  
Eph. v. 12.  
s xxxiv. 22. Lev.  
xxiii. 5. 16. 34.  
Deut. xvi. 16.  
t xii. 14—28. 43.  
49. xiii. 6, 7.  
xxxiv. 18. Lev.  
xxiii. 5—8.  
Num. ix. 2—14.  
xxviii. 16—25.  
Deut. xvi. 1—5.  
Josh. v. 10, 11.  
2 Kings xxi. 21.  
—23. Mark xiv.  
12. Luke xxi. 7.  
1 Cor. v. 7, 8.

12 ° Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed.

13 And in all *things* that I have said unto you, ° be circumspect: and ° make no mention of the names of other gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth.

14 ¶ ° Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year.

15 Thou shalt keep ° the feast of unleavened bread: thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee in the time appointed of

the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: ° and none shall appear before me empty.

16 And the ° feast of harvest, the first-fruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the ° feast of in-gathering *which is* in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.

17 Three times in the year ° all thy males shall appear before the LORD God.

18 Thou shalt not offer the ° blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread, neither shall the fat of my ° sacrifice ° remain until the morning.

u xxxiv. 20. Lev.  
xxiii. 16. Deut.  
xvi. 16. Prov. iii.  
9, 10.  
x xxi. 29. Lev.  
xxiii. 9—21.  
Num. xxviii. 26  
—31. Deut. xvi.  
9—12. Acts ii. 1.  
y xxxiv. 22. Lev.  
xxiii. 34—44.  
Num. xxix. 12  
—39. Deut. xvi.  
13—15. Neh. viii.  
14—18. Zech.  
xiv. 16—19. John  
vii. 2. 37.  
z xxxiv. 23. Deut.  
xii. 5. xxxi. 11.  
Ps. lxxxv. 7.  
Luke ii. 42.

a xii. 8. 15. xxxiv.  
25. Lev. ii. 11.  
vii. 12. Deut.  
xvi. 4.  
\* Or, feast.  
b xii. 10. Lev. vii.  
15.

the poor, who had no lands in possession, to gather for their use and enjoyment: and on the residue the beasts of the field might feed. It is evident that the owners were not allowed to reap any harvest, or gather in the increase of the vine-yard or olive-yard, during this sabbatical year; yet it is generally thought that they might, along with their poor neighbours, gather some of the fruits, which could not be preserved, for present use.—The law seems to have been intended to teach the people, that they were merely the Lord's tenants for their estates; and that they would incur a forfeiture, if they did not observe his rules in cultivating them. It was also suited to teach them dependence on his Providence; and to lead them to observe his faithfulness, in sending a proportionate increase on the sixth year. It evidently and cogently inculcated indifference to worldly wealth; and liberality, without grudging, to the poor. The institution, as far as observed, likewise gave the Israelites leisure to attend on more important concerns; and no doubt was a real advantage to the ground, by letting it sometimes lie fallow: while it typified the rest of heaven, when all earthly labours, cares, and interests shall cease for ever.—Some expositors think, that the seventh thousand years of the world will be in some respect analogous to this sabbatical year. (*Notes, Lev. xxv. 1—7. 20—22.*)

V. 12. Even on the sabbatical year, the holy rest of the sabbath day must be observed, as well as at other times. (*Notes, xx. 8—11. Deut. v. 12—15.*)

V. 13. In order to exact circumspection in keeping these commandments, and especially in avoiding all occasions of idolatry, or approaches to it; the Israelites were forbidden to *mention*, or *cause to be remembered*, the names of other gods, or to let them be heard from their mouths. No doubt, on some occasions, they might mention the names of idols, in order to express their abhorrence of them; for thus, and thus only, the sacred writers mention them: but the use of their names in common conversation, would tend to abate this abhorrence, and to make way for the worship of them.—It is worth while to enquire, how far the familiar acquaintance with the heathen mythology, which generally accompanies a classical education, and is considered as essential to it, consists with this law: and whether it do not subserve the cause of scepticism and im-

morality, and prove very unfavourable to genuine Christianity. The characters and anecdotes of Jupiter, Bacchus, Apollo, Mars, Mercury, Venus, and other abominable idols, told in the fictions of the poets in a fascinating manner, lose their horror, and fill the youthful mind with delight and admiration: and an imagination stored with ideas, and a judgment perverted by examples, of this kind, promise nothing very desirable, either in respect of purity, integrity, or piety. It were to be wished that such books as Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and many others of that cast, were either totally kept out of the hands of *inexperienced* youth, or more cautiously entrusted to them.—As to the places of public diversion, they subsist by accommodation to the more plausible passions of depraved human nature: and the *Heathenism* of them only forms an additional proof of their unfavourable aspect on Christianity; and an additional reason, why real Christians should keep themselves and their children from them.

V. 14—18. Three solemn religious festivals were instituted to be observed by the Israelites, during all succeeding generations, while they continued to be the peculiar people of God.—“The feast of unleavened bread,” in remembrance of their deliverance out of Egypt, has been considered. (*Notes, xii. xiii. 8—10.*) “The feast of harvest,” when it became ripe, called also “the feast of pentecost,” seems to have been instituted, in remembrance of the promulgation of the Law from mount Sinai: and the “feast of in-gathering” when the harvest was completely secured, called also “the feast of tabernacles,” in remembrance of the people dwelling in tents in the wilderness. This was observed in the seventh month, called here “the end of the year;” for the year began in Autumn, till Israel was delivered out of Egypt.—Various oblations were required on all these occasions, which we shall hereafter consider; as also the command, that every male should appear before the Lord at his tabernacle, or temple, at those times, and not appear empty.—No leavened bread was allowed to be offered with the blood of the sacrifices; that is, say expositors, the sacrifice of the passover: but the other sacrifices at that festival were also intended; as likewise in the caution, not to leave any of the fat until the morning, lest it should be in danger of corrupting. A similar injunction had before been given respecting the

c xiii. 29. xxiv. 25. Lev. xxiii. 10—17. Num. xviii. 12, 13. Deut. xii. 5—7. xxvi. 10. Neh. x. 35. 1 Cor. xv. 20. Rev. xiv. 4. d xxxiv. 26. Deut. xiv. 21. Prov. xii. 10. Jer. x. 3. e iii. 2—6. xxxiii. 34. xxxiii. 2. 14. Gen. xlviii. 16. Num. xx. 16. Josh. v. 13. vi. 2. Is. lxiii. 9. Mal. iii. 1. 1 Cor. x. 9, 10. f Gen. xv. 18. Matt. xxv. 34. John xiv. 3. g Pa. ii. 12. Matt. xvii. 5. Heb. xii. 25. h Num. xiv. 11. Pa. lxxviii. 30. 56. Eoh. iv. 30. Heb. iii. 10, 16. i xxxii. 34. Num. xiv. 35. Deut. xviii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 19. Heb. iii. 11. x. 26—29. xii. 25. 1 John v. 16. k iii. 14. xxxiv. 5—7. Ps. lxxii. 19. lxxxiii. 18. Is. vii. 14. ix. 6. xiii. 8. xiv. 6. lvii. 15. Jer. xxiii. 6. Matt. i. 23. John v. 28. x. 30. 38. xiv. 9, 10. Col. ii. 9. Rev. i. 8. ii. 8, 23. iii. 7. 1 Gen. xii. 3. Num. xxiv. 9. Deut. xxx. 7. Jer. xxx. 20. Zech. ii. 8. Acts ix. 4, 5. \* Or, I will afflict them that afflict thee. m See on iii. 17.—Gen. xv. 19—21. xxxiv. 2. Josh. xxiv. 8—11.

19 The <sup>e</sup> first of the first-fruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not see<sup>d</sup> thee a kid in his mother's milk.

20 ¶ Behold, I send an <sup>e</sup> Angel before thee to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have <sup>r</sup> prepared.

21 <sup>s</sup> Beware of him, and obey his voice; <sup>b</sup> provoke him not: for <sup>h</sup> he will not pardon your transgressions: for <sup>k</sup> my Name *is* in him.

22 But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be <sup>h</sup> an enemy unto thine enemies, and <sup>h</sup> an adversary unto thine adversaries.

23 For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring <sup>m</sup> thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the

Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off.

24 Thou <sup>a</sup> shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor <sup>o</sup> do after their works: but thou shalt utterly <sup>p</sup> overthrow them, and quite break down their images.

25 And <sup>q</sup> ye shall serve the LORD your God, and <sup>r</sup> he shall bless thy bread, and thy water: and I <sup>s</sup> will take sickness away from the midst of thee.

26 There <sup>t</sup> shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren in thy land: <sup>u</sup> the number of thy days I will fulfil.

27 I will send <sup>v</sup> my fear before thee, and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come, and I will make all thine enemies turn their <sup>w</sup> backs unto thee.

28 And I will send <sup>x</sup> hornets before thee, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite from before thee.

n See on ix. 5. o Lev. xviii. 3. 26. —30. Deut. xii. 30, 31. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 2, 9. Pa. cvi. 35—38. Ez. xvi. 47. p xxxii. 20. xxxiv. 15, 14. Num. xxxiii. 52. Deut. vii. 5, 25, 26. xii. 3. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 3—7. q Deut. vi. 18. x. 12. 20. xi. 13. xii. 4. xxxviii. 1—6. Josh. xxii. 5. xxiv. 14, 15. 21. 24. 1 Sam. vii. 8. xii. 20. 24. Jer. viii. 2. Matt. iv. 10. r Deut. vii. 13. xxviii. 6—8. Mal. iii. 10, 11. s xv. 26. Deut. vii. 15. Is. xxxiii. 24. t Deut. vii. 14. xxxviii. 4. Job xxi. 10. Pa. cvii. 88. cxlii. 13. u Gen. xxxv. 8. xxxv. 29. 1 Chr. xxiii. 1. Job v. 26. xiii. 17. Pa. lv. 23. xc. 10. Is. lxxv. 20. x xv. 14—16. Gen. xxxv. 5. Deut. ii. 25. xii. 23, 25. Josh. ii. 9—11. 1 Sam. xiv. 16. 2 Kings xiv. 6. 2 Chr. xiv. 14. + Heb. neck. Pa. xviii. 40. y Deut. vii. 20. Josh. xxiv. 11, 12.

flesh of the paschal lamb. (xii. 10. *Notes, Lev. xxiii. Deut. xvi. 1—17.*)

V. 19. *Not see<sup>d</sup> thee, &c.*] This singular practice, which is more than once prohibited, might be deemed to have some semblance of cruelty; or it might be considered as an unnatural gratification of the appetite: but probably it was a superstition, or a sort of incantation, in use among idolaters, by which they thought to secure a plentiful harvest. (*Marg. Ref. d.*)

V. 20—23. After the Lord had enacted all these laws, he concluded this revelation to Moses, by him to be delivered to Israel, with many encouraging promises, interspersed with warnings and exhortations. He engaged especially to “send his Angel before” the people, to conduct them to Canaan: but he cautioned them to take heed and obey him, and not be refractory and rebellious; as he would not endure their provocations, but take signal vengeance on them, if they persisted in them: “for,” says JEHOVAH, “my name is in him.” (*Marg. Ref. k.*)—When we recollect the many Scriptures, which call an Angel, that appeared to the people of God, by the names, JEHOVAH, and ELOHIM, that is, God, we can hardly doubt who this Angel was, who had power on earth to forgive, or not to forgive, and in whom was the name of JEHOVAH; which seems naturally to mean the participation of the divine perfections, as well as acting with divine authority.—“But,” adds the LORD, “if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I command thee,” then I will confer the promised blessings.

V. 26. *Number, &c.*] The righteous Governor of the world has established such a connexion between causes and effects, that the wickedness of men conduces, in an immense degree, to shorten their lives, and those of others, even to succeeding generations: so that very few of the

human race live so long as they might, did not their own misconduct, or that of other men, bring them to an untimely end. No doubt in this, as in all other respects, the counsel of the Lord is accomplished: and this is one of his methods of restraining or punishing vice.—But “the number of their days,” which the Lord promised “to fulfil” to the Israelites, while obedient, refers to that term of human life, which men of a good constitution might be expected to attain to, if they did nothing to impair their health, were preserved from the effect of other men's vices, and by the blessing of God, were protected from external injuries, and exempted from pestilences and fatal diseases. We ought not to suppose, that such assurances, as we meet with in the close of this chapter, engaged to every individual long-life, health, and fruitfulness; but only that a special blessing should attend them, in addition to the natural tendency of a sober, righteous, and godly life; and that they would in this respect be evidently distinguished from other nations.—When a universal prevalence of genuine Christianity shall terminate wars, oppressions, enfeebling poverty, intemperance, and licentiousness, men will far more generally, than at present, live to old age. (*Notes, Lev. xxvi. 3—13. Is. lxxv. 20—23.*)

V. 27. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 28. The sting of the hornet, or large wasp, is very terrible; they are also exceedingly courageous insects, and not to be got rid of but by destroying them: vast swarms of them might therefore effectually drive away the inhabitants of Canaan, and prove even a more dreadful plague to them, than the frogs, lice, flies, or locusts had been to Egypt.—No account indeed is found, in the subsequent history, of hornets assaulting the armies which fought against Israel: but Joshua attests the fulfilment of the promise, in respect to the two kings of the Amorites,

29 I will not drive them out from before thee <sup>a</sup> in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee.

30 By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land.

31 And <sup>a</sup> I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto

the river: for I will <sup>b</sup> deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out before thee.

32 Thou <sup>c</sup> shalt make no covenant with them, <sup>d</sup> nor with their gods.

33 They shall not dwell in thy land, lest <sup>e</sup> they make thee sin against me: <sup>f</sup> for if thou serve their gods, <sup>g</sup> it will surely be a snare unto thee.

in a manner which proves that it was well known by all the people. (Note, Josh. xxiv. 12.) It may be inferred, from the texts referred to in the margin, that the hornets attacked the devoted nations, either before they engaged in battle, thus weakening and dismaying them; or after they were put to flight, and attempting to hide themselves in caverns or desolate places, to consume the remains of them, or drive them out of the land. And this may account for the silence of the history on the subject. Probably, the three tribes here mentioned, were more dreadfully harassed by the hornets than the rest were.—Learned men have shewn from ancient historians, that traditions prevailed, of nations forced by swarms of different kinds of insects to leave their country; most of which, probably, originated from some confused report, of the Lord's dealings with the Egyptians and Canaanites. (Note, viii. 24.)

V. 29, 30. The Israelites might conclude, from the promises made to their fathers and to them, that the Lord would at once expel or destroy the old inhabitants of the land before them; and, experiencing delays, they might question whether he had not failed of his word. But this consequence was obviated by the intimation here given; and the reason assigned, for a gradual extirpation of the devoted Canaanites, shews that the country assigned to Israel was far more than sufficient for that generation, which yet consisted at least of two millions: and as they could not occupy the whole, till they were still more increased, it would be better for them, that some of the ancient inhabitants should remain, than that the country, lying desolate, should be infested with wild beasts.—Other causes however combined, in preventing the Israelites from at once obtaining possession of the whole country assigned them.

V. 31. The boundaries of the promised land, as here stated, if compared with the passages referred to in the margin, may be thus explained. The northern extremity of the Red Sea was at no great distance from the river of Egypt, which ran into the Mediterranean, on the shore of which the Philistines dwelt. From the extremity therefore of the Red Sea, across to the Mediterranean Sea, and the course of its shore, as far as mount Lebanon, was the western boundary from south to north. The great desert, at the southern extremity of Canaan; and at the south-east of the adjacent countries behind the Dead Sea and beyond Jordan, as far as the great river Euphrates, formed the southern and eastern boundaries; while a line from the Mediterranean Sea, passing by mount Libanus to the river Euphrates, would mark its boundaries on the north, or on the north-west.—There are consider-

able difficulties, at this distance of time, in ascertaining these limits with any tolerable exactness, and consequently different opinions in some particulars prevail; but this statement seems to accord with the most approved authorities.—It is generally supposed, that the promise of driving out the ancient inhabitants, related only to the devoted nations of Canaan: for when the other countries, included in this grant, were subjected to David and Solomon, they never attempted to expel or extirpate the inhabitants; nor does it appear that they had any command or authority to do it.

V. 32, 33. When the Israelites were forbidden to “make any covenant with the devoted nations or their gods;” it seems to intimate, that individuals or collective bodies, that were willing to renounce idolatry, and to embrace the religion of Israel, might be spared, and admitted into covenant with them; and the subsequent history favours this supposition. But while the devoted nations continued idolaters, they must not be tolerated in the land, if the Israelites could by any means expel or destroy them: for, the Lord’s purpose of “driving them out by little and little,” did not excuse the negligence of the people, who willingly allowed them to live among them; the consequence of which was, that they were either tempters or scourges to them.—The last clause may be rendered, “For thou wilt serve their gods; for it will be a snare unto thee.” If idolaters were allowed to live among the Israelites, it would prove a snare to them, and they would be induced to worship their idols.—The latter part of this chapter primarily relates to the national covenant, the solemn ratification of which is recorded in the next chapter.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—9.

How manifold are the temptations, and occasions of sin, in this evil world! He, who would “keep a conscience void of offence towards God and man,” must not only mortify his own covetousness, pride, resentment, envy, and sensuality; but likewise take heed that his judgment be not biassed, and his heart prejudiced, by the authority, example, or reasonings of men, who are held in reputation for wisdom, learning, and virtue; by the influence of the rich and great; by gratitude to benefactors; by natural affection to relations, or by partiality to beloved friends; by fear of offending those on whom he depends, or from whom he has expectations; by reverence to superiors; by popular clamours; by a party-spirit; by vulgar reports; by conformity to the maxims, customs, and fashions of the world; or even by an easy and friendly temper, and com-

## CHAP. XXIV.

Moses, being called to go up to the mount, delivers the laws to Israel, and they consent to covenant with God, 1—3. An altar and twelve pillars are prepared, and the covenant is ratified, with sacrifices, and the sprinkling of blood, 4—8. Moses, Aaron, and his sons, and the elders of Israel, are favoured with a vi-

sion of God, and feast before him, 9—11. Moses ascends the mount, Joshua at first accompanying him; he leaves Aaron and Hur to rule the people; and abides in the mount forty days and nights, 12—18.

AND he said unto Moses, "Come up unto the Lord, thou and Aaron, <sup>b</sup> Nadab and Abihu, and <sup>c</sup> seventy of the

<sup>a</sup> iii. 5. xix. 9. 20. 24. xx. 21. xxxiv. 2.  
<sup>b</sup> vi. 28. xxxviii. 1. Lev. x. 1, 2. 1 Chr. vi. 3. xxiv. 1, 2.  
<sup>c</sup> 9. i. 5. Num. xi. 16. 24. 25. Ex. viii. 11. Luke x. 1. 17.

passion for the poor and afflicted. For there is no passion or propensity in the human heart, however amiable in its general exercise, which will not betray us into imprudence, injustice, and even impiety, unless it be regulated by divine grace, and subordinated to the fear and love of God.—The laws delivered by Moses, however misunderstood by the Scribes and Pharisees, and by many professed Christians, required the same equity and truth, the same tenderness of men's reputation and comfort, the same regard to their liberty and property, the same love even to enemies, and the same disposition, however injured or exasperated, to mortify malevolence, and to return good for evil, which are inculcated by our blessed Saviour and his apostles. It is likewise very useful, to examine and meditate on these statutes, as select instances, familiarly illustrating the more general rules of equity and love, and teaching us how to apply them in the ordinary concerns of life. Indeed, the more we thus compare one part of Scripture with another, the better we shall understand every part; and the fuller will be our conviction, that the whole is "the word of God."—Integrity, impartiality, and benevolence; a noble disinterestedness; firmness and boldness; an habitual fear of God, and a constant expectation of the great day of retribution; are peculiarly requisite for legislators, magistrates, lawyers, juries, witnesses, or prosecutors, and all concerned in courts of justice. For when human wisdom has done its utmost, they will often be strongly tempted, to wrest or pervert judgment; perhaps to the oppression of numbers, and even to the murder of the innocent and righteous; nor will opportunities be wanting. Such *legal murders* have in many ages and nations been extremely frequent; but, with considerable confidence and gratitude, we may assert, that they are well guarded against in this favoured nation: how desirable is it that we might without hesitation add, and in all its distant provinces! But, wherever committed, they are the most malignant of all murders, and will be found so, at the day "when the earth shall disclose her blood, and no more cover her slain."—We have all great need to "watch and pray that we enter not into temptation," and to shun all occasions of sin: for the remaining evil of the heart is attracted by the evil that is in the world, with a kind of magnetick force, which increases as they approach each other. Hence it is, that a near prospect of secular advantages so frequently "blinds the wise, and perverts the words of the righteous." Let us then "take heed and beware of covetousness;" pray earnestly for contentment with food and raiment; and learn to expect needful supplies from the Lord, day by day, in the conscientious performance of the duties to which we are called. And, as we must be sensible, (whether we "know the heart of a stranger," by painful experience, or not,) that oppressions would be very galling to us; let us on no consideration, concur in oppressing any human

being: on the contrary, "whatsoever we would that men should do unto us, let us do even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets."

## V. 10—33.

While we carefully observe the rules of justice, truth, and mercy, in our conduct towards our brethren and neighbours; we must not forget our still higher obligations to the LORD our God: and if we be indeed his people, we shall cheerfully devote ourselves to his service, submit to all his will, and seek his glory, in the conduct of our secular affairs, in the use of our property, and in the spending of our time. We shall count his sabbaths and ordinances, our refreshment and pleasure; we shall readily dedicate to him the first and best of all his gifts, and snare our portion, even if small, with those who have still less than we; depending on his promise and providence for the future.—But in all these things, and even in the government of our tongues, it behoves us to be "circumspect;" for we can neither "work out our own salvation," nor glorify God and do good, without great diligence and attention; and the ruinous consequences of mere heedlessness are seldom duly considered. Let us then put ourselves under the guidance and banner of the great Angel of the covenant, in whom is the name of JEHOVAH: let us obey his voice, submit to his will, fear nothing but his indignation and failing of his forgiveness, desire the comforts of his Spirit, depend on his arm, and expect the fulfilment of his promises; and thus march forwards towards the heavenly Canaan, through hosts of opposing foes, all of which he will enable us to overcome. We shall then learn by experience, that his ways are ways of pleasantness and peace, notwithstanding conflicts and self-denial; that, in the ordinary course of things, obedience to his precepts conduces to health, long-life, and domestick comfort: and that the provisions which he sends, (though often such as the world counts mean and scanty,) being accompanied by his blessing, are far better than the greatest affluence of ungodly men. (Note, Ps. xxxvii. 16, 17.) And though it is not his will to destroy our inward enemies at once, but by little and little; yet they too shall finally be extirpated; and he will make us more than conquerors in the event. Nay, in the mean while, he will take occasion from their existence and opposition, to display his own glory, and to promote our good; so that the whole shall terminate in our deeper humility, and in more admiring love and ardent gratitude, for ever.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 1, 2. After Moses had received the foregoing laws, he was sent down from "the thick darkness where God was," (xx. 21,) to deliver them to the people: and at the same time the Lord gave him directions

elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off.

<sup>d</sup> 15. 18. xx. 21. 2 And Moses <sup>d</sup> alone shall come near the LORD: but they shall not come nigh, neither shall the people go up with him.

<sup>e</sup> xxi.—xxiii. Dent. iv. 1, 5. 45. v. 1. 31. vi. 1 xi. 1. 3 And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and <sup>f</sup> all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, <sup>f</sup> All the words, which the LORD hath said, will we do.

<sup>g</sup> Dent. xxxi. 9. 4 And Moses <sup>g</sup> wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, <sup>h</sup> and builded an altar under

the hill, and <sup>i</sup> twelve pillars <sup>k</sup> according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

<sup>k</sup> xxviii. 21. Lev. xxiv. 5. Num. xvii. 2. Josh. iv. 2, 3. 8. 9. 20. 1 Kings xi. 30. Ezra vi. 17. Luke xxii. 30. Rev. xxi. 14. 5 And he sent <sup>k</sup> young men of the children of Israel, which offered <sup>m</sup> burnt-offerings, and sacrificed <sup>n</sup> peace-offerings of oxen unto the LORD.

<sup>m</sup> See on xviii. 12. 6 And Moses took half of the blood, and put <sup>n</sup> it in basins; and half of <sup>n</sup> the blood he sprinkled <sup>p</sup> on the altar.

<sup>p</sup> xxix. 16. 20. Lev. i. 5. 11. iii. 2. 8. iv. 6. 7 And he took <sup>q</sup> the book of the covenant, and <sup>r</sup> read in the audience of the people: and they said, <sup>r</sup> All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient.

<sup>r</sup> Deut. xxxi. 11—13. Acts xxi. 15. Col. iv. 16. 1 Thes. v. 27. 8 And Moses took the blood, and <sup>s</sup> sprinkled <sup>s</sup> it on the people; and said, <sup>t</sup>

<sup>t</sup> See on 6.—Lev. viii. 20. 1s. lii. 15. Ez. xxxvi. 25. Heb. ix. 18, 19.

concerning the subsequent solemn transactions. He and Aaron, with Aaron's two eldest sons, and seventy elders of Israel, were directed to come up into the mount; after they (and probably the congregation with them) had worshipped at a distance, to express their humble reverence of the divine majesty, and to produce in their minds proper solemnity for a nearer approach. Yet only Moses was permitted to ascend the top of the mountain, where the glory of God was peculiarly manifested; while the others must keep at a great distance, though some would be admitted nearer than others.—It is not evident, who the seventy elders were. They are spoken of as part of a larger company. Some think they were a part of the rulers of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens, who had been appointed by the advice of Jethro; but these are not called *elders*: elders are repeatedly spoken of before that time: and the seventy elders mentioned in another place, were evidently appointed some time after. (*Marg. Ref. c.*) It is, however, very natural to suppose, that in each tribe there were some persons who on one account or another, bore the chief sway; and from these seventy were selected, who were also called “the nobles” or *princes* “of Israel” (11); and who attended as representatives of their several tribes, in solemnly covenanting with God.

V. 3, 4. When Moses had set before the people “all the judgments,” or the judicial law which he had received, with the moral law of ten commandments delivered from mount Sinai, and the promises made to them of special blessings while obedient; they unanimously and willingly consented, and engaged to obey. Accordingly, he wrote in a book the four foregoing chapters, as the conditions of the *national* covenant, which was now about to be solemnly ratified. For such it certainly was: as ‘the covenant of works’ has nothing to do with altars, sacrifices, and the sprinkling of blood; and ‘the covenant of grace’ is not made with whole nations, or collective bodies of divers characters; but only *representatively* with Christ, as the Surety of those given to him, and *personally* with true believers. But while this covenant was made with the nation of Israel, in regard to their outward blessings, it was a “shadow of good things to come;” and in many respects their situation under it accorded to that of those, who live under the gospel, and have the benefit of the ordinances and oracles of God.—The day on which

Moses went down from the mount having been thus employed, he arose early the next morning, and made the necessary preparations, by building an altar and raising twelve pillars. The altar seems to have been intended to denote JEHOVAH'S presence, as a party in this covenant; and the twelve pillars, the twelve tribes of Israel, as the other party; and between the two covenanting parties Moses acted as a typical mediator.

V. 5. *Young men.*] It does not appear whether these were the persons, before called *priests*, or not; (xix. 22;) but they acted merely as assistants to Moses, who officiated as priest, on this and several other occasions. The opinion, confidently maintained by some learned men, concerning a primæval right to the priesthood, vested in the eldest son of each family, is destitute of every shadow of scriptural support, and indeed at variance with the only *facts* to which an appeal can be made. Abel, the younger son, sacrificed at the same time as Cain, and was accepted, while Cain was rejected. Noah, not one of his sons, sacrificed after the flood. (*Gen. viii. 20.*) Abraham was commanded to sacrifice, and Isaac, instead of being the priest, was to be the oblation: and afterwards Abraham, not Isaac, offered the ram. Israel, not Reuben, nor any of his sons, sacrificed at Beer-sheba. (xli. 1.) Job officiated as priest, and offered sacrifices for his sons. (*Job i. 6.*) Nor is there the least trace of any thing in scripture, that favours the sentiment, which is a mere human invention, by whomsoever originally devised.—Oxen only are here mentioned: but we learn from the apostle that other animals were sacrificed. (*Heb. ix. 18—20.*)

V. 6—8. Half the blood of the sacrifices was immediately sprinkled on the altar; and the other half, being reserved for that purpose, was afterwards sprinkled *on the people*: either on the seventy elders, as personally representing the congregation, or on the twelve pillars which had been erected along with the altar, as an external sign or emblem of the twelve tribes; or, as some think, it was carried in basins, and sprinkled on the people in general: for this part of the solemnity preceded the ascent of the selected company into the mount (9). We learn from the apostle, that the book was also sprinkled. Moses had *read*, or *proclaimed*, the contents of it in the audience of the people, as the terms of the covenant about to be ratified with them; and they had renewed their consent to it.

<sup>u</sup> Zech. ix. 11. Behold "the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.

<sup>y</sup> See on l. 9 Then <sup>x</sup> went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel.

10 And they <sup>y</sup> saw the God of Israel: and *there was* under his feet as it were

before the sprinkling of the blood on them and on it; and then afterwards he subjoined, "This is the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words." The whole transaction was calculated to impress their minds with the important instruction, that the covenant was made with them, only through the blood of the atoning sacrifice; that neither their persons, moral obedience, nor religious services, could be accepted by a holy God, except through the shedding and sprinkling of blood; that even the blessings of the *national* covenant were all of mercy, and that, though they were secured to them only during their obedience, the Lord would deal with them in kindness, and not construe every act of disobedience into a forfeiture of the covenant. In this manner was the business transacted before all the people: and we learn from apostolical authority, that it was intended as a shadow or type of the manner, in which the true Israelites are admitted into covenant with God, through the atoning blood of Christ; and, yielding themselves to his service, willingly receive his commandments as the rule of their subsequent grateful obedience. (*Note, Heb. ix. 18—23.*)

V. 9—11. After this part of the important solemnity had been concluded, Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders, went up to a higher part of the mount; and there "they saw the God of Israel." Many commentators understand this vision, of an appearance of the Son of God in human form, anticipating his incarnation. And though the expression, "Ye saw no manner of similitude," (*Deut. iv. 15.*) seems to militate against this opinion; yet it may be answered, that this was spoken concerning the people in general, as receiving the law in an audible voice from the mount; but the words here used relate to a few individuals, and to a subsequent time. It is said of Moses, "The *Similitude* of the LORD shall he behold." (*Note, Num. xii. 4—8.*) Christ is the "Image of the invisible God;" the Effulgence of his glory, and the *Character of his subsistence*. (*2 Cor. iv. 4. Notes, John i. 18. Col. i. 15—17. Heb. i. 3, 4.*) The two appearances under consideration were a direct contrast: the former was that of the holy Lawgiver and Judge, in terrible majesty delivering to sinners "the ministration of condemnation;" the latter that of a Saviour, through the sacrifice and sprinkling of blood, admitting believers into communion with himself. Now it is only in Christ, that God manifests himself as reconciled to sinners, or admits any of them into communion with him.—No doubt "God in Christ," the Saviour of sinners, was the God of Israel, who manifested himself on this occasion: yet, it may reasonably be doubted, whether it was a visible appearance in *human form*. The expressions, "There was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire-stone, and as it were the

a paved work of a sapphire-stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness.

11 And upon the <sup>b</sup> nobles of the children of Israel he <sup>c</sup> laid not his hand: also <sup>d</sup> they saw God, and <sup>e</sup> did eat and drink.

12 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses,

Gen. xvi. 13. e xviii. 12. Deut. xii. 7. Ec. ix. 7. Luke xv. 23, 24. 1 Cor. x. 16—18.

"body of heaven in his clearness," accord with some passages in Ezekiel's first vision, in which it is evident, the idea of a personal appearance in human form is carefully excluded; and they seem rather to imply some grand display of glory, which might feebly be illustrated by such similitudes. (*Note, Ez. i. 26—28.*)—It appears therefore more consistent with the narrative, to understand it of a most resplendent manifestation of the divine glory; but in mild majesty, and not with the terrific displays which attended the promulgation of the law; yet even this visible glory itself could not be represented by any similitude: but that which appeared beneath the *feet* of the God of Israel, (that is, under the resplendent majesty, or as it were beneath the glorious throne on which he manifested his presence, as Israel's King,) might be compared to a pavement of sapphires, which are of a beautiful blue colour; or to the azure sky, as most visible in its splendour, on a bright night when spangled with stars. But, while this was a far more distinct vision of the glory of God, than that which had been made at the giving of the law, when nothing was seen, but clouds, darkness, fire, and tempest: yet, through the sacrifice and sprinkling of blood, and the covenant now ratified, this glory did not inspire terror, but confidence; and the representatives of Israel received no harm, but much comfort, while they feasted on the peace-offerings, in full view of the divine glory. Not only was this the case with Moses, the typical mediator; with Aaron, the intended high priest; and with his two eldest sons, who were next to him in the priesthood; but also with the *nobles* of Israel, as the seventy elders are called, being the principal persons of their several tribes. Even on them the Lord laid not his hand, to injure them, but admitted them to feast before him with safety and comfort.—Thus the believer, beholding, in the face of Jesus Christ, far clearer discoveries of the glorious justice and holiness of God, than ever he saw under his most terrifying convictions; feels no dismay, as before, and receives no harm: but with humble confidence, through the mediation of the Saviour, enjoys sweet communion with a holy God, and is inspired with comfort, peace, and joy.

V. 12—14. After the national covenant had been thus solemnly ratified, the Lord called Moses, (probably by an audible voice from the visible glory,) to come up to him into the mount, to receive the law, even the commandments, which God himself had now written on two tables of stone, as well as before spoken from the mount. Thus a peculiar honour was put on the moral law, and it was authenticated in another manner, than either the judgments, or the ritual institutions. The people had promised to obey the whole law, and the ten commandments especially contained that law; obedience to which might be considered

Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee <sup>f</sup> tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written <sup>g</sup> that thou mayest teach them.

13 And Moses rose up, and <sup>h</sup> his minister Joshua: and Moses went up into the mount of God.

14 And he said unto the elders, <sup>i</sup> Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you. And behold, Aaron and <sup>k</sup> Hur are with you: <sup>j</sup> if any man have any matters to do, let him come unto them.

15 And Moses went up into the

mount, and <sup>m</sup> a cloud covered the mount.

16 And <sup>n</sup> the glory of the LORD abode upon mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and the <sup>o</sup> seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud.

17 And the sight of the glory of the LORD <sup>p</sup> was <sup>q</sup> like devouring fire on the top of the mount, in the eyes of the children of Israel.

18 And Moses <sup>r</sup> went into the midst of the cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the mount <sup>s</sup> forty days, and forty nights.

as the condition of the covenant on their part. But they soon broke the principal requirements of it, by direct idolatry; and then the tables, which God had prepared, and on which he himself had written the law, were broken. Yet the same law was again given them, written by the Lord on tables of stone, prepared by Moses; along with the ceremonial law, which typified redemption and salvation by Christ. This intimated, that the rule of duty remains unchangeably the same, though the covenant of works is broken, and another covenant is mediated by the divine Saviour for the benefit of his people.—Joshua, the minister and intended successor of Moses, and a remarkable type of Christ, accompanied him part of the way up the mount: for he was thus by degrees to be honoured before all the congregation, by being admitted nearer to the manifested glory of God, than any other person, except Moses himself.—But before Moses, attended by Joshua, ascended further up the mount; he ordered the elders of Israel to tarry *there* for them, that is, at the foot of the mountain; and not in the exact spot where they then were, as it is evident from the appointment of Aaron and Hur, to be the deputies of Moses in his absence; which would have been of no use, had they remained separated from the people.

V. 15, 16. Having given these directions, Moses ascended further up the mount, even to the cloud that covered it: yet he remained six days, before he was called to enter into the midst of the cloud.—The subsequent narrative shews that Joshua attended him, when he parted from Aaron and his sons, and the elders; and that he waited for his return at a distance from the camp. (xxxii. 17.) It is therefore probable, that he continued with Moses during seven days, joining in holy conference and fervent devotion. These do not seem to have been a part of the forty days and nights afterwards mentioned: and as no intimation is given, that Joshua fasted during the time Moses continued in the mount, we may suppose, they both had manna while together, and Joshua had it after Moses had left him. No doubt he spent his time in prayer and holy contemplation.

V. 17, 18. While the divine glory appeared to Israel, from the midst of the cloud, as devouring fire; Moses, being summoned by the Lord, and encouraged by his supporting grace, entered with holy boldness into that very

cloud; (*Marg. Ref. q;*) and there he continued without food, forty days and forty nights, favoured with divine discoveries, and receiving further instructions for the people. (*Marg. Ref. r.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—11.

Having in the sacred Scriptures, as now completed by the New Testament, not only the laws which God gave by Moses, but the words of grace and truth which he sent to sinners by his only begotten Son; we are more favoured than Israel of old: and we are invited to join ourselves to the Lord in an everlasting covenant, through our divine Mediator, and in the ordinances which he has instituted as pledges of his love. But alas! numbers profess their consent to the covenant, and attest it by attendance on the most solemn ordinances; numbers will be able to say, "Lord, we have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and "thou hast taught in our streets;" to whom the Judge at last shall say, "I tell you, I know you not whence ye are, "depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." (*Luke xiii. 26, 27.*) When indeed we recollect, that the whole generation of Israel, who at that time consented to the covenant, and engaged to be obedient; with the seventy nobles, who "saw the God of Israel, and did eat and drink" before him; at length, with very few exceptions, perished in the wilderness; and that even Nadab and Abihu were afterwards struck dead by fire from before the Lord; we shall perceive the importance of the apostle's caution, "Let "him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." With such examples before our eyes, we cannot surely be so absurd, as to rest in outward privileges, forms, or notions, of whatever kind; or in any thing short of an inward renewal to holiness, which is both the seal of the Spirit, and the earnest of our inheritance.—In this transaction the true Christian can trace the outlines of his own experience. Attending to the holy law of God, he learned to fear his deserved wrath, and could find no peace, till he also heard the sweet words of mercy and grace. But having received instruction concerning the sacrifice of Christ, and the covenant which he mediated, he by faith applied for this salvation, and acceded to this covenant; and thus, by the sprinkling of the Redeemer's blood, "his "conscience was purged from dead works to serve the

f xxxi. 18. Deut. v. 22. Jer. xxxii. 33. 2 Cor. iii. 3. 7. Heb. ix. 4. g Deut. iv. 14. Ezra vii. 10. Matt. v. 19.

h xvii. 9—14. xxxii. 17. xxxiii. 11. Num. xi. 28.

i xxxii. 1. Gen. xxi. 5. 1 Sam. x. 8. xiii. 8—13.

k xvii. 10. 12. l xviii. 25, 26.

m xix. 9. 16. 2Chr. vi. 1. Matt. xvii. 5.

n 17. xvi. 10. Lev. ix. 23. Num. xiv. 10. xvi. 42. Ez. i. 28. 2 Cor. iv. 6. o xix. 11. xx. 10. Rev. i. 10.

p iii. 2. xix. 18. Deut. iv. 24. 36. Ez. i. 27. Heb. xii. 18, 29.

q 17. ix. 29. 38. xix. 20. Prov. xxxiii. 1. r xxxiv. 28. Deut. ix. 9. 18. 25. x. 10. 1 Kings xix. 8. Matt. iv. 2. Mark i. 13. Luke iv. 2.

## CHAP. XXV.

The Lord directs Moses concerning an offering from the people, in order to erect a tabernacle, 1—9. The form of the ark of the covenant, and the mercy-seat, 10—22. The table of shew-bread, 23—30. The golden candlestick, with the tongs and snuff-dishes, 31—40.

<sup>a</sup> xxxv. 5—29.  
Num. vii. 8—88.  
Deut. xvi. 16,  
17. 1 Chr. xxix.  
<sup>b</sup> Heb. take for  
me  
<sup>c</sup> Or, heave offer-  
ing. Num. xviii.  
24.  
<sup>d</sup> xxxv. 21.  
Judg. v. 9. 1 Chr.  
xxix. 17. Ezra i.  
6. iii. 5. vii. 16.  
Neh. xi. 2. Ps.  
cx. 3. 2 Cor. viii.  
12. ix. 7.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it: willingly with his heart, ye shall take my offering.

“living God,” while the book of the law likewise, as it were sprinkled with blood, was put into his hands, to be the rule of his future delightful obedience; and with it the Spirit of adoption was given, inclining and enabling him to obey. Thus the covenant was ratified; and now he has access to God upon a mercy-seat, he sees his glory in the face of Jesus Christ, enjoys communion with him, and is encouraged to serve him in righteousness and true holiness. And though his subsequent life be not one continued feast of strong consolations, yet at times he is thus favoured; and he has generally “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keeping his heart and mind through Christ Jesus;” except when by sin he grieves the Holy Spirit, or brings down upon himself the chastening rod of his reconciled Father.

## V. 12—18.

They, who would enjoy near and sweet communion with the Lord, must obediently hearken to his words, obey his call, and wait for him in faith and patience: and such as are humbly desirous of being employed by him in useful and honourable services, must cheerfully attend to the duties of the lowest station, if at present assigned them; continue faithful and active in occupying with their one talent; and spend much time in retirement, meditation, and devotion.—The lively exercise of faith, and the encouraging experience of the Lord’s goodness, inspire the soul with a holy but humble boldness in approaching him. The terrors, which once were felt at the discovery of his glorious holiness and justice, are dissipated, even while these awful attributes are more distinctly perceived and steadily contemplated, in the person and atonement of the great Redeemer: and while others tremble at a distance, when convinced that “our God is a consuming fire;” the established believer “has grace to worship him with reverence and godly fear,” combined with adoring, thankful love. And finding that his consolations abundantly compensate the want of outward enjoyments, and at some times enable him to forget the craving even of natural appetites; he is not, in these favoured seasons, in haste to terminate the sweet intercourse, but desires still to commune with his God, till a sense of duty compels him reluctantly to return to the ordinary employments of his station.

3 And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass,

4 And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats’ hair,

5 And rams’ skins dyed red, and badgers’ skins, and shittim-wood,

6 Oil for the light, spices for anointing oil and for sweet incense,

7 Onyx-stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breast-plate.

8 And let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell amongst them.

9 According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle,

<sup>c</sup> xxxvi. 1. xxxviii.  
31. xxxix. 3.  
Heb. ix. 19.  
<sup>d</sup> Or, silk. Gen.  
xli. 42. Ez. xvi.  
10. Rev. xix. 8.  
14.  
<sup>e</sup> xxxvi. 14.  
<sup>f</sup> xxxvi. 15. 26. 37.  
xxvii. 1. xxxvi.  
20.  
<sup>g</sup> 37. xxxvii. 20. xl.  
24. 25.  
<sup>h</sup> xxx. 28—38.  
<sup>i</sup> xxxviii. 9—21.  
<sup>j</sup> xv. 2. xxxvi. 1—  
4. Lev. iv. 6.  
xvi. 12. Heb. ix.  
1, 2.  
<sup>k</sup> xxxix. 45. 1 Kings  
vi. 13. 1a. xii. 6.  
Zech. ii. 10. viii.  
3. 2 Cor. vi. 16.  
Heb. iii. 6. Rev.  
xxi. 3.  
<sup>l</sup> 40. 1 Chr. xxviii.  
11—19. Heb.  
viii. 5. ix. 9.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXV. V. 1. Moses in the mount, like Paul in the third heaven, without doubt saw and heard very glorious and wonderful things: but it was not lawful or possible to utter them; (Note, 2 Cor. xii. 1—6;) and he reported nothing to the people but what referred to their duty, and to the worship of God which was to be established among them.

V. 2. The Israelites must be exhorted to offer a portion, towards the establishment of religious worship, from the spoils of the Egyptians, or from such other property as they had by any means obtained: yet this oblation, (called a *heave-offering*, (marg.) probably because lifting it up towards heaven was the ceremony by which it was devoted to God,) was neither exacted by compulsion, nor regulated by prescription; but every one was left to give, as he was “disposed in his heart.” (Note, 2 Cor. ix. 6, 7.)

V. 4—7. Wool, and linen, and goats’ hair, or other materials for working into cloths, dyed of the colours here mentioned, were highly valued.—The Lord so ordered it, that the Israelites had received of the Egyptians all the materials required for building the tabernacle, and setting forward the worship to be there performed, according to the several particulars here mentioned; and this not only intimated favour to the Gentiles, but also represented the use, which God often makes of the abilities and substance of strangers, in supporting and promoting true religion.

V. 8. The word (שֹׁכֵן, from שָׁכַן to sanctify, or make holy,) rendered *sanctuary* denotes a holy habitation for the Lord’s immediate residence. This was intended for a visible pledge and token that he was present with his people, to protect, instruct, guide, and govern them; to pardon their sins, to accept their services, and to supply their wants.—The tabernacle was also a type of the human nature of Jesus Christ, “in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;” of the Church of God, which, as one with him, is a spiritual house; of every true believer, who, as a part of that great temple, is “a habitation of God through the Spirit:” and of heaven, where the presence of God is visibly displayed, and he dwells among his holy angels and redeemed sinners, as their everlasting Felicity, and accepts their holy worship.

V. 9. The Lord not only directed Moses by words, how to build the tabernacle, and form its sacred furniture:

and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it.

10 ¶ And they shall make <sup>m</sup>an ark of shittim-wood: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.

11 And thou shalt <sup>a</sup>overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it; and shalt make upon it a crown of gold round about.

12 And thou shalt cast <sup>c</sup>four rings of gold for it, and put *them* in the four corners thereof; and two rings shall be in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it.

13 And thou shalt make <sup>p</sup>staves of shittim-wood, and overlay them with gold.

14 And thou shalt put the staves into the rings, by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them.

15 ¶ The staves shall be in the rings of the ark: they shall not be taken from it.

16 And thou shalt put into the ark <sup>r</sup>the testimony which I shall give thee.

17 And thou shalt make <sup>r</sup>a mercy-seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof.

18 And thou shalt make <sup>r</sup>two cherubims of gold: of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy-seat.

19 And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: *even* <sup>\*</sup>of the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubims on the two ends thereof.

20 And the cherubims shall stretch forth *their* wings on high, <sup>\*</sup>covering the mercy-seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another: <sup>\*</sup>toward the mercy-seat shall the faces of the cherubims be.

21 And thou shalt <sup>r</sup>put the mercy-seat above upon the ark, and <sup>r</sup>in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee.

r xvi. 34. xxvii. 21.  
xxx. 6. 36. xxxi.  
18. xxxii. 15.  
xxxiv.  
xxxviii. 21.  
Num. xvii. 4.  
Deut. x. 2-5.  
xxvi. 26. 1 Kings  
viii. 9. 2 Kings  
xi. 12. 2 Chr.  
xxxiv. 14. 15.  
Acts vii. 44.  
Heb. ix. 4.  
xxvi. 34. xxxvii.  
6. xl. 20. Lev.  
xvi. 12-15.  
1 Chr. xxviii. 11.  
Rom. iii. 25.  
Heb. iv. 16.  
1 John ii. 2.  
t xxvii. 7-9.  
Gen. iii. 24.  
1 Sam. iv. 4.  
1 Kings vi. 23-  
28. vii. 6. 7.  
1 Chr. xxviii. 18.  
Ez. x. 2. 20. xii.  
18, 19. Heb. ix.  
5.  
\* Or, of the mat-  
ter of the mercy-  
seat.  
u Ez. xxviii. 14

x Gen. xxviii. 12.  
1a vi. 1-5. Ez.  
i. 20. Matt.  
xxiv. 31. John i.  
51. 1 Cor. iv. 9  
xi. 10. Eph. iii.  
10. Col. ii. 10.  
Heb. i. 14. 1 Pet.  
i. 12. iii. 22. Rev.  
v. 11, 12.  
y 17. xxvi. 34.  
Rom. x. 4.  
z See on 16

but he shewed him a model, exactly representing the form of every part, and the proportion of each to all the rest. It is observable, that this related to the construction of the tabernacle and its furniture alone, or perhaps the priestly garments; and has no reference to the rest even of the ceremonial law, as it is frequently supposed. (Note, 40.) Indeed, it is not easy to form an idea of a *pattern*, or *model*, of any thing, which is not material.—During the continuance of Israel in the wilderness, and during four hundred and forty years after their settlement in Canaan, the sanctuary was only a tent, or moveable building; but afterwards a temple was built upon mount Zion, and the typical ordinances were confined to one place. This may mark the difference between the church on earth, and the church in heaven: wandering and journeying through this wilderness, we take our religion, and the ordinances of it, along with us all the way; but in heaven there is rest for the Church of God, and no more removals for ever.

V. 10—21. “The ark of the covenant” was so called, not only as it contained the tables of the law, which were the basis of the national covenant; but also because it was an abiding symbol of God’s gracious presence with his people, and typified those peculiar benefits, which belong to the covenant of peace, mediated by Christ in behalf of the true Israel.—It was a chest, made of wood not liable to rot, of about four feet in length, and two feet and a half in breadth and in depth, plated all over, both within and without, with plates of pure gold, having a border, or cornice, of gold round about it; and covered with a covering all of massy gold, which was called, the *covering*, or “the propitiatory,” or “the mercy-seat,” and it was kept firm in its place by the *cornice*, as the word rendered

“crown” seems here to mean. In this ark the two tables of stone, which contained the law of the ten commandments were put: it was placed in the holy of holies; before it the blood of the sacrifices was sprinkled, and the incense burnt, by the high priest, on the day of atonement; and above it appeared the visible glory, which was the symbol of the divine presence.—This was an evident type of Christ, as to his sinless human nature, (which “saw no corruption,”) in personal union with his divine nature, magnifying the law, and *covering* our transgressions of it, by “having it in his heart,” obeying it in his life, and atoning for the violations of it by his death. Through the sprinkling of his blood, and the intercession which, as our High Priest, he makes in the true holy of holies, God appears to sinners with mild glory upon a mercy-seat; and accepts the persons and services of believers, dwelling among them and abundantly blessing them.—“The testimony,” signifies the tables of the law, which *testified* God’s authority over the Israelites, his regard for them, and his presence with them: they also *testified*, that while he was merciful to them, he required them to be obedient: and the same would *testify* against them, if they neglected or forsook his service and worship. The two cherubim were emblematical representations of the angels, “desiring to look” into the mysteries of redeeming love: they were therefore formed with their faces towards the mercy-seat, as contemplating it and the mysteries which it contained.—Various conjectures have been advanced concerning the form or shape of the cherubim; but the text in this place mentions no more than their faces and wings, and arguments taken from other emblematical parts of Scripture are not satisfactory.—It is thought they were

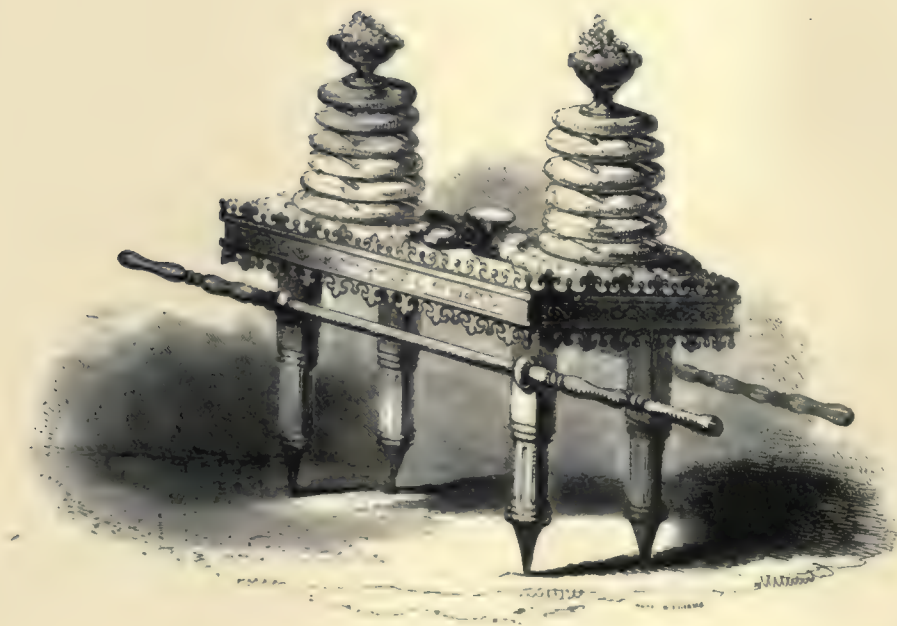


THE ARK AND MERCY-SEAT.

EXOD. XXV. 10-22.







THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD.

EXOD. xxv. 23-30. LEVIT. xxiv. 5-9.





THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK.

EXOD. xxv. 31—40.

<sup>a</sup> xx. 24 xxxi. 18. <sup>b</sup> and I will commune with thee, from above the mercy-seat, from <sup>b</sup> between the two cherubims which *are* upon the ark of the testimony, of all *things* which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.

<sup>c</sup> xxxvii. 10—16. <sup>d</sup> See on 11.—1 Kings vi. 20—22. <sup>e</sup> See on 12. <sup>f</sup> 23 ¶ Thou shalt also make <sup>e</sup> a table of shittim-wood: two cubits *shall be* the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.

24 And thou shalt <sup>d</sup> overlay it with pure gold, and make thereto a crown of gold round about.

25 And thou shalt make unto it a border of an hand-breadth round about, and thou shalt make <sup>e</sup> a golden crown to the border thereof round about.

26 And thou shalt make for it <sup>f</sup> four rings of gold, and put the <sup>f</sup> rings in the

four corners that *are* on the four feet thereof.

27 Over against the border shall the rings be, <sup>g</sup> for places of the staves to bear the table. <sup>g</sup> 14. 28

28 And thou shalt make the staves of shittim-wood, and overlay them with gold, that <sup>h</sup> the table may be borne with them.

29 And thou shalt make <sup>i</sup> the dishes thereof, and spoons thereof, and covers thereof, and bowls thereof <sup>j</sup> to cover withal: of pure gold shalt thou make them.

30 And thou shalt set upon the table <sup>k</sup> shew-bread before me alway.

31 ¶ And thou shalt make <sup>l</sup> a candlestick of pure gold, of beaten work shall the candlestick be made; his shaft, and his branches, his bowls, <sup>m</sup> his knops, and his flowers shall be of the same.

formed of the same mass of gold as the propitiatory, and that this is the meaning of the word rendered *beaten-work*; though others interpret it to denote the polish and finishing of the workmanship.—As the ark and propitiatory were intended to be carried about, there were golden rings at the four corners, and staves plated with gold; which were not taken out of the rings, even when it was stationary.

V. 22. After the tabernacle had been constructed, and the ark of the covenant had been put in the most holy place, the Lord displayed his glory from above the mercy-seat, between the cherubim; and thence he delivered to Moses the rest of the ceremonial and judicial law; communing with him, probably in an audible voice, and answering all his enquiries.

V. 23—30. Nothing but the ark of the covenant, with the propitiatory or mercy-seat, was put within the most holy place; but without the veil, a table was fixed, of the same height as the ark, but neither so long nor so broad. It was made of the same materials as the ark, and with a golden cornice: but it had also another cornice below the edge and one at the bottom; with a border between the two of a handbreadth; though some think one border only was below the edge, and that this was towards the bottom, to keep the feet or legs more closely united. The table also had rings and staves for the convenience of removing it.—To it were annexed several vessels; as *dishes*, in which some think the shew-bread was placed; or, according to others, the flour of which it was made, or the oil used for various purposes:—*spoons*, which were employed about the incense offered on the golden altar, or carried within the veil in a censer on the day of atonement; and some think the word denotes vials, as we read of vials full of odours, or incense: (*Rev. v. 8*):—*covers*, which seem to have been put over both the loaves and the incense; yet some suppose, they were vessels used in drink-offerings; but that is more reasonably considered as the use of the *bowls*,

mentioned in the last place.—The shew-bread will more conveniently be spoken of hereafter: (*Note, Lev. xxiv. 5—9*;) but, in general, this part of the ceremonial institution seems to have typified the communion, which in his ordinances the Lord holds with his redeemed people; the provisions of his house, and the feasts with which they are sometimes favoured; the food for their souls, which they always find when they hunger after it; and the delight which he takes in their persons and services, as presented before him in Christ Jesus. (*Cant. v. 1. Rev. iii. 20.*)

V. 31—39. The candlestick was made entirely of pure gold, beaten into plates and burnished. It is generally thought, that it might be taken in pieces, for the convenience of removing it. The *shaft*, or *trunk*, is supposed to have had a foot, on which the whole candlestick stood firm; yet no mention is made of this foot. On each side of the shaft were three *branches*, shaped like *reeds*, or *canes*, one above the other, being six in all. Each branch was ornamented by three *bowls*, shaped like almonds, (which perhaps were so placed as to receive any thing that fell from the lamps;) and by a *knop* like a pomegranate and a *flower*. These seem to have been placed above the uppermost bowl, just under the lamp, which was at the top of each branch.—On the *shaft*, or *main pillar*, called on that account the *candlestick*, were four *bowls* like almonds, and four *knops* and four *flowers*.—Three of these are supposed to have been made on the shaft, immediately under the place where each of the three branches arose out of it, on either side; the knop and the flower being above the bowl. And the fourth bowl, knop, and flower, were fixed beneath the lamp, which was on the top of the shaft, and which, with those on each of the branches, made the number seven in all. The height of the candlestick is not mentioned, nor indeed the dimensions of any part: but with its vessels, or the tongs and snuff-dishes for dressing the lamps, it contained a talent of pure gold, or about a hundred weight. This might suffice to direct the workmen in

32 And six branches shall come out of the sides of it: three branches of the candlestick out of the one side, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side.

33 Three bowls made like unto almonds, *with* a knop and a flower in one branch; <sup>n xxxvii. 19, 20. Zech. iv. 3.</sup> and three bowls made like almonds in the other branch, *with* a knop and a flower: so in the six branches that come out of the candlestick.

34 And in the candlestick *shall be* four bowls made like unto almonds, *with* their knops and their flowers.

35 And *there shall be* a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and a

knop under two branches of the same, according to the six branches that proceed out of the candlestick.

36 Their knops and their branches shall be of the same: all of it *shall be* one <sup>o 18. Num. vii. 4. 1 Kings x. 16, 17. 2 Chr. ix. 15. p xxxvii. 23. Rev. i. 12, 20. ii. 1. iv. 5. q xxxvii. 21. xxx. 8. Lev. xxiv. 2—4. 2 Chr. xiii. 11. r xl. 24. Num. viii. 2. Ps. cxix. 105. Prov. vi. 23. Is. viii. 20. Matt. v. 14. Luke i. 79. John i. 9. viii. 12. vii. 35. Acts xxvi. 18. Rev. xxi. 23—25. xxii. 5.</sup> <sup>h</sup> <sup>Heb. the face of it.</sup> <sup>i</sup> <sup>Num. viii. 2.</sup> <sup>j</sup> <sup>2 Chr. iv. 21. Is. vi. 6.</sup> <sup>k</sup> <sup>xxxvii. 23. Num. iv. 9. 1 Kings vii. 50. 2 Kings xii. 13. xxv. 14. Jer. lli. 18.</sup> <sup>l</sup> <sup>xxxvi. 30. xxxix. 42, 43. Num. viii. 4. 1 Chr. xxxvii. 11. 19. Ez. xliii. 11, 12. Acts vii. 44. Heb. viii. 5.</sup> <sup>m</sup> <sup>Heb. thou wast caused to see.</sup> <sup>n</sup> <sup>xxxvii. 19, 20. Zech. iv. 3.</sup> <sup>o</sup> <sup>18. Num. vii. 4. 1 Kings x. 16, 17. 2 Chr. ix. 15. p xxxvii. 23. Rev. i. 12, 20. ii. 1. iv. 5. q xxxvii. 21. xxx. 8. Lev. xxiv. 2—4. 2 Chr. xiii. 11. r xl. 24. Num. viii. 2. Ps. cxix. 105. Prov. vi. 23. Is. viii. 20. Matt. v. 14. Luke i. 79. John i. 9. viii. 12. vii. 35. Acts xxvi. 18. Rev. xxi. 23—25. xxii. 5.</sup> <sup>h</sup> <sup>Heb. the face of it.</sup> <sup>i</sup> <sup>Num. viii. 2.</sup> <sup>j</sup> <sup>2 Chr. iv. 21. Is. vi. 6.</sup> <sup>k</sup> <sup>xxxvii. 23. Num. iv. 9. 1 Kings vii. 50. 2 Kings xii. 13. xxv. 14. Jer. lli. 18.</sup> <sup>l</sup> <sup>xxxvi. 30. xxxix. 42, 43. Num. viii. 4. 1 Chr. xxxvii. 11. 19. Ez. xliii. 11, 12. Acts vii. 44. Heb. viii. 5.</sup> <sup>m</sup> <sup>Heb. thou wast caused to see.</sup>

37 And thou shalt make the <sup>o</sup> seven lamps thereof: and <sup>i</sup> they shall <sup>o</sup> light the lamps thereof, that they may <sup>o</sup> give light over against <sup>i</sup> it.

38 And <sup>i</sup> the tongs thereof, and the <sup>i</sup> snuff-dishes thereof, *shall be of* pure gold.

39 *Of* a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these vessels.

40 And look <sup>o</sup> that thou make *them* after their pattern, which <sup>i</sup> was shewed thee in the mount.

respect of the proportions to be observed; especially as Moses would remember the model shewn him in the mount.—There were no windows in the tabernacle; but the candlestick being placed over against the table of shewbread, each lamp would cast its light to the part of the tabernacle over against it, and the whole would thus be sufficiently lighted.—This typified the light of revelation, and the teaching of the Holy Spirit, through Christ Jesus, afforded to the church in this dark world, to direct her worship and obedience, and administer to her consolations: but in heaven, “the LORD will be unto her an everlasting Light, and God himself her glory.”—All these sacred vessels were so framed, that the Israelites might take them with them in their journeys; and they were highly decorated. Thus the religion of Christ must accompany his people through life; and it is fitted to be diffused through all nations: there is in him all beauty and glory; and he adorns his church with the graces of the Spirit, and all the beauty of holiness.—They were all made of the most precious metals: for Christ is most precious in himself, and in the estimation of the Father, of his people, and of all the inhabitants of heaven. His Church also consists of the excellent of the earth; he requires us to consecrate unto him the best and most valuable of every thing, of our time, our substance, our abilities, and especially our affections; and he will accept of nothing but that which is the very best of the kind.

V. 40. The ceremonial law was altogether instituted worship, which derives all its obligation from the express appointment of God. It was likewise in every part typical of Christ and his salvation: but especially the sanctuary and its furniture, were a shadow of him, in his person, righteousness, mediation, and grace; and of our life of faith and communion with him. It was therefore highly proper, that every particular should be fashioned exactly according to the model set before Moses on the mount; and nothing at all left to human invention. Indeed, it is evident, that *uniformity* in worship, as far as related to the services at the tabernacle, and afterwards at the temple, was prescribed by the law, though it was seldom adhered to: but it is equally plain, that such a uniformity, accord-

ing to a precise rule, in the *externals* of worship, was not intended under the new dispensation: and the very disputes, which this subject has so long occasioned, are a complete demonstration that no such exact and explicit rule subsists; for if it did, the controversy must cease of course, or rather could never have been started. The old ritual is evidently antiquated, and nothing of the same kind is substituted in its place; therefore a latitude is allowed us by the Lord, and we have no right to impose our sentiments on others, or to condemn those who differ from us. Yet we must remember, that we are accountable to God for the use which we make of this liberty. We should take heed, that we do not reject the truths or “commandments of God to keep our own traditions;” and that we consider every thing of this kind as a mere circumstance, though in our judgment expedient for the more regular attendance on God’s ordinances, profession of his truths, and obedience to his commandments. (Heb. viii. 5.—Note, 9.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In all things the Lord prevents us with his bounty, and we can present nothing to him, but what was previously his gift. (Note, 1 Chr. xxix. 10—19.) In the great concerns of salvation, his love suggested the gracious design, and his wisdom formed the wonderful plan: the Father loved the world, and gave his Son for our redemption; the Son loved us, and gave himself a sacrifice for our sins; his word reveals this salvation; his providence by special designation hath sent it to us; the ordinances, in which he will meet us, are of his appointment, and rendered effectual by his blessing; and his preventing grace produces at first the willing mind to attend on them. But while he reveals himself in Christ Jesus, as a reconciled Father upon a mercy-seat, affords us the light of his word, and promises the teaching of his Holy Spirit, to direct us to the Bread of life, and guide us into sweet communion with him, that we may feast upon the plenteousness of his holy temple; he reasonably requires that we diligently attend on his ordinances, come to his mercy-seat, enquire his will, feed upon the Bread of life, walk in the light, and present our bodies, souls, and all we have, to him, to

## CHAP. XXVI.

Directions for making the ten curtains of the sanctuary, 1—6. The eleven curtains of goats' hair; and the coverings of rams' skins and badgers' skins, 7—14. The boards, sockets, and bars, 15—30. The veil and pillars to separate the most holy place, 31—33. The arrangement of the furniture in the sanctuary; and the hanging for the door, 34—37.

- a xxxv. 8. xxxvi. 8  
—19. xl. 2. 17—  
19. 1 Chr. xxi.  
29. John i. 14. ii.  
21. Heb. viii. 2.  
ix. 9. 23. 24.  
Rev. xxi. 3.  
b 36. xxxv. 4. xxxv.  
6. 36. Rev. xix.  
8.  
c See on xxv. 18.  
d Heb. the work of  
a spinning work-  
man, or, embroi-  
derer.  
e 7. 8. Num. iv.  
25. 2 Sam. vii. 2.  
1 Chr. xviii. 1.  
f 9. xxxvi. 10.  
John xvi. 21.  
1 Cor. xii. 4. 12  
—27. Eph. ii. 21.  
22. iv. 8—6. 16.  
Col. ii. 2. 19.

**MOREOVER** thou shalt make <sup>a</sup>the tabernacle *with* ten curtains of <sup>b</sup>fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet; *with* <sup>c</sup>cherubims of <sup>d</sup>cunning work shalt thou make them.

2 The length of one <sup>e</sup>curtain shall be eight and twenty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and every one of the curtains shall have one measure.

3 The five curtains shall be <sup>f</sup>coupled together one to another: and

*other* five curtains shall be coupled one to another.

4 And thou shalt make <sup>g</sup>loops of blue upon the edge of the one curtain, from the selvedge in the coupling: and likewise shalt thou make in the uttermost edge of *another* curtain, in the coupling of the second.

5 Fifty loops shalt thou make in the one curtain, and fifty loops shalt thou make in the edge of the curtain that is in the coupling of the second; that the loops may take hold one of another.

6 And thou shalt make fifty <sup>h</sup>taches of gold, and couple the curtains together with the taches: and it shall be <sup>i</sup>one tabernacle.

7 ¶ And thou shalt make <sup>j</sup>curtains of <sup>k</sup>goats' hair to be <sup>l</sup>a covering upon

- g 11. 33. xxxv. 11.  
xxxvi. 18. 1o  
xxxix. 33.  
h Eph. i. 22, 26  
iv. 13. 1 Pet. ii.  
4. 5.  
i xxxv. 26. xxxvi.  
14—16. Num.  
iv. 25. Ps. xiv.  
13. 1 Pet. iii. 4  
v. 6.  
k xxv. 4. xxxv. 6.  
23. Num. xxxi.  
20.  
l 14. Is. iv. 5.

be employed according to his will, and for his glory; and that we, with a willing and liberal mind, according to the ability which he giveth us, actually separate to his service, both for the support of religion and communicating to the poor, a proportion of our substance, to prove the sincerity of our faith and love. If we have no inclination to this, we have no proof that we are his true people; but if we have indeed a willing mind, and give the best which we possess in simplicity, we may take the comfort of this good evidence, that God hath bestowed on us his saving grace. Though no exact proportion is prescribed, yet the Lord saith, that "he which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully,"—in peace and assurance on earth, and in abundant glory in heaven. Finally, let us remember, that if we are true Christians, we are the temples of the Holy Spirit, have the law of God written in our hearts, live a life of communion with God, feast on his ordinances, and are the light of the world. The Lord help us to try ourselves by this view of Christianity, and to walk according to it.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXVI. V. 1—6. As these rich curtains formed the principal covering of the sanctuary, they are called the *Tabernacle*, or *Dwelling-place*, namely, of Israel's God and King.—They were made of the finest linen, dyed of the richest colours, spun and woven in the most curious manner, and beautifully embroidered all over with *cherubim*, the emblematic representation of angels, as joining in the worship of the God of Israel. Each curtain was about fifteen yards long, and something more than two yards wide: but though woven and wrought separately, they were afterwards joined together, into two grand divisions of five curtains each; probably by needle-work. Each of these divisions would be about eleven yards wide; and they likewise were joined together into *one tabernacle*. Fifty loops of blue tape, or ribband, were fastened to the

edge or selvedge of the outermost of the five curtains, on that side by which it was to be coupled to the outermost of the other five curtains; on the selvedge of which, fifty loops were placed exactly answering to the others.—These loops seem to have been joined together, by being passed through each other: and fifty taches, or buttons, or clasps, of gold, were also made, to each of which, two loops, one of either outside curtain, were closely fastened, in order to render the whole compact: yet so that the two grand divisions might easily be separated, when there was occasion to remove it. Thus firmly joined together, it was spread over the top of the sanctuary, and reached on each side, within less than a yard of the ground, covering also the whole length of it. The ten curtains were forty cubits wide, (except any thing should be deducted for the seams and joinings,) yet the sanctuary was not much more than thirty cubits long: hence it has been thought, that one division of the covering was exactly spread over the *holy place*, which was twenty cubits in length; and that the other covered the *most holy place*, which was ten cubits square; and that the residue hung over on the west end towards the ground. But this is not here mentioned: and perhaps this inner covering being spread rather loosely over the sanctuary, did not extend much beyond the ends of it; which is the more likely, as mention is expressly made of the surplus of the second curtains.

V. 7—14. The curtains of goats' hair were above a yard longer than the rich curtains, and would therefore extend above half a yard lower on each side, that is, almost to the ground. Being one more in number than the others, and of the same width, they would, when joined, be more than two yards wider, and so much the more would be left to hang over at the ends of the sanctuary: but it seems that the greater part of the additional curtain, was brought to the east end or opening of it; and there doubled up, perhaps for ornament as a festoon; yet some also remained at the west end, to cover the curtains and the boards. They were joined together, as the rich curtains were, except that

m 1. 9. 12

the tabernacle; <sup>m</sup> eleven curtains shalt thou make.

a 2. 13

8 The <sup>a</sup> length of one curtain *shall* be thirty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and the eleven curtains *shall be all* of one measure.

o a

9 And thou shalt couple <sup>o</sup> five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves, and shalt double the sixth curtain in the fore-front of the tabernacle.

p 4-6.

10 And thou shalt make <sup>p</sup> fifty loops on the edge of the one curtain *that is* outmost in the coupling, and fifty loops in the edge of the curtain which coupleth the second.

• Or, covering.

q See on 3. 6.

11 And thou shalt make fifty taches of brass, and put the taches into the loops, and couple the <sup>q</sup> tent together <sup>q</sup> that it may be one.

r 9.

12 And the remnant that remaineth of the curtains of the tent, the half-curtain that remaineth, <sup>r</sup> shall hang over the back side of the tabernacle.

s 2. 8.

† Heb. in the remnant, or, surplusage.

13 And <sup>s</sup> a cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other side <sup>†</sup> of that which remaineth in the length of the curtains of the tent, it shall hang over the sides of the tabernacle, on this side, and on that side, to cover it.

t xxxvi. 19. Num. 17. 5. Ps. xxxvii. 5. cxli. 4, 5. 1s. 1v. 6. xxx. 4.  
u xxv. 5. xxxv. 7. 23. xxxix. 34. Num. 17. 10. Ez. xvi. 10.  
x 18. 22-29. xxxvi. 20-33. xl. 17, 18. Num. 17. 31, 32. Eph. ii. 20, 21.  
y xxv. 5.

14 And thou shalt make <sup>t</sup> a covering for the tent, *of* <sup>u</sup> rams' skins dyed red, and a covering above *of* badgers' skins.  
15 ¶ And thou shalt make <sup>x</sup> boards for the tabernacle, <sup>y</sup> *of* shittim-wood, standing up.

16 Ten cubits *shall be* the length of

a board, and a cubit and a half *shall be* the breadth of one board.

17 Two <sup>z</sup> tenons *shall there be* in <sup>z</sup> Heb. *kanle* one board, set in order one against another: thus shalt thou make for all the boards of the tabernacle.

18 And thou shalt make the boards for the tabernacle, twenty boards on the south side, southward.

19 And thou shalt make <sup>z</sup> forty sockets of silver, under the twenty boards: two sockets under one board for his two tenons, and two sockets under another board for his two tenons.

20 And for the second side of the tabernacle on the north side, *there shall be* twenty boards.

21 And their forty sockets *of* silver: <sup>a</sup> two sockets under one board, <sup>a</sup> 19. and two sockets under another board.

22 And for the sides of the tabernacle westward, thou shalt make six boards.

23 And two boards shalt thou make for the corners of the tabernacle in the two sides.

24 And they shall be <sup>b</sup> coupled together beneath, <sup>b</sup> and they shall be coupled together above the head of it unto one ring: thus shall it be for them both; they shall be for the two corners.

25 And they shall be eight boards, and their sockets *of* silver, sixteen sockets: two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board.

26 And thou shalt make <sup>c</sup> bars *of*

glorious and precious. The secure protection which he prepares for those who are precious in his sight, may also be denoted: and the unity of the whole, formed of so many pieces, and of such different materials, into one covering of the sanctuary, represents the spiritual temple, formed of persons of different nations, dispositions, abilities, and attainments, compacted together into one church, by the uniting influence of the Spirit of love.

V. 15-29. The sockets of silver, each weighing a talent, that is, about a hundred weight, were placed in rows upon the ground; forty on the south, forty on the north, twelve on the west, and two at each corner on the west end. In every couple of these sockets, and by two tenons fitted to the hollows of them, was fixed a substantial board of shittim-wood, covered with plates of gold: the boards seem also to have been fastened together by mortises and tenons, or by a *concave* in the one exactly fitted to a *convex* in the other. The corner boards were also joined to the boards on either side of them, both at

the taches were made of brass instead of gold. The language however, describing the way in which they were fastened to each other, is varied: and perhaps may be thus more clearly rendered: "Thou shalt make fifty loops at the border of the first curtain, which is outmost next to the coupling, and fifty loops in the border of the curtain that coupleth, *even* of the second." For these were the two curtains by which all the rest were *coupled* together: and on the outmost border of each of these, fifty loops were fixed; which by means of the taches, or clasps, or buttons, were firmly joined together, into one *tent* or *covering*.—Thus the coarser curtains completely covered, and *concealed*, the richer: yet a two-fold security against the effects of the weather was added, in the covering of rams' skins dyed red, and that of badgers' skins, which was spread over all the rest.—The whole represents the person and doctrine of Christ, his true church, and all heavenly things, which are outwardly, and to the carnal eye, mean; but are inwardly, and in the sight of God, exceedingly

z 25. 37. xxxvi. 10. 12-19. xxxvi. 24-26. xxxviii. 27. 30. 31. xl. 18. Num. iii. 35. iv. 31, 32. Cant. v. 15.

b xxxvi. 29. 30. 1s. cxxxiii. 1-3. 1 Cor. i. 10.

c xxxvi. 31-39. Num. iii. 35. iv. 31. Rom. xv. 1. Gal. vi. 1, 2.

shittim-wood: five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle,

27 And five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the tabernacle for the two sides westward.

28 And the middle bar in the midst of the boards shall reach from end to end.

<sup>d</sup> See on xxv. 11, 12. 29 And thou shalt <sup>a</sup> overlay the boards with gold, and make their rings of gold for places for the bars: and thou shalt overlay the bars with gold.

<sup>e</sup> xl. 2. 17, 18. Num. x. 21. Josh. xviii. 1. Heb. viii. 2. <sup>f</sup> xxv. 9, 40, xxvii. 8. Acts vii. 44. Heb. viii. 5. ix. 23. <sup>g</sup> xxxvi. 36. xl. 8. 21. Lev. xvi. 2. 16. 2 Chr. iii. 14. Matt. xxvii. 51. Mark xv. 38. Luke xxiii. 45. Eph. ii. 14. Heb. ix. 3-8. x. 20, 21.

<sup>h</sup> xxv. 4. xxxv. 6. 25. 35. xxxvi. 8. <sup>i</sup> 1. xxviii. 18. xxxviii. 23. 2 Chr. ii. 7-13. Ps. cxxxvii. 5. Cant vii. 1. <sup>k</sup> See on xxv. 18. <sup>l</sup> 27. xxxvi. 38. Esth. i. 6. 30 And thou shalt <sup>a</sup> rear up the tabernacle <sup>f</sup> according to the fashion thereof which was shewed thee in the mount.

31 ¶ And thou shalt make <sup>a</sup> a veil of <sup>b</sup> blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of <sup>c</sup> cunning-work: with <sup>k</sup> cherubims shall it be made.

32 And thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim-wood, overlaid with gold: their hooks shall be of gold, upon the four sockets of silver.

33 And thou shalt hang up the veil under <sup>m</sup> the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither <sup>n</sup> within the veil, <sup>o</sup> the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you, between <sup>p</sup> the holy place and the most holy.

34 And thou shalt <sup>q</sup> put the mercy-seat upon the ark of the testimony, in the most holy place.

35 And thou shalt set <sup>r</sup> the table without the veil, and <sup>s</sup> the candlestick over against the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south; and thou shalt put the table on the north-side.

36 And thou shalt make an <sup>t</sup> hanging for the door of <sup>u</sup> the tent, <sup>v</sup> of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needle-work.

37 And thou shalt make for the hanging five pillars of shittim-wood, and <sup>y</sup> overlay them with gold: and their hooks shall be of gold: and thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for them.

top and bottom, by a ring or staple, no doubt of gold.—Thus a wall was formed on three sides of the sanctuary; which was still further strengthened by five bars of shittim-wood, covered with gold, passing through rings of gold. As the middle bars alone are said to “reach from end to end,” it may be supposed that the others were not so long. The whole was so firmly compacted together, that it could not be shaken or thrown down, much more easily than an edifice of stone; though it might readily be taken down, and afterwards put together again; its materials also were very costly.—In all these things, it was a type of the church of God, “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.” Eph. ii. 20, 21.

V. 30. Notes, xxv. 9. 40.

V. 31-33. This veil separated “the holy place,” or what the apostle calls “the first tabernacle,” “from the most holy place;” and it was hung upon pillars fixed in sockets of silver, in the manner of the boards.—It was formed of the same materials, and with the same ornamental work, as the innermost curtains; but it is generally thought to have been made exceedingly thick, that it might completely conceal the most holy place, and the ark of the covenant.—We need only hint, that sin had excluded man from the gracious presence of God, so that nothing short of the death of Christ could remove the obstacle, rend the veil, and give the sinner free access with boldness to the mercy-seat.

V 36, 37. This hanging was suspended on five pillars,

overlaid with gold, at the east end of the sanctuary, and served instead of a door; on the removal of which, the priests might enter the sanctuary between the pillars. It seems to have been less ornamented in all respects, than the inner veil, and without cherubim; and the sockets for the pillars were made of brass instead of silver. In veneration of the rising sun, many of the Gentiles worshipped towards the east: but Israel was required to protest against that idolatry, by turning their backs upon the east in worshipping God; for we must disregard the most excellent and useful creatures, when they would divert our homage and affections from the Creator.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

With this typical description of Christ and his church before our eyes, let us ask ourselves what our judgment on these subjects is. Do we see any glory in the person of Christ? any excellency in his character, or preciousness in his salvation, or wisdom in the doctrine of the cross? Do we perceive any beauty in holiness, or any amiableness in the character of Christians? These things are hidden under external meanness, from the carnal eye of the superficial observer, but are spiritually discerned by every true believer; who sees, through the exterior covering, the internal glory, and hidden excellency, of heavenly things. As our judgment, choice, and consequent practice are, so is our state towards God. “To you that believe, Christ is precious.”—Let us also examine ourselves, as to the state of our own hearts; whether we possess a consciousness of dependence on God, love to him, hatred of sin, desire after holiness, and a full purpose of heart, through

## CHAP. XXVII.

The brazen altar for burnt sacrifice, and its vessels, 1—8. The court of the tabernacle, its hangings, pillars, and dimensions, 9—19. The oil for the candlestick, and the ordering of it, 20, 21

**AND** thou shalt make an <sup>a</sup>altar of shittim-wood, five cubits long, and five cubits broad: the altar shall be four-square, and the height thereof *shall be* three cubits.

**2** And thou shalt make the <sup>b</sup>horns of it upon the four corners thereof: his horns shall be of the same: and thou shalt <sup>c</sup>overlay it with brass.

**3** And thou shalt make his pans to receive his ashes, and <sup>d</sup>his shovels, and his <sup>e</sup>basons, and his <sup>f</sup>flesh-hooks, and his <sup>g</sup>fire-pans: all the vessels thereof thou shalt make of brass.

divine grace to glorify him? Will our religion bear examination? and are we more careful to approve our hearts to God, than our characters to men? For, notwithstanding all our imperfections, this state of mind is in the sight of God of great price.—The hypocrite is the reverse of all this: he keeps up a specious appearance before men, but he shrinks from examination; for “his inward part is very wickedness;” and God knows it.—Thus also the Christian’s comfort, and his inheritance, are not an outside shew of mirth and prosperity, covering an aching heart, and a soul doomed to destruction; but an inward sweetness and peace unobserved of men, and a glorious inheritance, reserved within the veil. Nay, the mean appearance of the church, and of the Christian, is often a security from persecution and temptation.—As every part of this spiritual building of God, in subserviency to his power and love, conduces to the stability of the whole, let us consider how much it behoves us, to “endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace:” let us watch against discontent, envy, ambition, and contention; and, each in his proper place, study to serve the common interests of genuine Christianity.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXVII. V. 1—8. The altar for the sacrifices made by fire, at the entrance into the Sanctuary, was almost three yards square, and above a yard and a half in height. The frame was of shittim-wood, forming a hollow square within. And on each corner was a small turret, or pinnacle, of the same wood: to which, on some occasions at least, the animals to be sacrificed were bound; and to which part of the blood was applied. The frame of the altar was covered with plates of brass, probably of a considerable thickness, both within and without: the horns also were overlaid with brass. Over the hollow in the middle was placed a brazen grate, to receive the fire and the sacrifices, being full of holes, as a net, through which the ashes might fall down under the altar; whence

**4** And thou shalt make for it <sup>h</sup>a grate of net-work of brass: and upon the net shalt thou make four brazen <sup>i</sup>rings in the four corners thereof.

**5** And thou shalt put it under the compass of the altar beneath, that the net may be even to the midst of the altar.

**6** And thou shalt make <sup>k</sup>staves for the altar, staves of shittim-wood, and overlay them with brass.

**7** And the staves shall be put into the rings, and the staves shall be put upon the two sides of the altar to <sup>l</sup>bear it.

**8** Hollow with boards shalt thou make it: <sup>m</sup>as <sup>n</sup>it was shewed thee in the mount, so shall they make *it*.

**9** ¶ And thou shalt make <sup>o</sup>the court of the tabernacle for the south side

they were removed from time to time. This grate seems to have sloped down on every side, and so to have reached half way to the bottom of the altar within: and by four rings it might be taken up to be cleaned or to be removed, separately from the rest of the altar. By means of this grate, the fire was kept at a proper distance from the wood of which the frame was made; and it had this protection in addition to the covering of brass.—There seem likewise to have been rings to the altar, as well as to the grate, by which it was carried on the staves or bars.—Connected with the altar, were various vessels for different purposes; as *pans*, into which the ashes were taken to be carried away; *basons*, to receive the blood of the sacrifices, and the meat-offerings; *flesh-hooks*, or *forks*, by which the flesh was put on the altar, or ordered when there: and *fire-pans*, in which it is supposed the sacred fire was taken, when the altar was removed; but which might likewise be used on other occasions, especially in carrying fire from the brazen altar, with which to burn incense on the golden altar within the sanctuary. The altar, formed of wood, but protected from the fire by the brazen plates, may typify the human nature of Christ, supported under the fire of the divine wrath for sin, by its union with his divinity.

V. 9—19. The tabernacle, when set up, was inclosed in a court, between fifty and sixty yards in length, and between twenty-five and thirty in breadth; formed by curtains hung upon brazen pillars, fixed in brazen sockets, after the manner of the boards of the sanctuary; and having an entrance at the east end, similar to the entrance of that building. The curtains for this court were made of fine linen, spun and woven, after the manner of the rich curtains called the *tabernacle*; yet neither dyed nor embroidered as they were: but those that formed the entrance into it, were dyed, and wrought with ornamental needlework, though not with *cherubim*.—The brazen pillars likewise were embellished with chapiters, overlaid or environed with plates of silver; (xxxviii. 17;) and the hooks on



THE BRAZEN ALTAR, FOR BURNT OFFERINGS.

Exod. xxvii. 1-8. Lev. i. 1-9.



<sup>o</sup> xxvi. 31—37. southward: *there shall be* <sup>°</sup> hangings for the court of fine twined linen of an hundred cubits long, for one side.

<sup>p</sup> See on xxvi. 19 And the twenty pillars thereof, and their twenty <sup>p</sup> sockets *shall be of* brass; the hooks of the pillars, and their <sup>q</sup> fillets *shall be of* silver.

<sup>q</sup> xxvii. 28 Jer. iii. 21. 11 And likewise for the north side in length, *there shall be* hangings of an hundred cubits long, and his twenty pillars, and their twenty sockets of brass: the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets of silver.

12 And for the breadth of the court, on the west side, *shall be* hangings of fifty cubits: their pillars ten, and their sockets ten.

13 And the breadth of the court on the east side, eastward, *shall be* fifty cubits.

<sup>r</sup> s. xxvi. 36. 14 The <sup>°</sup> hangings of one side of the gate *shall be* fifteen cubits: their pillars three, and their sockets three.

15 And on the other side *shall be* hangings fifteen cubits: their pillars three, and their sockets three.

<sup>s</sup> See on xxvi. 31. 16 And for the gate of the court *shall be* an hanging of twenty cubits, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and

fine twined linen wrought with <sup>t</sup> needle-work: *and* their pillars *shall be* four, and their sockets four.

17 All the pillars round about the court *shall be* filletted with silver: their hooks *shall be of* silver, and their sockets of brass.

18 The <sup>u</sup> length of the court *shall be* an hundred cubits, and the breadth <sup>u</sup> fifty every where, and the height five cubits, of fine twined linen, and their sockets of brass.

19 All the vessels of the tabernacle in all the service thereof, and <sup>x</sup> all the pins thereof, and all the pins of the court, *shall be of* brass.

20 ¶ And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee <sup>y</sup> pure oil-olive beaten, <sup>y</sup> for the light, to cause the lamp <sup>z</sup> to burn <sup>z</sup> always.

21 In <sup>a</sup> the tabernacle of the congregation <sup>b</sup> without the veil, which is before the <sup>a</sup> testimony; <sup>a</sup> Aaron and his sons shall order it from <sup>c</sup> evening to morning before the LORD: *it shall be* <sup>c</sup> a statute for ever unto their generations, on the behalf of the children of Israel.

which the curtains were hung were made of silver.—The pins (19) are supposed to have been intended to hold down the bottom of the curtains to the sockets, that the wind might not blow them aside: and it seems, such pins were also used to hold down the curtains of the tabernacle, which were made of brass, though the sockets were made of silver, and the boards covered with gold. Yet some think, that only the pins for the curtains at the door of the sanctuary, the pillars of which stood in sockets of brass, are meant. Within this inclosure the priests and Levites attended at the altar, and hither the people were admitted, at least such as brought sacrifices: the priests went likewise into the sanctuary; but none, except the high priest, went into the holy of holies, and that but on one day in a year; yet the whole people of Israel was “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation,” compared with the heathen. Surely, this divine appointment is suited to teach us, how far sin has separated betwixt us and a holy God, and what difficulties bar our re-union! Surely it evinces the falsehood of that proud sentiment, which represents man’s poor services, as in themselves acceptable and meritorious before God; since even this “kingdom of priests” could not approach his very mercy-seat, in their own persons, or with their own services, however costly; but only by their representative, their typical mediator, with the sprinkling of blood, and the burning of incense!—These distinctions also represented the difference between the visible nominal

church, and the true spiritual church, which alone hath access to God and communion with him.

V. 20, 21. The purest oil, which ran freely from the olives when bruised, and not such as was squeezed out by a press or mill, was required for the seven lamps of the golden candlestick: and they were to be lighted and ordered by Aaron, and by his sons, through successive generations; some of whom probably attended on them all the night. It is said, “Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning:” and from this and some other expressions in the scriptures referred to in the margin, (*Marg. Ref. d.*) many have concluded that the lamps were not lighted in the day-time. But, as the sanctuary had no windows, and as the priests were required to offer incense twice every day on the golden altar, as well as to order other things within the sanctuary during the day, this construction can scarcely be admitted. Josephus, who was a priest, says, that only three of the seven were lighted in the day-time; and he is an unexceptionable witness to the customs of his own times, but then those customs were often unscriptural. Perhaps, had it not been for an express injunction, the priests might have thought it enough to order the lamps during the day, when wanted; and have left them to go out in the night: but they were particularly commanded to order them through the night, “to cause the lamp to burn always;” and the expressions, before referred to, may only denote, that in the evening they paid an especial at

## CHAP. XXVIII.

Aaron and his sons are appointed to the priesthood,  
1. The holy garments prescribed for the high priest,  
2—5; consisting of the ephod and girdle, 6—14; the  
breast-plate of judgment with Urim and Thummim,  
15—30; the robe of the ephod, the mitre, and the  
coat of fine linen, 31—39. The garments of the other  
priests, 40—43

a Lev. viii. 2 Num.  
xvi. 9—11. xvii.  
2—9. Heb. v. 1  
—5.

AND \* take thou unto thee Aaron  
thy brother, and his sons with him,

tention to the lamps, preparatory to their care of them  
through the night. Upon the whole, it seems probable  
that the light never went out in the sanctuary, except when  
the priests neglected or mistook their duty.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

Of what vast importance, in true religion, must the  
Person, the priesthood, and the sacrifice of the Son of God  
be, when they are forced upon our attention in such a  
variety of types and representations!—He indeed is our  
Prophet, and we must welcome and submit to his teach-  
ing; our King, and we must willingly obey him; our Ex-  
ample, and we must imitate him: but he is also our Altar,  
our Priest, our Sacrifice, our Mediator; and we have nei-  
ther been truly taught by him, nor have we rendered him  
any genuine obedience, unless we have learned to come to  
the Father, as lost sinners, through him, the Way, the  
Truth, and the Life; to draw all our sufficiency from his  
fulness, as the Fountain of grace; and to rely on his  
merits, as the Foundation of our hope.—We have abun-  
dant cause to bless our God, that we are within the inclo-  
sure of his visible church, and favoured with the means  
of grace: let us not however rest in outward profession,  
but be very earnest and diligent, to be found of the number  
of those who “truly have fellowship with the Father and  
“with his Son Jesus Christ.” We should also recollect,  
that even the Scriptures will not prove effectual to en-  
lighten our minds, in those things which belong to eternal  
salvation, without the unction of the Holy Spirit, com-  
municated to us through that great High Priest, of whom  
Aaron and his sons were types, and who “walketh amidst  
“his golden candlesticks.” But at the same time we  
must consider, that ministers, by opening and applying  
the Scriptures, and preaching the gospel continually; and  
private Christians, in performing the duties of their several  
stations; and all, by their fervent, and frequent prayers;  
are instrumental in diffusing the divine light in this dark  
world. Let us then diligently tend the lamp of the sacred  
Scriptures, that we may walk in the light ourselves, and  
communicate it to all around us. And may the Lord send  
forth many able and faithful ministers, to diffuse the light  
throughout the earth: for, blessed be his name, it is not  
now confined to the sanctuary in Israel, but is intended to  
lighten the gentiles in every part of the world.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1. Several intimations had before  
been given of the Lord's purpose; but this is the first  
express appointment of Aaron and his sons, to the priest-  
hood. The heads of families seem hitherto to have offi-

from <sup>b</sup> among the children of Israel,  
that he may minister unto me in the  
priest's office, <sup>c</sup>even Aaron, <sup>e</sup>Nadab and  
Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's  
sons.

2 And thou shalt make <sup>d</sup>holy gar-  
ments for Aaron thy brother, for <sup>e</sup>glory  
and for beauty.

30. Num. xx. 26—28. Ps. cxxxviii. 9. 16. Is. lxi. 3. 10. lxiv. 6. Zech. iii. 3. 4. Rom. iii.  
22. xlii. 14. Gal. iii. 27. Heb. viii. 23. Rev. xix. 8. e 40. xix. 5, 6. Num. xxvii. 20.  
21. Job xl. 10. Ps. xc. 16, 17. xcv. 6. cxliix. 4. Is. iv. 2. Jer. ix. 23, 24. 1 Cor. i. 30, 31

b 41. xxix. 1. 9.  
44. xxxi. 20.  
xxxii. 10. xxxv.  
19. Num. xxv.  
7. Deut. x. 6.  
1 Chr. vi. 10.  
2 Chr. xi. 14.  
Luke i. 6.  
c vi. 23. xxiv. 1.  
9. Lev. x. 1. 12.  
Num. ii. 4.  
xxvi. 61. 1 Chr.  
xxiv. 1—4.  
d xxx. 5—9. 29.  
30. xxxi. 10.  
xxxix. 1. xl. 13.  
Lev. viii. 7—9.  
e 40. xix. 5, 6. Num. xxvii. 20.  
1 Cor. i. 30, 31

ciated as priests, and to have offered sacrifices; but now  
that practice was terminated, and the sacerdotal office was  
restricted to the family of Aaron. Moses not only gave a  
decided proof of his disinterestedness, in leaving his own  
posterity in the rank of private Levites, while he confirmed  
Aaron and his descendants in this important and honour-  
able service; (1 Chr. xxiii. 14—17; Note, 14:) but he also  
fully evinced, that he acted entirely by divine direction;  
and this is further proved by the remarkable circumstance,  
that no provision was made for the succession to the  
priesthood, in case Aaron's family should be extinct. Ac-  
cording to human observation, this was a very probable  
event, especially after the death of Nadab and Abihu: and  
it must have been followed by the entire subversion of the  
religious system at this time established; for it was fund-  
amental to it, that no person, in any age or in any case,  
should officiate as priest, under the penalty of death, ex-  
cept he were of Aaron's family: yet Moses left the whole  
dependant on an apparent contingency! This, human  
policy never would have done. But the providence of  
God took care of that, which was thus simply committed  
to him; and the priests of the family of Aaron increased,  
and continued as long as that dispensation, and until the  
Christian dispensation was introduced.—The word (כֹּהֵן) rendered  
“that he may minister in the priest's office,” seems originally to have meant *serving in an honourable  
station*: and therefore it is used concerning the sons of  
David, who could not be priests, strictly speaking.  
(2 Sam. viii. 18.) Hence it is in several places in the  
margin rendered *princes*. And as *princes* or courtiers wait  
on the king, and are honoured by nearer access to him  
than others; so the priests under the law, both in respect  
of their office, and as types of Christ, waited on the Lord  
in his courts, and were admitted nearer to him than other  
Israelites. Therefore “no man took this honour to him-  
“self, but he who was called of God, as was Aaron;”  
for it was absolutely requisite that the Lord should select  
the persons, whom he would admit into his special pre-  
sence, and distinguish as the types of his beloved Son, in  
mediating between him and his sinful creatures.—Where-  
ever the word (כֹּהֵן) is connected with any of the names of  
God, it seems always to denote a *priest*; but when it  
stands alone, it sometimes means a *prince* or eminent  
person.

V. 2. Whatever was separated from common uses, and  
consecrated to the immediate service of God, was called  
HOLY. These garments were intended to distinguish the  
priests, and to render their persons and ministrations re-  
spected by the people: they were also emblematical of  
that holy conversation and conduct, which should ever be



THE HIGH PRIEST IN HIS ROBES AND BREAST-PLATE,  
AND  
A PRIEST IN THE ORDINARY DRESS OF THE TEMPLE SERVICE.

Exod. xxviii. xxxix.



3 And thou shalt speak unto all *that* *are* <sup>1</sup>wise hearted, whom I have <sup>2</sup>filled with the Spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

4 And these *are* the garments which they shall make; <sup>1</sup>a breast-plate, and an <sup>2</sup>ephod, <sup>3</sup>and a robe, and <sup>4</sup>a broi-dered coat, a <sup>5</sup>mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

5 And they shall take <sup>1</sup>gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen.

6 ¶ And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined <sup>1</sup>linen, with cunning work.

7 It shall have the <sup>1</sup>two shoulder-pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof; and *so* it shall be joined together.

8 And <sup>1</sup>the <sup>2</sup>curious girdle of the ephod which *is* upon it, shall be of the same, according to the work thereof;

*even* of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen.

9 And thou shalt take two <sup>1</sup>onyx-stones, and <sup>2</sup>grave on them the names of the children of Israel.

10 Six of their names on one stone, and *the other* six names of the rest on the other stone, <sup>1</sup>according to their birth.

11 With the work of an engraver in stone, *like* the <sup>1</sup>engravings of a signet, shalt thou engrave the two stones, with the names of the children of Israel: thou shalt make them to be set in <sup>1</sup>ouches of gold:

12 And thou shalt put the two stones upon <sup>1</sup>the shoulders of the ephod, *for* stones of memorial unto the children of Israel. And <sup>1</sup>Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD, upon his two shoulders for a <sup>1</sup>memo-rial.

13 And thou shalt make <sup>1</sup>ouches of gold:

14 And two <sup>1</sup>chains of pure gold at the ends: of <sup>1</sup>wreathen work shalt thou make them, and fasten the wreathen chains to the ouches.

1. xxi. 3-6. xxxi. 31-35. xxxvi. 1. 2. Is. xxviii. 24-26. 3. Deut. xxxiv. 9. Is. xl. 2. 1 Cor. xii. 7-11. Eph. i. 17.

1. xxxix. 8-21. Is. lix. 17. Eph. vi. 14. 1 Thes. v. 8. Rev. ix. 17. 4. 6-14. xxxix. 2-5. 21. 22. Lev. viii. 7. 8. 1 Sam. ii. 18. xxx. 18. xxxiii. 6. xxx. 7. 2 Sam. vi. 14. k. 31-34. xxxix. 25, 26. 7. 33, 40. Lev. viii. 7. 28. xxxix. 28. Lev. viii. 9. Zech. iii. 5. 6. 1. 3. 4. -xxxix. 2, 3.

o. See on xvi. 1.

p. xxxix. 4.

7. 27, 28. xxxix. 5. xxxix. 20, 21. Lev. viii. 7. Is. xi. 5. 1 Pet. i. 3. Rev. i. 13. 1. r. embroidered.

20. xxxix. 13. Gen. ii. 2. Job xxxviii. 16. Ps. xxxviii. 3. 38. xxxix. 6. 2 Chr. ii. 7. Cant. viii. 6. Is. xlix. 16.

1. 1-4. Gen. xliii. 33.

21. Jer. xlii. 24. Zech. iii. 9. Eph. i. 13. iv. 30. 2 Tim. ii. 12. Rev. vii. 2.

x. 13, 14. 25. xxxix. 6. 13. 18.

7. Ps. lxxxix. 19. Is. ix. 6. xii. 2. Zech. vi. 13, 14. Heb. vii. 25-28. z. 29.

a. xii. 14. xlii. 9. xxxix. 7. Gen. ix. 12-17. Lev. xxiv. 7. Num. xvi. 40. xxxi. 54. Josh. iv. 1. Is. lxii. 6. Marg. Luke i. 54. 72. Act. x. 4. b. 24. xxxix. 15.

c. 22-25. xxxix. 17, 18. 1 Kings vii. 17. 2 Kings xxv. 17. 2 Chr. iv. 2, 13.

the "glory and beauty," the distinguishing mark, of the ministers of religion; without which they, and the services which they perform, will be had in contempt. But especially they were typical of the glory of the divine majesty, and the beauty of perfect holiness, which rendered Jesus Christ "such a High Priest as became us," and stamped infinite value on his whole work. (Note, Heb. vii. 26-28.)

V. 3. Whoever is endued with skill and ability to perform the service assigned him, especially in promoting true religion, and does it uprightly and diligently, is *wise-hearted*, and will give God the glory of making him so; for all natural wisdom is the gift of God: but this seems to have been *supernaturally* bestowed; as it is added, "whom I have filled with the Spirit of wisdom." (Notes, xxxi. 1-6.)

V. 4, 5. The different parts of the priestly garments will be briefly considered, as they are afterwards more particularly described.—They were made for Aaron and "his sons, that he might minister in the priest's office:" and it is generally thought that the priests never wore the sacred vestments, except when ministering at the sanctuary. All the garments seem to have been made of *linen*, though some writers, without any scriptural proof, assert that part of them was made of *wool*. Where no colour is mentioned, the linen was white.

V. 6-14. The ephod, or the outer garment of the priests, which they wore over the rest to keep them close about them, was a short coat without sleeves; but made

with two shoulder-pieces, one for each shoulder, to join the whole garment together, and to retain it in its place. Ephods were worn by the inferior priests, and even by others on some occasions; as by Samuel when a child, and by David when he danced before the ark. (1 Sam. ii. 18. 2 Sam. vi. 14.) But these were made only of linen; whereas the ephod of gold was richly dyed and curiously embroidered, and had much gold wrought upon it. According to our translation, and the general sense of expositors, it was likewise girt on with a girdle over the breast, dyed, embroidered, and interwoven with gold, like the other parts of the ephod: but it is not certain, whether the original words mean a *girdle*; or merely that the whole of the ephod *which went round the body*, as well as that which was on the breast and shoulders, should be thus ornamented. The ephod, however, was buttoned on each shoulder by an onyx set in gold; and on these two onyx-stones were engraven the names of the twelve sons of Israel, six on each onyx, according to their seniority; that the chief priest might bear their names before the Lord in his ministrations, and thus both remember to plead their cause, and also put the Lord in remembrance of his promises to them. There were likewise two chains of gold, curiously wreathen, and fixed to the ouches, in which the onyx-stones were set: and these chains seem to have served also to fasten the breast-plate on the ephod (22-28).—Thus Christ appeared to the apostle, "girt about the paps "with a golden girdle:" for "righteousness was the girdle "of his loins;" "he was clad with zeal as a clonk;"

d See on 1. 4 30.  
—xxxix. 8 Lev.  
viii. 8.

e See on G xxvi.  
1.

15 ¶ And thou shalt make <sup>d</sup> the breast-plate of judgment with cunning work, <sup>e</sup> after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it: of gold, of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine twined linen shalt thou make it.

16 Four-square it shall be being doubled; a span shall be the length thereof, and a span shall be the breadth thereof.

f See on 9. 11.—  
xxxix. 10. Mal.  
iii. 17.

• Heb. fill in it  
filings of stone.

g Ez. xxviii. 13.  
Rev. xxi. 19—21.

† Or, ruby. Job  
xxviii. 18. Prov.  
iii. 15. viii. 11.

xx. 15. xxxi. 10.

Lam. iv. 7.

h Job xxviii. 19. k  
Rev. xxi. 20.

i Is. li. 31, 32.

k xxxix. 11 Ez.  
xxvii. 16.

l xxiv. 10. Job  
xxviii. 6. 16.

Cant. v. 14. Ez.  
i. 26. x. 1. Rev.

iv. 3. xxi. 19.

m Jer xvii. 1. Ez.  
xxviii. 18.

n xxxix. 12.

o Is. li. 12.

p Ez. i. 16. x. 9.

Dan. x. 6. Rev.  
xxi. 20.

q See on 9.

r Rev. iv. 3. xxi.  
11. 18.

s Heb. fillings. 13.

t 9—11.

u 1 Kings xviii. 31.  
Luke xxii. 30.

Jain. i. 1. Rev.  
vii. 4—8. xxi. 12.

v 14

17 And <sup>f</sup> thou shalt <sup>g</sup> set in it settings of stones, *even* four rows of stones: *the first row shall be* <sup>h</sup> a <sup>i</sup> sardius, <sup>j</sup> a topaz, and <sup>k</sup> a carbuncle: *this shall be* the first row.

18 And the second row shall be an emerald, <sup>l</sup> a sapphire, and <sup>m</sup> a diamond.

19 And the third row <sup>n</sup> a ligure, <sup>o</sup> an agate, and an amethyst.

20 And the fourth row, <sup>p</sup> a beryl, and <sup>q</sup> an onyx, and <sup>r</sup> a jasper: they shall be set in gold in their <sup>s</sup> inclosings.

21 And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, <sup>t</sup> twelve, according to their names; *like* the engravings of a signet, every one with his name shall they be <sup>u</sup> according to the twelve tribes.

22 And thou shalt make <sup>v</sup> upon the breast-plate chains at the ends, of wreathen work, of pure gold.

23 And thou shalt make upon the breast-plate two rings of gold, and shalt

put the two rings on the two ends of the breast-plate.

24 And thou shalt put the two wreathen chains of gold in the two rings *which are* on the ends of the breast-plate.

25 And *the other* two ends of the two wreathen chains, thou shalt fasten in the two ouches, and put *them* <sup>z</sup> on the <sup>y</sup> shoulder-pieces of the ephod before it.

26 And thou shalt make two rings of gold, and thou shalt put them upon the two ends of the breast-plate, in the border thereof, which *is* in the side of the ephod inward.

27 And two *other* rings of gold thou shalt make, and shalt put them on the two sides of the ephod, underneath, towards the fore-part thereof, over against the *other* coupling thereof, above <sup>y</sup> the curious girdle of the ephod. <sup>z</sup> See on 9.

28 And they shall bind the breast-plate, by the rings thereof unto the rings of the ephod with <sup>z</sup> a lace of blue, that *it* may be above the curious girdle of the ephod, and that the breast-plate be not loosed from the ephod. <sup>z</sup> 31. 37. xxxix. 30, 31. Num. xv. 38

29 And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel <sup>a</sup> in the breast-plate of judgment, <sup>b</sup> upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place, for <sup>c</sup> a memorial before the LORD continually. <sup>a</sup> See on 15. 30. <sup>b</sup> See on 12.—Jer. xxx. 21. Rom. x. 1 <sup>c</sup> Cant. viii. 6. 1a. xlix. 15, 16

“the government was upon his shoulders;” and he bears the names of his people before God, as a memorial; while, as their Representative and Advocate, with all his power, he interposes in their behalf, and maintains their cause.

V. 15—29. “The breast-plate of judgment” was so called, because the high priest wore it whenever he consulted the Lord, about the concerns of religion and government, in order to deliver the *judgment of God* to the rulers in the congregation. It was a piece of fine linen cloth, woven, dyed, and embroidered, like the golden ephod, and being doubled it was a span square. Upon it were fixed twelve precious stones, set in twelve ouches of gold; and on each of them was engraven the name of one of the sons of Israel: these being considered as the representatives of the twelve tribes. It is doubted; whether the name of Levi was engraven, as that tribe might be sufficiently represented by the high priest himself; or whether Manasseh and Ephraim had each a separate stone, as forming two tribes: but the text seems to imply, that the names of all Jacob’s sons were engraven, and no other.—Learned men have formed discordant opinions about the precious stones intended by the original words; but we

may as well rest satisfied with our version, which probably is as correct as any. Nor have the endeavours which some have used, to find out a coincidence between the precious stone, and the character or circumstances of the tribe supposed to have been engraven on it, proved at all successful. It suffices, that they were emblems of the divers excellencies, found in the several members of the Church of Christ, who among them possess all that is truly valuable upon earth.—This breast-plate Aaron wore, when he went into the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord, to remind him that he acted in a publick character; and that he must have the interests of all the tribes, whom he represented, near his heart in approaching the Lord, without any prejudice or partiality. This was an evident type of Christ, who has the name even of every individual of his people engraven upon his heart; and within the veil will be sure never to forget or neglect any of them, or of their concerns, however destitute or despicable they may be upon earth.—The breast-plate, thus richly decorated, was firmly joined to the ephod of gold. Two golden rings were fixed on the two uppermost corners of the breast-plate, to which the wreathen chains of gold, (before mentioned in the description of the ephod,) being

**30** And thou shalt put in the breast-plate of judgment <sup>a</sup>the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the LORD: and Aaron shall <sup>e</sup>bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart, before the LORD continually.

**31** ¶ And thou shalt make <sup>e</sup>the robe of the ephod all of blue.

**32** And there shall be an hole in the top of it, in the midst thereof: it shall have a binding of woven work, round about the hole of it, <sup>b</sup>as it were the

hole of an habergeon, <sup>i</sup>that it be not rent.

**33** And *beneath*, <sup>k</sup>upon the <sup>k</sup>hem of <sup>k</sup>it, thou shalt make <sup>i</sup>pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, round about the hem thereof; and <sup>m</sup>bells of gold between them round about.

**34** A <sup>n</sup>golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round about.

**35** And it shall be upon Aaron, to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he <sup>o</sup>goeth in unto the holy place

joined to the ouches of gold on the shoulder-pieces, were fastened. (14. 25.) Then two other rings of gold were placed underneath, and out of sight, at the lowermost corners of the breast-plate; and two answering them on the ephod, at the bottom of the *shoulder-pieces*, as the word rendered *sides* (27) evidently means; and these rings on the breast-plate and on the ephod, were tied fast together by a blue lace or ribband on each side, over the curious work of the ephod. Thus it was so completely fastened at all the four corners, that it could not move.

V. 30. The Scriptures no where inform us, what the URIM and THUMMIM were; nor was any direction given to Moses how to make them. The original words signify, THE LIGHTS, (or *Illuminations*;) and THE PERFECTIONS; and a variety of conjectures have been made on the subject. Some suppose that the precious stones, engraven with the names of the sons of Israel, are meant; which are thus called from their *brilliancy*, and because they were the most *perfect* of their kind: but the context seems to imply that something further was intended, and this interpretation is not satisfactory. Others think, that the words *אורים וטומים* were either wrought in the substance of the breast-plate, or engraven on a plate of gold, and fixed upon it; as HOLINESS TO THE LORD was, upon the mitre; intimating, that divine illumination and strict integrity or soundness of heart, were requisite in the sacred office of the high priest: or rather, that the clearest light and knowledge, with the most perfect counsel and direction, would be obtained by thus consulting the Lord.—This interpretation seems not inconsistent with the narrative: but it is objected, that no direction is given how these words were to be put into the breast-plate, as there is afterwards concerning the inscription on the mitre (36). Others therefore think, that the URIM and THUMMIM were something given to Moses on the Mount, to be privately inclosed in the breast-plate, as a pledge that the Lord would answer the high priest when he thus enquired his will; and that it was the Lord's express intention, none should know what they were. Several other opinions have been formed, but these seem the most plausible. Yet, after all, it may be doubted, whether any thing were put into the breast-plate, distinct from the things before described; and whether the use to which it was to be appropriated were not principally intended.—When however the high priest, as Israel's representative, wearing the breast-plate, enquired for the

ruler and congregation of Israel, what they ought to do; he was illuminated and instructed to give perfect counsel in the most difficult cases. Various opinions are also formed, concerning the *manner*, in which these answers were given; but only two seem at all probable: either the high priest was answered by an audible voice from above the mercy-seat within the veil, or he was inspired as a prophet, to declare the will of God on the occasion. It is evident that none but the high priest was authorized to enquire of God in this manner; and he only at the tabernacle, in the holy place without the inner veil: but some instances, hereafter to be considered, render it probable, that on particular occasions, the Lord answered enquiries made in *this manner*, at a distance from the tabernacle. (1 Sam. xiv. 18. 36, 37. xxiii. 1—12.)—The Jewish writers say, that this method of enquiring the will of God was terminated, when Solomon had built the temple; and it is certain, that little is afterwards recorded concerning it: but it seems rather to have fallen into disuse, because the high priests in general neglected their duty; and the prophets, as extraordinary messengers of God, were appointed to supersede them. It however finally ceased at the captivity; till Christ, the great Antitype, arose, as a Priest with URIM and THUMMIM, who communicates to his true Church, from his treasury of divine wisdom and grace, through his word, and by his Spirit, all wisdom, knowledge, and righteousness, and every perfect gift, in measure sufficient for every emergency. And as the URIM and THUMMIM were on Aaron's heart, whenever he entered the sanctuary to enquire the will of God; and he never approached the Lord in *this manner*, on his own personal concerns, as distinct from those of his people, but as "bearing the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart continually;" so Christ "appears in the presence of God for us," and ever bears the interests of his whole church and of every believer on his heart, in his unremitting intercession for us.

V. 31—35. The robe of the ephod was the middle garment, which was worn under the ephod, and above the coat (39). It had a hole, through which the head passed when it was put on; and it seems to have been formed carefully of one piece, that it should not be rent. This may remind us of Christ's coat "without a seam, woven from the top throughout," and which was not rent, but cast lots for by the soldiers; an emblem of his perfect

before the LORD, and when he cometh out; that he die not.

**36 ¶** And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and 'grave upon it, *like* the engravings of a signet, 'HOLINESS TO THE LORD.

**37** And thou shalt put it on 'a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre: upon the fore-front of 'the mitre it shall be.

**38** And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may 'bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always

upon his forehead, that they may be 'accepted before the LORD.

**39** And thou shalt 'embroider the coat of fine linen, and thou shalt make the mitre of fine linen, and thou shalt make 'the girdle of 'needle-work.

**40 ¶** And 'for Aaron's sons thou shalt make coats, and thou shalt make for them girdles, and 'bonnets shalt thou make for them, 'for glory and for beauty.

**41** And thou shalt put them upon Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him: and shalt 'anoint them, 'and 'consecrate them, and sanctify them,

uninterrupted obedience to the divine law, and of the unbroken harmony which ought to subsist in his church.—Upon the hem, or lowermost border of the robe, which is supposed to have reached to the ancles, were fixed artificial pomegranates, which were richly dyed, though the rest of the robe was entirely blue; and between every two of the pomegranates was fastened a golden bell. It is not said how many there were of each: but it is much more probable that they accorded to the twelve tribes of Israel, than that there should be seventy-two, as some writers assure us.—These may represent the sound of divine truth, preached or professed, being joined with the precious fruits of holiness, in the ministers of the gospel and in true Christians: but it especially typified the glad tidings which Christ is anointed to preach, and the fragrant fruits of his priesthood which he confers upon his Church.—The bells were also intended to give notice to the people when the high priest entered into the most holy place, perhaps that they might join his ministrations within the sanctuary with their prayers. (*Luke i. 10.*) It is also added, "That he die not;" which he might expect to do, if he did not act according to the prescribed rules, in this sacred and typical interposition between sinners and a holy God.

V. 36—38. The mitre was made of fine linen, rolled up, not much unlike the turbans worn at this day in the eastern countries, as the original name evidently indicates. (מִצְנֶפֶת, *à* מִצְנֶפֶת *vertere, volvere, circumdare.*) On this crown, or turban, was fastened, by a blue ribband or lace, passed through it and tying behind, a plate of fine gold, beaten into the form of a leaf, or one of the petals of a beautiful flower, and rendered as bright as possible; for so the word seems to mean. On this plate were engraven the Hebrew words קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה, signifying HOLINESS TO THE LORD; and it was placed on the mitre exactly over the high priest's forehead, so that every one whom he faced might read the inscription. This was suited to remind him of the sanctity of his office and character, as the typical mediator between JEHOVAH and his people; and so especially required to be in all respects devoted in holiness, to the service of a holy God: and to warn him neither to disgrace, nor attempt to conceal, his sacred function. It likewise instructed the people to honour his person and ministrations.—In wearing constantly, when officiating as high priest, this holy crown, he was also reminded that he "was to bear the iniquity

"of the holy things," which Israel offered to the Lord. If any thing was neglected, or done contrary to law, he must be answerable for it, and should therefore be circumspect; and their involuntary imperfections must be expiated by his typical services. In all this he represented our great High Priest, whose perfect holiness, and voluntary dedication of himself in our behalf unto the Father, to fulfil his will and magnify his law by his obedience unto death, have prepared the way for his being "made to us "Sanctification," by his Holy Spirit. Through the same he also "bears the iniquity of our holy things," and, by his prevailing intercession, renders our sinful persons and imperfect services acceptable to a holy God.

V. 39. We read before of an embroidered coat, but no particular directions were given how it was to be made. It is supposed to have been the innermost garment worn by the high priest, having sleeves down to the wrists, made rather close to the body, but hanging loose, except as fastened by a girdle. It was made of fine linen, (as the mitre also was,) probably white, but curiously embroidered: and the girdle was not only embroidered, but dyed of various colours. (xxxix. 29.) Some affirm likewise that it was made so long, as to reach many times round the body, like a sash; and to have ends hanging down almost to the ground, which, when employed, the high priest threw across his shoulder. (*Rev. i. 13.*)

V. 40, 41. The coats and girdles of the ordinary priests are thought to have been made, in all respects, like those of the high priest: but the bonnets worn on their heads were different from his crown or tiara, as another word is used (מִצְנֶפֶת); but the precise difference is not certainly known. They too had ephods, but of plain white linen; and the breast-plate, the robe of the ephod, and the golden crown inscribed HOLINESS TO THE LORD, were peculiar to the high priest. Yet the garments of the ordinary priests were made "for them for glory and for beauty," as well as his. They typified the glorious and beautiful holiness of Christ, our great High Priest, which is communicated to all the royal priesthood of his true disciples: and, while it required great care in the priests to keep their garments pure and white, they were reminded of the holiness which they ought diligently to observe in all their conduct.—It is said by the Jewish expositors, that these garments were never washed; but when soiled, they were used for other

u Lev. i. 4. xxi. 27. xxiii. 11. <sup>14</sup> <sup>15</sup> <sup>16</sup> <sup>17</sup> <sup>18</sup> <sup>19</sup> <sup>20</sup> <sup>21</sup> <sup>22</sup> <sup>23</sup> <sup>24</sup> <sup>25</sup> <sup>26</sup> <sup>27</sup> <sup>28</sup> <sup>29</sup> <sup>30</sup> <sup>31</sup> <sup>32</sup> <sup>33</sup> <sup>34</sup> <sup>35</sup> <sup>36</sup> <sup>37</sup> <sup>38</sup> <sup>39</sup> <sup>40</sup> <sup>41</sup> <sup>42</sup> <sup>43</sup> <sup>44</sup> <sup>45</sup> <sup>46</sup> <sup>47</sup> <sup>48</sup> <sup>49</sup> <sup>50</sup> <sup>51</sup> <sup>52</sup> <sup>53</sup> <sup>54</sup> <sup>55</sup> <sup>56</sup> <sup>57</sup> <sup>58</sup> <sup>59</sup> <sup>60</sup> <sup>61</sup> <sup>62</sup> <sup>63</sup> <sup>64</sup> <sup>65</sup> <sup>66</sup> <sup>67</sup> <sup>68</sup> <sup>69</sup> <sup>70</sup> <sup>71</sup> <sup>72</sup> <sup>73</sup> <sup>74</sup> <sup>75</sup> <sup>76</sup> <sup>77</sup> <sup>78</sup> <sup>79</sup> <sup>80</sup> <sup>81</sup> <sup>82</sup> 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u Lev. i. 4. xxi. 27. xxiii. 11. <sup>14</sup> <sup>15</sup> <sup>16</sup> <sup>17</sup> <sup>18</sup> <sup>19</sup> <sup>20</sup> <sup>21</sup> <sup>22</sup> <sup>23</sup> <sup>24</sup> <sup>25</sup> <sup>26</sup> <sup>27</sup> <sup>28</sup> <sup>29</sup> <sup>30</sup> <sup>31</sup> <sup>32</sup> <sup>33</sup> <sup>34</sup> <sup>35</sup> <sup>36</sup> <sup>37</sup> <sup>38</sup> <sup>39</sup> <sup>40</sup> <sup>41</sup> <sup>42</sup> <sup>43</sup> <sup>44</sup> <sup>45</sup> <sup>46</sup> <sup>47</sup> <sup>48</sup> <sup>49</sup> <sup>50</sup> <sup>51</sup> <sup>52</sup> <sup>53</sup> <sup>54</sup> <sup>55</sup> <sup>56</sup> <sup>57</sup> <sup>58</sup> <sup>59</sup> <sup>60</sup> <sup>61</sup> <sup>62</sup> <sup>63</sup> <sup>64</sup> <sup>65</sup> <sup>66</sup> <sup>67</sup> <sup>68</sup> <sup>69</sup> <sup>70</sup> <sup>71</sup> <sup>72</sup> <sup>73</sup> <sup>74</sup> <sup>75</sup> <sup>76</sup> <sup>77</sup> <sup>78</sup> <sup>79</sup> <sup>80</sup> <sup>81</sup> <sup>82</sup> <sup>83</sup> <sup>84</sup> <sup>85</sup> <sup>86</sup> <sup>87</sup> <sup>88</sup> <sup>89</sup> <sup>90</sup> <sup>91</sup> <sup>92</sup> <sup>93</sup> <sup>94</sup> <sup>95</sup> <sup>96</sup> <sup>97</sup> <sup>98</sup> <sup>99</sup> <sup>100</sup> <sup>101</sup> <sup>102</sup> <sup>103</sup> <sup>104</sup> <sup>105</sup> <sup>106</sup> <sup>107</sup> <sup>108</sup> <sup>109</sup> <sup>110</sup> <sup>111</sup> <sup>112</sup> <sup>113</sup> <sup>114</sup> <sup>115</sup> <sup>116</sup> <sup>117</sup> <sup>118</sup> <sup>119</sup> <sup>120</sup> <sup>121</sup> <sup>122</sup> <sup>123</sup> <sup>124</sup> <sup>125</sup> <sup>126</sup> <sup>127</sup> <sup>128</sup> <sup>129</sup> <sup>130</sup> <sup>131</sup> <sup>132</sup> <sup>133</sup> <sup>134</sup> <sup>135</sup> <sup>136</sup> <sup>137</sup> <sup>138</sup> <sup>139</sup> <sup>140</sup> <sup>141</sup> <sup>142</sup> <sup>143</sup> <sup>144</sup> <sup>145</sup> <sup>146</sup> <sup>147</sup> <sup>148</sup> <sup>149</sup> <sup>150</sup> <sup>151</sup> <sup>152</sup> <sup>153</sup> <sup>154</sup> <sup>155</sup> <sup>156</sup> <sup>157</sup> <sup>158</sup> <sup>159</sup> <sup>160</sup> <sup>161</sup> <sup>162</sup> <sup>163</sup> <sup>164</sup> <sup>165</sup> <sup>166</sup> <sup>167</sup> <sup>168</sup> <sup>169</sup> <sup>170</sup> <sup>171</sup> <sup>172</sup> <sup>173</sup> <sup>174</sup> <sup>175</sup> <sup>176</sup> <sup>177</sup> <sup>178</sup> <sup>179</sup>

g See on l. 4.

that they may minister unto me in the priest's office.

l. xx. 26. xxxix.  
28. Lev. vi. 10.  
Ez. xlii. 18. Rev.  
in. 18. xvi. 15.  
\* Heb. flesh of  
their nakedness  
† Heb. be

42 And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness: from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach.

43 And they shall be upon Aaron, and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy place; that

purposes about the sanctuary, and supplied by new ones.—The particulars of the arraying, anointing, and consecrating Aaron and his sons, will hereafter be considered.

V. 42, 43. The indecencies, attending the worship of idols, were strongly protested against by the care taken to avoid every approach to them, and every accidental appearance of them, in the ministration of the priests of the true God. They were therefore required to wear linen breeches, or drawers, at all times, when they officiated at the sanctuary; though it does not appear that the Israelites in general wore any other than loose garments, according to the general custom of the east to this day. And it seems especially with reference to this part of the priestly clothing, that the concluding caution was given: if they were negligent in this matter, they would bear iniquity and die; for this was "a statute for ever to Aaron and his sons;" that is, perpetually, as long as that priesthood endured. This was suited to impress both priests and people with a sense of the holiness of God and their own sinfulness; and to shew that he would be sanctified by all who approached him, especially by his priests.—As no shoes or sandals are mentioned among the sacred vestments, it is supposed that the priests always ministered bare-foot; for Moses was ordered to pull off his shoes, when the Lord appeared to him in the burning bush. (Note, iii. 4, 5.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Blessed be God, that we have such a High Priest, as is in this chapter typically delineated: one solemnly appointed by God and consecrated to his work; furnished for his high office by the glory of his divine majesty, and the beauty of perfect holiness; who bears the names of all his people upon his shoulders, and upon his heart, presenting them and all their several cases, before the Father in heaven, and ever living, by his continual intercession, to apply the salvation which his sacrifice has purchased: in whom are ILLUMINATIONS AND PERFECTIONS, even inexhaustible treasures of wisdom and grace, to be communicated to them; who, himself HOLINESS TO THE LORD, is made Sanctification to his people, that they may be "holy unto the LORD also," in their measure in this world, perfectly in that to come. Happy are we, if we are so well instructed in the spirituality of the divine law, the evil of sin, and our own sinfulness, as to be deeply convinced that "such a High Priest became us;" that we can have no access to a holy God, nor acceptance with him, but by Jesus Christ; no light, no wisdom, no perfection but from him; no glory nor beauty, but in conformity to him. If this be our judgment and experience, let us take encourage-

ment from the power, love, and compassion of our High Priest to the meanest of his people, "to draw near with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Yet, "let us have grace to worship him with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire:" not forgetting, that garments were at first necessary to hide the shame of our fallen parents; that when we use them for ostentation we glory in our shame; that they who prefer ornament to modesty are still more basely criminal; and that this vanity and indecency is most of all abominable in the courts of the Lord. Let us then make a bold and consistent profession of our devotedness to God, and be careful to adorn it by the fruits of righteousness in our lives; making Christ our Counsellor, by whom we may enquire of the Lord, and learn his truth and will, that we may be wise-hearted for every service to which he shall appoint us. By daily meditating upon his word, let us endeavour, "with open face, as in a glass, so to behold his glory, that we may be changed into the same image from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord."—Clothed in his righteousness for glory and for beauty, who in his death hath borne the iniquity of our holy things, let us, through him, as his "spiritual priests," "offer unto God the sacrifice of praise continually, giving thanks unto his name:" and let us see to it, that "our loins are girt about with truth;" that we wear the breast-plate of righteousness, and that we "are sober, and hope to the end;" for "blessed are those servants, whom their Lord when he cometh shall find so doing."

It Lev. v. 17 xx.  
19, 20. xxii. 9  
Num. ix. 18  
xxiii. 22. Matt.  
xxii. 12, 13.  
k xxvii. 21. Lev  
xvii. 7.

#### CHAP. XXIX.

The ceremonies and sacrifices to be used in consecrating the priests, and the altar, 1—37. The daily oblation, 38—41. Gracious promises, 42—46

AND this is the thing that thou shalt do unto them to hallow them, to

a 21. xx. 11. xxviii.  
41. Matt. vi. 9.  
b See on xxviii. 3

ment from the power, love, and compassion of our High Priest to the meanest of his people, "to draw near with boldness to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Yet, "let us have grace to worship him with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire:" not forgetting, that garments were at first necessary to hide the shame of our fallen parents; that when we use them for ostentation we glory in our shame; that they who prefer ornament to modesty are still more basely criminal; and that this vanity and indecency is most of all abominable in the courts of the Lord. Let us then make a bold and consistent profession of our devotedness to God, and be careful to adorn it by the fruits of righteousness in our lives; making Christ our Counsellor, by whom we may enquire of the Lord, and learn his truth and will, that we may be wise-hearted for every service to which he shall appoint us. By daily meditating upon his word, let us endeavour, "with open face, as in a glass, so to behold his glory, that we may be changed into the same image from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord."—Clothed in his righteousness for glory and for beauty, who in his death hath borne the iniquity of our holy things, let us, through him, as his "spiritual priests," "offer unto God the sacrifice of praise continually, giving thanks unto his name:" and let us see to it, that "our loins are girt about with truth;" that we wear the breast-plate of righteousness, and that we "are sober, and hope to the end;" for "blessed are those servants, whom their Lord when he cometh shall find so doing."

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XXIX. V. 1—7. Directions having been given, about making the sacred garments for Aaron and his sons; the manner of their consecration to the priesthood is next prescribed. Though appointed by office, to expiate the sins of the people by the typical sacrifices; they must be reminded that they themselves likewise were sinners, and needed an expiation; a young bullock therefore, (or rather bull,) for a sin-offering, a ram for a burnt-offering, and a ram of consecration as a peace-offering; and bread, cakes tempered with oil, and wafers anointed with oil, all unleavened, for a meat-offering, were first prepared. The distinguishing nature and meaning of these several kinds of sacrifice, with the manner in which they were offered and used, will hereafter be considered.—This preparation having been made, and the meat-offering in a basket, as well as the young bull and the two rams, brought to the door of the tabernacle; Moses, who would officiate as

minister unto me in the priest's office:

<sup>c</sup> Lev. vii. 2. ix. 2. xvi. 3. 2 Chr. xiii. 9.

° Take one young bullock, and two rams <sup>d</sup> without blemish,

<sup>d</sup> xiii. 5. Lev. iv. 3. v. 15. 16. vi. 6. xxii. 20. Mal. i. 13. 14. Heb. vii. 26. 1 Pet. i. 19.

2 And ° unleavened bread, and cakes unleavened ° tempered with oil, and

<sup>e</sup> See on xii. 8.— Lev. ii. 4. vi. 20.—22. vii. 2. 1 Cor. v. 7.

° wafers unleavened anointed with oil: of wheaten flour shalt thou make them.

<sup>f</sup> 23. Lev. ii. 4. 5. 15. vii. 10. Num. vi. 15.

3 And thou shalt put them into one basket, and bring them <sup>h</sup> in the basket,

<sup>g</sup> Lev. vii. 12. viii. 26. Num. vi. 15. 19.

with the bullock and the two rams.

<sup>h</sup> Lev. viii. 2. 35. 31. Num. vi. 17.

4 And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring <sup>i</sup> unto the door of the tabernacle

<sup>i</sup> xvi. 36. xl. 28. Lev. viii. 3—6.

of the congregation, and shalt <sup>k</sup> wash them with water.

<sup>k</sup> xxx. 18—21. xl. 12. Lev. viii. 6. xiv. 8. Deut. xxi. 11. Ez. xxxvi. 25. John xiii. 8—10. Eph. v. 26. Tit. iii. 5. Heb. x. 22. 1 Pet. iii. 21. Rev. i. 5. 6.

<sup>l</sup> See on xxviii. 2. 4.—Lev. viii. 7. 8.

5 And thou shalt take the ° garments, and put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breast-plate, and gird him with the curious girdle of the ephod.

<sup>m</sup> See on xxviii. 26—29. — Lev. viii. 9.

6 And thou shalt put the ° mitre upon his head, and put the holy crown upon the mitre.

<sup>n</sup> See on xxviii. 26—29. — Lev. viii. 9.

priest on this occasion, was directed to bring Aaron and his sons to the same place, and there to wash them with water. Probably, they were at that time washed all over, though on many other occasions they only washed their hands and feet. Moses was then directed to clothe Aaron with the sacred garments; completing the whole, by "putting the holy crown upon the mitre." (Note, xxviii. 36—38.) The golden plate, inscribed HOLINESS TO THE LORD, being called "the holy crown," not only shewed how honourable Aaron's office was, but further intimated that the High Priest, whom he typified, would also be a King; and there seems to be a reference to the two words, used for this plate of gold, in the former chapter and here, when the Psalmist says of the Messiah, "Upon himself shall his crown flourish;" (Ps. cxxxii. 18;) for in the original both the words are used.—When Aaron had been thus arrayed, Moses was directed to anoint him with the sacred oil, the composition of which is afterwards prescribed, which being poured on his head, "ran down to his beard," and "even to the skirts of his raiment;" or, as some with probability suppose the word to mean, the upper border of his raiment, that fastened round his neck. (Note, Ps. cxxxiii. 2.)—In all this, Aaron was evidently a type of Christ. He indeed, being without sin, was not admitted to his sacerdotal office by atoning sacrifices: but, being "made in the likeness of sinful flesh," he submitted to be baptized by John, before he entered on his sacred work; which ordinance in its general use denoted the washing away of the pollution of sin, as the washing of the priests also did. We have seen that the sacred garments likewise typified his endowments and qualifications for his High Priesthood: and he was also anointed with the Holy Spirit without measure, not for himself only, but for all his people.—The ceremonies of this consecration seem, likewise, to denote the admission of sinners into the spiritual priesthood, to offer "spiritual sacrifices, accept-

<sup>n</sup> xxviii. 41. xxx. 23—31. Lev. xvi. 10—12. x. 7. xxi. 0. Num. xxxv. 25. Ps. lxxxix. 2. 1s. 34. 1. John iii. 34. 1. John ii. 27. o xxviii. 40, 41. Lev. viii. 13.

7 Then shalt thou take the ° anointing oil, and pour it upon his head, and anoint him.

8 And thou shalt bring ° his sons, and put coats upon them.

<sup>p</sup> xxviii. 1. Num. xvi. 10. 35. 40. xviii. 7. Heb. v. 4. 5. 10. vii. 11—14.

9 And thou shalt gird them with girdles, (Aaron and his sons,) and ° put the bonnets on them: and ° the priest's office shall be their's for a perpetual statute: and thou shalt ° consecrate Aaron and his sons.

<sup>q</sup> 1. Heb. bind.

10 And thou shalt ° cause a bullock to be brought before the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron and his sons shall ° put their hands upon the head of the bullock.

<sup>r</sup> 15. 19. Lev. i. 4. iii. 2. viii. 14. 18. xvi. 21. 1s. lxxxvi. 6. 2 Cor. v. 21.

11 And ° thou shalt kill the bullock, before the LORD, by the ° door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

<sup>s</sup> Lev. i. 4. 5. viii. 15. ix. 8. 12. t See on 4. Lev. i. 3.

12 And thou shalt take of ° the blood of the bullock, and put it upon ° the horns of the altar with thy finger, and

<sup>u</sup> Lev. viii. 15. ix. 9. xvi. 14, 18. 19. Heb. ix. 13, 14. 22. x. 4. x xxvii. 2. xxx. 2. xxxviii. 2.

"able to God through Jesus Christ." They must be washed in regeneration; clothed in that righteousness, which is upon all them that believe; anointed with the unction of the Holy Spirit; and have an interest in the one great Sacrifice for sin, before they can glorify God as his holy priesthood, or rejoice in their own invaluable privileges.

V. 8, 9. The sons of Aaron, when they had been washed with water, needed only to be arrayed with the garments, prescribed for them; for they were not anointed on the head with the sacred oil, which was peculiar to the high priest. The words rendered "consecrate," literally mean *fill the hands*. Probably this was done by putting the sacrifice into their hands, to be waved before the Lord. The ministers of God have their hands filled, when they enter upon their office; and will continue to have their hands full of work of one sort or another, if they duly seek for it and attend to it: but far more covet the emolument or honour of the ministry, than its work. Indeed, the case is the same with all Christians: each may have his hands filled with work, if his heart be disposed to do it. (Mark xiii. 34.)

V. 10, 11. "Putting the hands on the head" of the sin-offering, not only implied the surrender of it as an oblation to God; but also, and especially, it denoted a confession of guilt, which was thus typically transferred to the sacrifice that it might be expiated by it: so that the priests thus acknowledged themselves deserving of death, and that they could not offer sacrifices for others, unless the Lord first accepted their sin-offering, and forgave their transgressions.—Moses, as priest on this extraordinary occasion, slew the several sacrifices; though in ordinary cases the offerers themselves might slay them. (Notes, Lev. i. 4—9.)

V. 12. When Moses had slain the bull for a sin-offering, he was required to apply part of the blood, with his finger, to the four horns of the altar of burnt-offering; and then

<sup>y</sup> Lev. iv. 7. 18. <sup>z</sup> pour all the blood beside the bottom of the altar.

13 And thou shalt take <sup>a</sup> all the fat that covereth the inwards, <sup>a</sup> and the <sup>a</sup> caul that is above the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, and <sup>b</sup> burn them upon the altar.

14 But <sup>c</sup> the flesh of the bullock, and his skin, and his dung, shalt thou burn with fire without the camp: <sup>d</sup> it is a sin-offering.

15 ¶ Thou shalt also take <sup>e</sup> one ram, and Aaron and his sons shall <sup>f</sup> put their hands upon the head of the ram.

16 And <sup>g</sup> thou shalt slay the ram, and thou shalt take his blood, and sprinkle <sup>h</sup> it round about upon the altar.

17 And thou shalt cut the ram in pieces, and <sup>i</sup> wash the inwards of him,

and his legs, and put <sup>j</sup> them <sup>k</sup> unto his <sup>l</sup> Or, upon pieces, and unto his head.

18 And thou shalt burn the whole ram upon the altar: it is <sup>m</sup> a burnt-offering unto the Lord: it is <sup>n</sup> a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the Lord.

19 ¶ And thou shalt take <sup>o</sup> the other ram, <sup>p</sup> and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the ram.

20 Then shalt thou kill the ram, and take of his blood, and <sup>q</sup> put it upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot, and <sup>r</sup> sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about.

21 And thou shalt take of the blood that is upon the altar, and of <sup>s</sup> the

to pour all the remainder at the bottom of it, where no doubt there was a trench, by which whatever was redundant might be carried off. Thus the altar itself must first be sanctified, by sacrifice and blood, before it could sanctify the gift: for every creature of God on earth has been so polluted by man's sin, that none is meet to be set apart for his immediate service, till purged with blood: and all the ministrations of sinners are so defiled, that the best would condemn them, even their most solemn sacrifices, unless sprinkled with the blood of Christ. This was evidently intended to teach the Israelites the holiness of God, the defiling nature of sin, their own sinfulness, and their need of the promised Saviour, who should "take away sin" by the sacrifice of himself.

V. 13, 14. According to the law of the sin-offering, afterwards given, (Notes, Lev. iv. 4—11,) all the fat of this bull was directed on this occasion, as by anticipation, to be burnt on the altar; but the flesh, skin, and dung, were to be burned with a *strong fire*, (the word is altered,) without the camp. It should be observed, that the fat, which the Israelites always burnt on the altar, was not what is blended with the flesh, in every part of the body; but the suet and loose inward fat. When an animal is opened, the several intestines appear covered with fat, which forms an integument both suited to keep them separate, and to preserve a proper warmth. These integuments, and the suet with the kidneys covered by it, are evidently meant in all the passages in which this is instituted, though learned men have differently explained the terms used on the subject.—The flesh of the other sin-offerings, the blood of which was not carried into the sanctuary, was eaten by the priests: but this was the sin-offering of the priests, who could neither bear nor atone for their own sins. In this incipient state therefore of the Levitical priesthood, though the blood was not carried into the holy place, (the high priest not being yet fully authorized to perform that service,) the flesh was burned without the camp, as it was afterwards appointed in respect of the sin-offerings for the high priest, congregation, or ruler, the blood of which was carried into the holy place.—The word rendered "sin-

"offering" is merely *sin*; "It is *sin*." This implied, that it must be treated with abhorrence, and consumed by the fire, which represented the justice of God, as if it were *sin* itself: and the expression helps to explain the apostle's energetick language in the following passage, as also other similar passages in the New Testament, "Christ was made *Sin* for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made *the Righteousness of God in him*."

V. 15—18. One of the rams, before-mentioned, was directed to be offered as "a burnt-offering," with the ceremonies in that case prescribed. (Notes, Lev. i.)—Every sacrifice of innocent useful animals, implied the sinfulness of the offerers, and prefigured the vicarious sufferings of the Holy Jesus: the priests therefore were required to lay their hands on the head of the *ram* for a burnt-offering, and even on that of consecration, (as well as on that of the *young bull* for a sin-offering,) implying the translation of their guilt to the animal about to be sacrificed. The whole of the blood was to be sprinkled about the altar; or, as some suppose, *poured on the altar round about*, to be consumed by the fire along with the flesh. The entire animal, except the skin, being burnt, no separation was made between the loose fat and the intestines; but the whole, being previously well cleansed, was laid, with the flesh and the head, on the altar. In connexion with the typical import, this sacrifice denoted the offerer's profession of unreserved devotedness, in body and soul, to the service of God, according to the duties to which he was called.

V. 19—21. "The ram of consecration" was evidently a sacrifice of *peace-offering*, though presented on a particular occasion. (Notes, Lev. iii.) With reference to this occasion, part of the blood was applied, not as that of the sin-offering to the horns of the altar, but to Aaron and his sons; to the tips of their right ears, the thumbs of their right hands, and the great toes of their right feet: implying their obligation to hearken diligently to the word of God, to do his work in the best manner which they could, and to walk in his ways with steady perseverance; and also, that they could not do these things acceptably, ex-

anointing oil, and sprinkle *it* upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon the garments of his sons with him: and he <sup>p</sup> shall be hallowed, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him.

22 Also <sup>q</sup> thou shalt take of the ram the fat and <sup>r</sup> the rump, and the fat that covereth the inwards, and the caul *above* the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat that *is* upon them, and <sup>s</sup> the right shoulder; for *it is* a ram of consecration:

23 And <sup>t</sup> one loaf of bread, and one cake of oiled bread, and one wafer, out of the basket of the unleavened bread, that *is* before the LORD.

24 And thou shalt <sup>u</sup> put all in the hands of Aaron, and in the hands of his sons; and shalt <sup>v</sup> wave them *for* <sup>w</sup> a wave-offering before the LORD.

25 And <sup>y</sup> thou shalt receive them of their hands, and burn *them* upon the altar for a burnt-offering, <sup>z</sup> for a sweet savour before the LORD; *it is* <sup>a</sup> an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

26 And thou shalt take the breast of the ram of Aaron's consecration, and wave it *for* a wave-offering before the LORD: and it shall be thy part.

27 And thou shalt sanctify <sup>b</sup> the breast of the wave-offering, and the shoulder of the heave-offering, which is waved, and which is heaved up of <sup>c</sup> the ram of the consecration, *even of that which is* for Aaron, and of *that* which is for his sons.

28 And <sup>d</sup> it shall be Aaron's and his sons' by a statute for ever, from the children of Israel: for *it is* <sup>e</sup> an heave-offering: and it shall be an heave-offering from the children of Israel, of <sup>f</sup> the sacrifice of their peace-offerings, *even* their heave-offering unto the LORD.

29 ¶ And <sup>g</sup> the holy garments of Aaron shall be <sup>h</sup> his son's after him, to be <sup>i</sup> anointed therein, and to be consecrated in them.

30 And <sup>k</sup> that son, that is priest in his stead, shall put them on <sup>l</sup> seven days when he cometh into the tabernacle of the congregation to minister in the holy place.

31 ¶ And thou shalt take <sup>m</sup> the ram of the consecration, and <sup>n</sup> seethe his flesh in the holy place.

32 And <sup>o</sup> Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram, <sup>p</sup> and the bread that *is* in the basket, *by* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

p See on John xvii. 19. Heb. ix. 22 x. 29.

q 13. Lev. viii. 25—27.  
r Lev. iii. 9. vii. 3 ix. 19

s Lev. vii. 32, 33. ix. 21 x. 14 Num. xviii. 18.

t 2, 3

u Lev. viii. 27

\* Heb. shake to and fro.

x 25, 27. Lev. vii. 30. ix. 21. x. 14.

y Lev. vii. 29—31. viii. 28. Ps. xcix. 6.

z See on 18.

a 41. Lev. i. 9. 13. ii. 2. 9. 16. iii. 3. 5. 9. 11. 14. 16. vii. 5. 25. x. 13. i Sam. ii. 28.

b Lev. vii. 31—34. viii. 29. ix. 21. x. 15. Num. vi. 30. xviii. 18, 19.

c 22. 34. Lev. vii. 37. viii. 28—31.

d Lev. vii. 32—34. x. 14. 15 Deut. xviii. 3

e 27. Lev. vii. 14. Num. xv. 19, 20 xviii. 24, 25, xxxi. 29. 41. Lev. iii. vii. 11. &c.

f xxxviii. 3, 4.

h Num. xx. 26—28.

i 5—7. xxx. 30 xl. 15. Lev. viii. 7—12. Num. xviii. 8. xxxv. 25.

k 35. xii. 15. Gen. viii. 10. 12. Lev. viii. 33—35. xii. 2, 3. xiii. 5. Josh. vi. 14, 15. Ez. xliii. 26. Acta xx. 6, 7. See on 27.

l Heb. he of his sons. Heb. vii. 28.

m Lev. viii. 31. i Sam. ii. 13. 15. Ez. xlii. 20—24.

n xxiv. 9—11. Lev. x. 12—14.

o 2. 3. 23.

cept through the atoning blood, received and applied by faith. Then part of the blood reserved upon the altar, probably in a bason for that purpose, was mingled with the holy anointing oil, and sprinkled on the garments both of Aaron and his sons, to hallow them to the Lord. 'This may be looked upon as a lively representation of our purification by the blood of Jesus Christ, and by his Holy Spirit.' Bp. Patrick. We may add, that these always go together. (Notes, Rom. vi. 16—19. xii. 1.)

V. 22—28. In ordinary peace-offerings of the herd, the fat alone was burned on the altar; but of sheep the rumps also, which are often exceedingly large and fat in those countries; and in this particular case, the right shoulder, with a portion of each part of the meat-offering, having been first put into the hands of Aaron and his sons, to be waved by them, were presented by Moses, as a burnt-offering to the Lord, and laid on the altar with the fat. From this circumstance, the sacrifice was called "the ram of consecration," or of *fillings*, as the hands of Aaron and his sons were first filled with these parts of it, before they were presented to God; implying, that they did not set themselves to work, but undertook their sacred services by his express direction. The breast of the ram, having been waved by Moses himself, was allotted to him, as priest, for his portion of the peace-offering. In other instances however, after Aaron and his sons had been fully initiated in their office, both the right shoulder and the

breast of every peace-offering were allotted to the priests. —The *heaving* these parts of the sacrifices upwards towards heaven, and the *waving* of them to the right hand and left, or to the four quarters of the globe, implied, that they were thus dedicated to the God of heaven and of all the earth; and were then used by his priests as given by him to them: and perhaps the right shoulder and the breast being thus presented, might intimate, that the priests and offerers also should devote themselves to the service of God, with all their power, and with their whole heart.

Consecration. (26) מִקְדָּשׁ, from קָדַשׁ to be full, or to fill. (Note 8, 9.)

V. 29, 30. On this occasion, another general law was given, respecting the appointment of one of Aaron's sons, at his death, for his successor in the high priesthood; who must be clothed in the sacred vestment of his father, that he might be anointed and consecrated in them; and must put them on seven days, before he performed the peculiar functions of the high priest; in order that he might be habituated to the dress, and have time to learn what was necessary to a due performance of these sacred services.

V. 31—34. The remainder of the ram of consecration, with that of the meat-offering, was to be eaten by the priests, as their portion of their own peace-offering: but, as the occasion was peculiar, they must eat it in the court of the tabernacle and not elsewhere, for none, even of their

<sup>p</sup> Lev. x. 16-18.  
Pa. xxii. 26. John  
vi. 53-55. 1 Cor.  
xi. 24. 26.

<sup>q</sup> Lev. xxii. 10-13.  
Num. i. 51.  
iii. 10. 38. xvi.  
40. xviii. 4. 7.  
<sup>r</sup> Num. xvi. 5.  
<sup>s</sup> 22. 28. 28.

<sup>t</sup> xii. 10. xvi. 19.  
Lev. vii. 18. 19.  
viii. 32. x. 16.

<sup>u</sup> xl. 12-15. Lev.  
viii. 4. &c.  
<sup>x</sup> xxxix. 42. 43.  
xl. 16. John xv.  
14.

<sup>y</sup> 30. 37. xl. 13.  
Lev. viii. 33. xiv.  
8-11.

<sup>z</sup> See on 10-14.  
Ex. xliii. 25. 27.  
xlv. 18-20. Heb.  
x. 11.

<sup>a</sup> Lev. xvi. 16-19.  
27. Heb. ix. 22.  
23.

<sup>b</sup> xxx. 26. xl. 9-11.  
Lev. viii. 19.  
11 Num. vii. 1.

33 And they shall <sup>p</sup>eat those things, wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate *and* to sanctify them: but <sup>q</sup>a stranger shall not eat *thereof*, because <sup>r</sup>they *are* holy.

34 And if ought of <sup>s</sup>the flesh of the consecrations, or of the bread, remain unto the morning; then thou shalt <sup>t</sup>burn the remainder with fire: it shall not be eaten, because it *is* holy.

35 And <sup>u</sup>thus shalt thou do unto Aaron, and to his sons, <sup>x</sup>according to all *things* which I have commanded thee: <sup>y</sup>seven days shalt thou consecrate them.

36 And thou shalt offer <sup>z</sup>every day a bullock *for* a sin-offering, for atonement: and thou shalt <sup>a</sup>cleanse the altar, when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt <sup>b</sup>anoint it to sanctify it.

37 Seven days thou shalt make an

atonement for the altar <sup>c</sup>and sanctify <sup>d</sup>it: and <sup>e</sup>it shall be an altar most holy: whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be <sup>f</sup>holy.

38 ¶ Now this *is that* which thou shalt offer upon the altar; <sup>g</sup>two lambs of the first year, day by day continually.

39 The one lamb thou shalt offer <sup>h</sup>in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer <sup>i</sup>at even.

40 And with the one lamb <sup>j</sup>a tenth-deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an <sup>k</sup>hin of beaten oil: and the fourth part of an hin of wine *for* <sup>l</sup>a drink-offering.

41 And the other lamb thou shalt <sup>m</sup>offer at even, and shalt do thereto according to the meat-offering of the morning, and according to the drink-offering thereof, for a sweet savour,

families, might join with them in thus feasting before the Lord in his courts; and the residue must be burnt, and not be kept till morning. In these particulars it was ordered differently from most other peace-offerings.

V. 35-37. The consecration of Aaron and his sons was to be continued for seven days, during which time a young bull for a sin-offering, according to the form before established, (Notes, 10-14,) was every day offered for atonement, (or rather atonements,) both for them and for the altar, which must thus be cleansed, (or expiated, as the word signifies,) and anointed, before it was fully consecrated as an altar. Some expositors are of opinion, that these seven days for the cleansing of the altar, were distinct from the seven days of consecrating the priests; and that they preceded them, and attended the erection of the sanctuary by Moses. And they argue in favour of this opinion, that the purifying of the altar must have preceded all sacrificing upon it; but that Moses offered a burnt-offering and a meat-offering upon it, when he placed it in the court of the tabernacle. (xl. 29.) The language, however, here used, by no means admits of this construction: as the bull for atonement was offered on each of the days, in which Aaron and his sons were consecrated, and with the blood of these very bulls the altar was expiated. It seems evident that some things, in the first introduction of the Levitical ceremonial, must necessarily have come short of the exact regularity which it required when completed. Moses had never been consecrated to the priesthood, as Aaron was; yet he acted as priest during this interval: and can we wonder, if he sacrificed on the altar before it had been fully dedicated? When the burnt-offering was slain, he would put the blood on the horns of the altar, or sprinkle it round about; and this would be a sufficient confession, that all things, with which sinners have to do, need purging with atoning blood, when used in the service of a just

and holy God. And when Aaron and his sons were consecrated, the more solemn expiation or dedication of the altar was carried on at the same time, and by the same sacrifices, from applying the blood of the first sin-offering to the horns of it, till it was finished on the seventh day. Then it was made an altar "most holy; whatsoever touched it should be holy." None but priests of Aaron's family might approach it: from that time Moses sacrificed no more, and every oblation presented at it was "holy to the LORD."

V. 38-41. When the priests had been fully consecrated, and the altar sanctified, two lambs of the first year must be offered daily, one in the morning, the other in the afternoon, as a burnt-offering. This observance might never on any account be omitted, whatever additional sacrifices were appointed for the sabbaths and solemnities, or presented on various occasions by the rulers, priests, or people; for it especially typified "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world;" the constant efficacy of his one all sufficient atonement; and our continual need of it, in all our approaches unto a holy God. It likewise taught the people, that God must be worshipped every day continually, morning and evening at least, with prayer, and praise, and thanksgiving; and not only on sabbaths and solemn festivals: and that this should be considered as a sacred feast, to which they were admitted, and in which the Lord condescended to meet with them.—To render this idea of communion with God more familiar to their minds, the several particulars requisite to a feast accompanied the sacrifice; especially bread and wine, in the form of a meat-offering and a drink-offering.—The word rendered "tenth deal," means a tenth, that is, of an ephah, or about three quarts of wine-measure, being the same as an omer. A hin contained the sixth part of an ephah, of about five quarts wine-measure. So that about three quarts of fine flour, mixed up with a quart and half a pint of the



THE ALTAR OF INCENSE.

EXOD XXX. 1-9

## CHAP. XXX.

Directions, concerning the altar of incense, 1—10; the half shekel of ransom-money, 11—16; the brazen laver, 17—21; the holy anointing oil, 22—33; and the incense, 34—38.

**AND** thou shalt make <sup>a</sup> an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim-wood shalt thou make it.

<sup>b</sup> 2 A cubit shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, four-square shall it be; and two cubits shall be the height thereof: <sup>b</sup> the horns thereof shall be of the same.

<sup>c</sup> 3 And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the <sup>a</sup> top thereof, and the <sup>a</sup> sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof: and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about.

<sup>d</sup> 4 And two golden <sup>a</sup> rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two <sup>a</sup> corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make it; and

they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal.

5 And thou shalt make the <sup>a</sup> staves of shittim-wood, and overlay them with gold.

6 And thou shalt put it before the veil, that is by the ark of the testimony; before <sup>a</sup> the mercy-seat, that is over the testimony, where <sup>b</sup> I will meet with thee.

7 And Aaron shall burn thereon <sup>a</sup> sweet incense every morning: when he <sup>a</sup> dresseth the lamps he shall burn incense upon it.

8 And when Aaron <sup>a</sup> lighteth the lamps <sup>a</sup> at even, he shall burn incense upon it; <sup>a</sup> a perpetual incense before the Lord, throughout your generations.

9 Ye shall offer no <sup>a</sup> strange incense thereon, nor burnt-sacrifice, nor meat-offering; neither shall ye pour drink-offering thereon.

10 And <sup>a</sup> Aaron shall make an atone-

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXX. V. 1—6. The altar of incense was made, like the ark of the covenant, of shittim-wood covered with plates of gold. It was something more than half a yard square, and above a yard in height; and from the four corner-posts arose four horns, or pinnacles, which were covered with plates of gold. It was surrounded on the top with a cornice of solid gold, underneath which were placed two golden rings, probably on two opposite corners, for the convenience of carrying it on staves, during the marches of Israel in the wilderness, and afterwards when removed to different places in Canaan.—This altar, and the incense burnt on it, typified the Son of God in our nature making intercession for us; as the altar of burnt-offering and its oblations typified his sacrifice. The former was therefore placed *within* the sanctuary, the latter in the court *without*; for his sacrifice was offered on earth, his intercession is in heaven. But it was not put in the *most holy place*; because the *continual* intercession of Christ was represented by the other priests, as well as the high priest, daily burning incense upon it morning and evening. It was therefore placed without the veil, but nearer to it than the table or the candlestick; and in the centre of the tabernacle, directly over against the ark, except as the veil was between.

V. 7, 8. Aaron alone is here mentioned, as burning incense on the altar: but it is generally agreed, that not only succeeding high priests, but also the ordinary priests in their courses, performed this service. (Notes, Luke i. 5—10.) When Aaron or his sons had offered the morning-sacrifice, one of them went into the tabernacle, and on that occasion he trimmed and ordered the lamps for the day, and perhaps cleansed and burnished the candlestick: he also burned incense on the golden altar, while the people were offering their prayers without. In the evening

likewise, when the lamb had been sacrificed, the priest again entered the sanctuary, and both lighted the lamps and burned incense on the altar.—It is probable, that no more than one priest at a time entered the sanctuary to burn incense: and that if the high priest were present, and had no impediment, he performed this service, at least in the first ages of the church of Israel. As the oil might be nearly burnt out, and perhaps some of the lamps extinguished; it is here called *lighting the lamps*: and as Aaron and his sons were directed to “order them from evening to morning,” we cannot suppose that they left them from the time of the evening sacrifice to the ensuing morning; but that the priest, whose office it was to burn incense, ordered them at that time; and that some other of the priests, in rotation, tended them during the rest of night. (Note, xxvii. 20, 21.)—The daily sacrifices represented the perpetual efficacy of Christ’s atonement, and the burning of incense morning and evening typified his continual intercession for us; while the dressing and lighting of the lamps prefigured the preaching of the word, which could only be rendered effectual by that intercession, bringing down a blessing, in answer to the prayers of his people.—As no *grate* is mentioned in this altar, nor any thing said about cleaning it, expositors generally think, that a censer with coals was placed on it, when incense was burnt.

V. 9, 10. Nothing, except the incense afterwards described, might be offered on the golden altar: but, once every year, on the great day of atonement, the high priest must apply to the horns of it the blood of the sin-offering; to shew that all the services performed at it needed purging with blood, to be accepted by a holy God. This denoted that the intercession of Christ in heaven derives all its efficacy from his sufferings on earth; and that we need no other sacrifice or intercessor but Christ only.

ment upon the horns of it once in a year, with the blood of <sup>a</sup>the sin-offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it, throughout your generations: it is most holy unto the LORD.

11 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

12 When thou <sup>o</sup>takest the sum of the children of Israel, after <sup>a</sup>their number; then shall they give every man <sup>p</sup>a ransom for his soul unto the LORD, when thou numberest them: that there be <sup>a</sup>no plague among them, when thou numberest them.

13 This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered; half <sup>a</sup>a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary: (<sup>a</sup>a shekel is twenty gerahs:) <sup>a</sup>an half shekel shall be the offering of the LORD.

14 Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, <sup>a</sup>from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the LORD.

15 The <sup>a</sup>rich shall not <sup>a</sup>give more, and the poor shall not <sup>a</sup>give less than half a shekel, when they give an offer-

ing unto the LORD, to make <sup>a</sup>an atone-ment for your souls.

16 And thou shalt take the atonement-money of the children of Israel, and shalt <sup>a</sup>appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be <sup>a</sup>a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.

17 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

18 Thou shalt also make <sup>a</sup>a laver of brass, and his foot <sup>a</sup>also of brass to wash <sup>a</sup>withal: and thou shalt <sup>a</sup>put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein.

19 For Aaron and his sons shall <sup>a</sup>wash their hands and their feet thereat.

20 When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they <sup>a</sup>die not: or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD.

21 So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not; and it shall be <sup>a</sup>a statute for ever to them,

V. 11—16. The Israelites were twice numbered, in the days of Moses, by divine command; and doubtless on both these occasions this law was observed. (*Marg. Ref. o.*) Indeed, the collecting of the half-shekel, if exactly done, would itself be equivalent to numbering them.—Women and minors were exempted from the tax, not being numbered; and so were the Levites, as it is manifest from comparing the number of those who paid the tax, with the sum total of the congregation, besides the Levites. (xxxviii. 26. *Num. i. 46, 47.*) Indeed it is probable, that the old men, who were incapable of war, were also exempted. (*Num. i. 42, 45.*) The shekel of the sanctuary, where the standard weight was kept, was nearly half an ounce troy weight; so that the sum paid by each person was about fifteen pence.—This silver was at that time used for the sockets of the sanctuary, and for hooks for the curtains, and for plates, to fillet or cover the chapters of the pillars round the court. (*Note, xxxviii. 26—28.*) But it is probable, a similar assessment was made as often as necessary, being the same as was demanded of our Lord; (*Note, Matt. xvii. 24—27.*) and it was in general expended in purchasing sacrifices, wood, and other things, for the service of the sanctuary; or perhaps in repairs. Other contributions were voluntary, and proportioned to the ability or liberality of the offerer: but this was the ransom of the souls, or lives, of the people, and the same sum was paid by every man, whether rich or poor; and if they refused to pay it, they could have no interest in the sacrifices, and might expect to be visited with the plague for their contempt.

Some think that David's offence, in numbering the people, was enhanced, by his neglecting to raise this capitation-tax. (*Notes, 2 Sam. xxiv.*)—The law implied, that the souls of all are of equal value, equally forfeited, and equally in need of a ransom; Christ is equally proposed to all who hear the gospel, and all believers have an equal interest in him: but, without this interest in him, we can have no benefit from his sacrifice; and, instead of ransom for our souls, may expect additional vengeance for neglecting so great salvation. And though we can add nothing to the all-sufficient atonement of Christ, which is freely given without money and without price, to all who believe in him; yet we may, by our worldly substance, assist in maintaining the expenses of religious ordinances, which are *memorials* to us of the atonement made for our souls.

V. 18—21. The laver of brass was a large cistern, probably circular, in which was continually kept a quantity of water; and perhaps the foot was a circular vessel which received the water out of the cistern, by several cocks or spouts, for immediate use. For the priests, though washed at their consecration, were commanded on pain of death, to wash their hands and feet every time they officiated, or at least every day; which intimated the continual guilt, which they contracted in their daily employments and converse with the world. (*Note, John xiii. 6—11.*) But, besides this use, much water would be wanted for washing the sacrifices, the vessels, and other things about the sanctuary, in order to preserve the court clean and sweet, when so many animals were slaughtered,



THE BRAZEN LAVER.

Exod. xxx. 17—21.



even to him, and to his seed throughout their generations.

22 ¶ Moreover the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

23 Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred *shekels*, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, *even* two hundred and fifty *shekels*, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty *shekels*,

24 And of cassia five hundred *shekels*, after <sup>s</sup> the shekel of the sanctuary, and of oil-olive an <sup>h</sup> hin.

25 And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the <sup>a</sup> apothecary: it shall be <sup>a</sup>an holy anointing oil.

26 And thou shalt <sup>a</sup>anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith, and the ark of the testimony.

27 And the table and all his vessels, and the candlestick and his vessels, and the altar of incense,

28 And the altar of burnt-offering with all his vessels, and the laver and his foot.

29 And thou shalt sanctify them,

that they may be most holy: <sup>1</sup> whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy.

30 And thou shalt <sup>a</sup>anoint Aaron and his sons, and <sup>a</sup>consecrate them, that *they* may minister unto me in the priest's office.

31 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, This shall be <sup>a</sup>an holy anointing oil unto me, throughout your generations.

32 Upon <sup>a</sup>man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make *any other* like it, after the composition of it: it is holy, *and* it shall be holy unto you.

33 Whosoever <sup>a</sup>compoundeth *any* like it, or whosoever putteth *any* of it upon <sup>a</sup>a stranger, shall even be <sup>a</sup>cut off from his people.

34 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, Take <sup>a</sup>unto thee sweet spices, *stacte*, and *onycha*, and *galbanum*; *these* sweet spices with pure <sup>a</sup> frankincense: of each shall there be a like *weight*:

35 And thou shalt make it a <sup>a</sup>perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, <sup>a</sup>tempered together, pure *and* holy.

oil, or ointment typified the Holy Spirit, especially as given to our great High Priest without measure; and all his personal and mediatorial excellencies, as the "well beloved Son, in whom the Father is well pleased," and whose name is to the believer, "an ointment poured forth." It also intimated, that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," not one of his holy priesthood; and that we cannot attend on any divine ordinance, or officiate in any sacred service, acceptably or usefully, without his sanctifying influences.—The concluding prohibition reminds us, that hypocrisy which counterfeits, and profaneness which ridicules, the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, bring swift destruction on the guilty; and, in general, that Christ himself, and his holy gospel, are "a savour of death" to unbelievers. (Note, 2 Cor. ii. 14—17.)

V. 34—38. The spices, or gums, of which this *perfume*, or *incense*, (for so the word is elsewhere rendered,) was composed, are not all certainly known; because some of the words are seldom used in Scripture.—The *stacte* is supposed by the most approved commentators to have been the purest part of myrrh: and the *onycha*, an odoriferous shell, though some think it was the gum called *Ladanum*. The *galbanum* is thought to have been of a different sort from the gum called now by that name, the smell of which is very disagreeable. The *frankincense* is well known.—The word, rendered *tempered together*, signifies *salted*: (*marg.*) and it is supposed, that salt was mingled with the other ingredients; as indeed it was used in every oblation. This incense, being beaten small, was placed within

f xxxvii. 29 Ps. xiv. 8. Prov. vii. 17. Cant. i. 3. 13. iv. 14. Jer. vi. 20. Ez. xxvii. 19. 22.

f Num. iii. 47. Ez. xiv. 12. h xxxix. 40 Lev. xix. 36 Num. xv. 5.

\* Or, *perfumer*. i Chr. ix. 30.

i Num. xxxv. 25 Ps. lxxxix. 20 cxxxiii. 2 Heb. i. 9.

k xl. 9—15. Lev. viii. 10—12. Num. vii. 1. 10. 1a. lxi. 1. Acta x. 38. 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. i John ii. 20. 27.

xxxix. 37 Lev. vi. 18. Matt. xxiii. 17. 19.

m xxxix. 7. xl. 15. Lev. viii. 12. 30. Num. iii. 3. n See on xxxviii. 3. xxxix. 9. 35.

o xxxvii. 29. Lev. viii. 12. xxi. 10. Ps. lxxxix. 20.

p Lev. xxi. 10. Matt. vii. 6.

q Luke xli. 1. 2. Heb. x. 26—29.

r xxxix. 33. s xli. 15. 19. Gen. xlii. 14. Lev. vii. 20, 21. xvii. 4.

9. xix. 8. xxi. 13. 29. Num. ix. 13. t xxv. 6. xxxvii. 29.

u Lev. ii. 1. 15 v. 11. xxiv. 7. i Chr. ix. 29. Neh. xiii. 5. Cant. iii. 6. Matt. ii. 11.

x Prov. xxvii. 9. Cant. i. 3. iii. 6. John xii. 8.

y Heb. salted Lev. ii. 13.

so much blood sprinkled and poured out, and so much fat and flesh consumed on the altar.—The laver was placed nearer to the door of the sanctuary, than the altar was; and the Levites replenished it as often as it was necessary.

V. 22—33. The several spices here mentioned, being the very best of those kinds, which were most highly valued at that time, and amounting in all to a hundred and twenty pounds troy-weight, with about five quarts of oil of olive added to them, doubtless of the purest sort, were formed into a rich and highly aromatick ointment, or oil, according to the methods used by the makers of unguents or perfumes. It is generally supposed that it still continued a *liquid*, and that the dreggy part of the spices was strained out of it.—With this holy oil, all the furniture belonging to the sanctuary was anointed. It was poured on the head of Aaron and his successors, when they were consecrated to the high priesthood: and, with the blood of the burnt-offering, it was sprinkled on the garments both of the high priests, and of the other priests, when admitted to their office. The anointing with this holy oil especially completed the consecration of the priests, and the dedication of the sanctuary and its furniture, as *most holy*; and therefore it must not be used for any common purposes, or made by any other person, on peril of death.—It is indeed generally supposed that the kings of Judah were by the LORD's express appointment anointed with it: for it is reasonable to conclude, in opposition to Jewish traditions, that it was made, under the inspection of the high priest, as often as it was wanted, which would frequently be the case in successive generations. This sacred

36 And thou shalt beat *some* of it very small, and put of it before <sup>v</sup> the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, <sup>2</sup> where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto you most holy.

37 And *as for* the perfume which thou shalt make, <sup>a</sup> ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: <sup>b</sup> it shall be unto thee holy for the LORD.

38 Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even <sup>c</sup> be cut off from his people.

<sup>v</sup> See on xvi. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Ex. xxv. 21. xxxv. 42, 43 Lev. xvi. 2.

<sup>a</sup> 32, 33

<sup>b</sup> xxxix. 37. Lev. ix. 8.

<sup>c</sup> See on 33

the sanctuary, probably on the table; that it might be ready for the priests to take and burn on the golden altar, before the *testimony*, or ark, as nothing but the veil interposed: (Note, 1—6:) for this daily burning of incense within the sanctuary was as necessary, in order to Israel's communion with God, as the daily sacrifices on the altar of burnt-offering.—Let the attentive reader compare the language used on these subjects, with the account of the giving of the moral law from mount Sinai; and study the difference, between a sinner meeting God as a Lawgiver and a Judge, and his coming before him on “a throne of grace,” as a God of salvation, through the atonement and intercession of the great High Priest of our profession. But they, who corrupt or pervert the doctrine of free mercy, to gratify their own carnal and sensual inclinations, and they who constitute other intercessors, alike violate the spirit of the annexed prohibition.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If men do not wilfully shut their eyes to the things which are written in the word of God, they cannot but see in these ceremonial institutions, compared with the New Testament, that Jesus Christ is the grand Subject of the Scriptures; and the sum of all true religion, as “made of God unto us, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption.” To assert that the language of the New Testament concerning his priesthood, oblation, entrance into the holiest, and intercession for his people, were accommodations to these Old Testament-rites, is to suppose that, in building the spiritual temple, the all-wise Architect, without any previous design, planned and formed a very intricate and unnecessary scaffolding, and then erected the building for the sake, and according to the pattern, of that scaffolding! But “known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.” He first formed the plan of salvation in his own infinite mind, then shewed as much of it as was needful, to Moses in the mount; and according to it, this scaffolding was formed, for the sake of the intended building, which accordingly has since been erected exactly answerable to it.—From this chapter let us observe, that our duty, and our urgent wants call upon us daily to approach our Creator and Benefactor, with our thanksgivings and supplications; but that we are not worthy to draw nigh in our own name, or in any other way than through the meritorious and prevailing intercession of the Son of God. Though we are *without* on earth, and he is ascended into heaven, and

#### CHAP. XXXI.

Bezaleel and Aholiab are appointed and qualified to erect the tabernacle, and make the sacred furniture, 1—11. The observance of the sabbath is enforced, 12—17. The tables of the law are delivered to Moses, 18.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 See, <sup>a</sup> I have called by name <sup>b</sup> Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah.

3 And I have <sup>c</sup> filled him with the

<sup>a</sup> xxxiii. 12. 17. xxxv. 30 Mark iii. 16—19. John iii. 27. <sup>b</sup> xxxviii. 1. 1 Chr. ii. 19, 20. <sup>c</sup> xxxv. 31. 1a. xxxviii. 6. 28. 1 Cor. xii. 4—11.

is out of our sight; let us by faith behold him, and realize him to our minds, as ever living to receive and present our worship, perfumed with the sweet incense of his intercession, before the Father's mercy-seat for acceptance. We must therefore not be slack, unfrequent, or doubtful in our supplications: nay we should ask abundantly and constantly, and expect copious blessings, that our joy may be full, and our God be glorified. Blessed be his name, the Priest, the sacrifice, the incense, and anointing oil, are all ready prepared to our hands, without any concurrence of our's: but, if we know the value of this great salvation, we shall not grudge either time, labour, or expense, which the maintaining, or attending on, divine ordinances may require; and it is to be feared that we have no interest in the sacrifice, if we hesitate to contribute. Nor should we forget, that the poor are as welcome to Christ, as the rich; and the rich as much in want of his ransom for their souls, as the poor: for, in this grand concern, no external distinctions make any difference, and all are alike bound to express their valuation of Christ and of his salvation. Even they who are washed, in their first conversion, from the sins of their past lives, and from prevailing sin in their hearts, have occasion for renewed repentance, forgiveness, and grace, from day to day; and must still approach as sinners washed in the blood of Jesus, anointed by the Spirit, and pleading the Saviour's merits. But let us beware of attempting to render a religious profession subservient to our secular interests; of treating heavenly things with irreverence or contempt; or of gratifying our sinful inclinations under the pretence of Christian liberty: for these are most dangerous and fatal perversions of the gospel of Christ.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XXXI. V. 1—5. It cannot be supposed that the Israelites, who had been employed as bond-slaves in Egypt, were in general qualified for such curious workmanship as had been described; any more than that the apostles, taken from their fishing boats, and other low occupations, were capable of speaking fluently and correctly in the languages of all nations, to whom they were commanded to preach: but the same Spirit, who gave the apostles utterance in divers tongues, miraculously endued the persons here appointed with requisite skill, or exceedingly improved them in it; for they might have acquired some knowledge in particular branches of these ingenious arts, which are thought to have been very successfully cul-

Spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship,

4 To <sup>d</sup>devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass,

5 And <sup>e</sup>in cutting of stones to set *them*, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship.

6 And I, behold, <sup>f</sup>I have given with him, <sup>g</sup>Aholiab the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan; and in the hearts of all that are <sup>h</sup>wise-hearted I have put wisdom; that they may make all that I have commanded thee:

7 The <sup>i</sup>tabernacle of the congregation, and the <sup>j</sup>ark of the testimony, and the mercy-seat that *is* thereupon, and all the <sup>k</sup>furniture of the tabernacle, and all the <sup>l</sup>furniture of the tabernacle, and the <sup>m</sup>pure candlestick with all his furniture, and <sup>n</sup>the altar of incense, 9 And <sup>o</sup>the altar of burnt-offering with all his furniture, and <sup>p</sup>the laver and his foot,

10 And <sup>q</sup>the cloths of service, and the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office,

11 And <sup>r</sup>the anointing oil, and <sup>s</sup>sweet incense for the holy *place*; according to all that I have commanded thee, shall they do.

12 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

13 Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, <sup>t</sup>Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it *is* a <sup>u</sup>sign between me and you, throughout your generations; <sup>v</sup>that ye may know that I *am* the LORD, that doth sanctify you.

14 Ye shall <sup>w</sup>keep the sabbath therefore: for it *is* holy unto you. <sup>x</sup>Every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever <sup>y</sup>doeth *any* work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

15 <sup>z</sup>Six days may work be done, but in the seventh <sup>a</sup>is <sup>b</sup>the sabbath of rest, <sup>c</sup>holy to the LORD: <sup>d</sup>whosoever doeth *any* work in the sabbath-day, he shall surely be put to death.

16 Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, <sup>e</sup>for <sup>f</sup>a perpetual covenant.

17 It *is* a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for *in* <sup>g</sup>six

d xxv. 32-35.  
xxvi. 1. xxviii.  
15. 1 Kings vii.  
14. 2 Chr. ii. 7.  
13, 14.

e xxviii. 9-21.

f iv. 14, 15. vi. 26.  
Ezra v. 1, 2. Ec.  
iv. 9-12. Matt.  
x. 2-4. Luke x.  
1. Acts xlii. 2.  
xv. 39, 40.

g xxxvi. 1.  
h xxviii. 3. xxxv.  
10, 25, 26. xxxvii.  
8. 1 Kings iii. 12.  
Jam. i. 5. 16, 17.

i xxvi. xxvii. 9-  
10. xxxvi. 8-38.  
k xxv. 10-22.  
xxxvii. 1-9.

\* Heb. vessels.

l xxv. 22-30.  
xxxvii. 10-16.  
m xxv. 31-40.  
xxxvii. 17-24.  
n xxx.  
1-10.  
o xxxvii. 25-28.  
p xxxvii. 1-8.  
xxxviii. 1-7.

q xxxviii. xxxix.  
Lev. viii. 7, 8.  
13. Num. iv. 6-  
14.

t See on xx. 8-11.  
—Lev. xix. 3, 30.  
xxxiii. 3. xxv. 2.  
u 17. Ez. xx. 12.  
20. xlii. 24.

x Lev. xx. 8. xxi.  
8. Ez. xxxvii. 28.  
John xvii. 17. 19.  
1 Thes. v. 22.  
y Jude 1.  
Deut. v. 12-15.  
Neh. ix. 14. Ia.  
lvi. 2-6. lviii.  
13, 14.  
z Ia. lvi. 2, 6. Ez.  
xx. 13. 18. 21.  
24.

a xxxv. 2, 3.

b 17. xvi. 26. xxxiv.  
21. Lev. xxiii. 3.  
Ez. xli. 1. Luke.  
xlii. 14.  
c xvi. 23. Lev.  
xxiii. 8. 32.  
Luke xxiii. 66.  
—Heb. iv. 9. Gr.  
+ Heb. holiness.  
d Num. xv. 32-  
36. Jer. xvii. 24.  
—27.

e Gen. ix. 13. xvi.  
11. Jer. i. 5.

f Gen. ii. 2, 3.  
36. Jer. iv. 3, 4. 10.

tivated in Egypt, at this early period.—Neither Moses, nor Aaron, nor any of Aaron's sons were appointed to this service: the honour already conferred must suffice for them; and if they attended to their proper employment, they would find that also sufficient. Nor were Moses's sons appointed; for it was the Lord's will that his disinterestedness and divine legation, should appear *illustrious* in the *obscurity* of his posterity! If Hur was (as some think) Miriam's husband, and in consequence Bezaleel a distant relation of Moses; as the Lord expressly called him by name, to preside in the whole business, all occasion of murmuring was precluded.

V. 6. Aholiab was also expressly appointed to be assistant to Bezaleel, and next under him, in this service: yet not only to these two, but to many others, the Lord gave wisdom and understanding, as well as a willing heart, to perform various parts of the work, under their superintendency.—They were not, however, allowed to exercise their ingenuity, in *contriving* any decorations to embellish the sanctuary; but merely to *devise* how to execute the commands of God, with exactness, readiness, and elegance.—[*Dan*.] Hiram, the principal workman, in building Solomon's temple, was "the son of a woman of the *daughters of Dan*." (2 Chr. ii. 13, 14. iv. 11-18. Note, 1 Kings vii. 14.)

V. 8. *Pure candlestick*.] Thus called, because it was made entirely of pure gold; and not merely overlaid with gold, as other parts of the sacred furniture were.

V. 10. *Cloths of service*.] These are supposed to have been the coverings, prepared for the sacred furniture, when it was to be removed. (Num. iv. 6-14.)

V. 13-17. The injunction, to sanctify the sabbath, seems to have been repeated and enlarged on at this time, to shew the people, that the sacred rest must not be interrupted, even while they were employed in erecting the tabernacle. The appointment of the weekly sabbath was a *sign*, or token, of the Lord's special favour to Israel. Their strict and constant observance of it would not only distinguish them, as the worshippers of God, who created the heavens and the earth in six days and rested on the seventh, from all the surrounding idolaters; but, through successive generations, it would be a *sign* of their covenant-relation to him, and an important means of bringing them more fully acquainted with his glorious perfections, and of rendering them indeed a holy people devoted to his service. It was therefore, at this time expressly made a part of the *judicial law*, that every Israelite should hallow the sabbath: if any one violated it, he must be put to death by the magistrate, provided his crime were known; and if he kept it secret, he might expect to be cut off by some divine judgment. Other seasons were set apart, as a kind of *sabbath*: but this was the principal; "a sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD;" the public observance of which by the nation, and the punishment of such as violated it, formed one condition of the national covenant throughout their generations. For it was kept in honour

days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and <sup>g</sup> was refreshed.

18 ¶ And he <sup>h</sup> gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with <sup>i</sup> the finger of God.

## CHAP. XXXII.

Aaron, at the people's instigation, makes a golden calf, and they worship it, 1—6. God informs Moses,

of the Creator, who *rested* and *was refreshed*, when he had completed his design: such satisfaction did he take in that display of his glory! Surely then his worshippers ought to find refreshment and delight, in contemplating his works, rendering him the tribute of adoring and grateful praise, and performing the duties of that holy day.

V. 18. After all the preceding laws and instructions, (which probably were given at different times,) when the forty days of Moses's continuance on the mount were nearly ended, the Lord gave him the tables of stone before spoken of, (xxiv. 12;) with the ten commandments written on them by his own immediate power. They are here called, the "two tables of testimony:" because the laws written on them were the substance of that will of God, which he *testified* to them; and likewise, because by giving this law to them, and by placing it in the ark under the mercy-seat, from above which he displayed his glory, he *testified* his special favour to that nation, and the way in which it would be continued to them. The *stones*, on which the law of the ten commandments was written, denoted its perpetual, unchangeable obligation; in which it differed from the other laws, which would after a time be superseded.—By *the finger of God*, the Holy Spirit may be meant, as the texts referred to shew; (*Marg. Ref. i.*) and he writes this law in the hearts of all the spiritual children of Israel, having prepared them for that purpose.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord confers his *unmerited* favours on whom he pleases: but the honour, which cometh from him, is always attended with a work to be done: and to be employed by him is indeed the highest honour, and the noblest privilege.—Men are not now called forth by name, as in the days of Moses: yet our God generally marks out the persons, whom he hath made choice of, by endowing them with correspondent dispositions and qualifications by his Spirit, and opening the way to their work in his providence. We may indeed certainly know that we are not appointed to any service, for which we continue utterly unqualified. Yet there are cases, in which men are unexpectedly and evidently called to situations, and engaged in services, for which they are humbly conscious of being in themselves wholly insufficient: but they may depend upon God to give them "the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, and "knowledge" for their work, even after they are engaged in it; if they simply seek his glory, do his will, and are employed by him. He confers different gifts on different persons; that they may feel their need of each other, and

who intercedes for Israel, and prevails, 7—14. He comes down from the mount, breaks the tables of the law, destroys the idol, and expostulates with Aaron, 15—24. He commissions the Levites, who slay three thousand of the criminals, 25—29. He again intercedes for the nation, 30—35.

AND when the people saw that Moses <sup>a</sup> delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, <sup>b</sup> Up, <sup>c</sup> make us gods <sup>d</sup> which shall go before us: for *as for* this Moses,

receive mutual benefit, as the members in the human body: let then each person mind his proper work, and improve his own talents diligently; remembering that whatever wisdom any man possesses, the Lord hath put it into his heart, to the end that he may do *all* his commandments. Let no one envy, despise, intermeddle with, or depreciate, the gift or work of his brethren: and let each "study to "be quiet, and to do his own business;" and to rejoice in the superior endowments of others, without murmuring or disputing, or by ostentation provoking their envy or resentment.—Every useful work is beautiful in its season; but the more immediate exercises of religion belong especially to the sanctification of the sabbath: and as the appointment itself is an *external* sign of the Lord's goodwill to sinful men; so our love to it, and delight in hallowing it, is a good *internal* evidence, that he hath begun and will continue to sanctify our souls.—May the Lord therefore have mercy upon us, pardon all our transgressions, take away the heart of stone, and write *this* and all his laws in our inmost souls: then, though every sweet season of communion with God on earth must come to a close, we shall at length be admitted into his presence in heaven, where "is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore."

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXXII. V. 1. Just when Moses, Israel's faithful representative, had transacted all their great concerns upon the mount, and was coming down, fully instructed and authorized, to erect the tabernacle, and set up the worship of God among them, a sad interruption took place, through their shameful disobedience.—They seem to have been weary of waiting so long at Sinai; though had they been so disposed, they might have improved the time very profitably, in reflecting and conversing on what they had heard and seen. While some of them "in heart turned "back into Egypt," others were in great haste for the corn and wine, the milk and honey, of Canaan. But the grand evil was this; their carnal minds did not relish the spiritual worship of an invisible holy God. Many of them were infected with idolatry, and doubtless had witnessed in Egypt religious feasts suited to a sensual mind; (*Note, Ez. xx. 7—9.*) and probably they expected the same, in the feast which they were to hold unto the Lord: but in this they were greatly disappointed, and the whole was a very serious, alarming, and painful employment to them.—In the absence of Moses therefore, they formed the project of a religious feast more suited to their taste, which having solemnized, they intended to leave Sinai, and to



MOUNT SINAI AND MOUNT HOREB.

EXOD. xxxi. 18 DEUT. ix. 8, 9.



o 7. 11. xiv. 11. \*the man that brought us up out of the  
xvi. 3. Hos. xii. land of Egypt, 'we wot not what is be-  
13. Mic. vi. 4. come of him.  
f Gen. xxi. 26.  
xxxix. 8. xlv.  
15.

2 And Aaron said unto them, Break  
off the 'golden ear-rings which *are* in  
the ears of your wives, of your sons,  
and of your daughters, and bring *them*  
unto me.

3 And all the people <sup>h</sup> brake off the  
golden ear-rings which *were* in their  
ears, and brought *them* unto Aaron.

4 And he received *them* at their hand,  
and 'fashioned it with <sup>k</sup> a graving tool,

after he had made it a molten 'calf: 1 Kings xii. 28  
and they said, 'These *be* thy gods, O 22 2 Kings x.  
Israel, <sup>a</sup> which brought thee up out of 29. 2 Chr. xi. 16.  
the land of Egypt. xiii. 8. Hos. viii.  
4. 5. x. 5. xiii. 2.  
m 8. Judg. xvii. 3.  
1 Kings xii. 28.  
Neh. ix. 18. 1a.  
xi. 18. Rom. i.  
21—23.

5 And when <sup>o</sup> Aaron saw *it*, he built  
an altar before it, and Aaron <sup>p</sup> made  
proclamation, and said, To-morrow is  
<sup>q</sup> a feast to the LORD.

6 And they rose up early on the  
morrow, and 'offered burnt-offerings,  
and brought peace-offerings: and the  
people <sup>r</sup> sat down to eat and to drink,  
and rose up to play.

more so. Many conjectures have been made concerning his reasons for acting as he did; but his conduct seems to have been too unreasonable to be either excused, or accounted for: yet the Lord permitted it, to evince by facts, of what man is capable; and to shew that the priesthood was given to Aaron entirely of *grace*, when he might most justly have been cut off for his transgression; that he might wear his honours the more humbly ever after, as Peter did after denying his Lord; that when the sin-offering of consecration was offered, he might indeed feel his need of the atonement; and that it might appear, that sinful man wanted a High Priest of another and a nobler order.—The Jews indeed have a tradition that Hur was killed for opposing the project, and that Aaron feared the same fate: but if so, he would have had a better excuse to make before Moses. (Note, 21—24.) He might indeed be frightened, but he had not so just cause: for, however disposed the people had shewn themselves to rebellion, it is not intimated that they assembled seditiously, or with violence, on this occasion. The demand of the golden ear-rings has been considered, as an attempt to put the people off from their purpose; and as there was much gold in their camp besides this, and such ornaments are reluctantly parted with, it is probable he entertained some hope, that they would not comply with so self-denying and expensive a proposal. But it was a feeble measure, and far from that decision which became him: for they *readily* and *zealously* parted with their ornaments, which they had newly acquired as the spoil of Egypt; and he as readily, however he acquired his skill, formed it into the shape of a calf, or ox!—The words rendered, "He fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf," are variously interpreted. 'The order is inverted. He first cast 'the calf, then he formed it with a graving tool or scraping instrument, cutting away the redundancies, and 'polishing it.—Or, preserving the right order, it may be 'explained; He framed, or marked out with a graving instrument, the image to be made, namely, that the 'mold might be fashioned, into which the gold should be 'poured; and he thence, in this manner, made the molten 'calf.' In *Pool's Synopsis*.—It is likewise much disputed, what induced Aaron to make the image in this shape. Some deny that the Egyptians worshipped either an ox, or the image of one, at this early period: but they can only shew, that we have no positive evidence they did, and for the same reason we have no proof they did not; for we

march, either back into Egypt, or forward to Canaan.—They, who duly consider in what manner *religious festivals* are observed among millions of professed Christians, will readily perceive how agreeable *such a religion* must be to a sensual mind, as consists "in sitting down to eat and drink, "and rising up to play" (6); that is, to dance, and sing, and divert themselves.—In forwarding this project, they pretended that they "knew not what was become of this "Moses," of whom they spake with the utmost indifference: they seemed to intimate, that the fire had consumed him, or that he had perished with hunger, or perhaps was taken up into heaven.—Indeed they had no reason to think he delayed longer than was necessary; or to doubt that he was safe, and faithfully employed for them, and that he would in due time return. But, supposing he had been dead, surely a decent respect should have been shewn to his memory: and had they then questioned whether Aaron and Hur should succeed him, or some other persons be appointed, there might have been an appearance of reason in it: but to propose making them gods, because Moses was gone, shewed them "mad upon their idols," and glad of any pretence to return to them! Not much above forty days before, they had heard God himself speak unto them out of the midst of the fire, while they saw no similitude; and he had expressly prohibited them not to form any image of him: that fire, and the cloud attending it, were still before their eyes; all the other wonders were fresh in their memories; they daily ate of the manna from the clouds, and drank of the water from the rock: yet even "in Horeb they forgot God their Saviour," ascribed their deliverance out of Egypt, first to the man Moses, and then to the idol which they had formed! (4.) Such was this astonishing transaction!

Gods] אלהים; the same word as is every where used for the true God; but it is here, and in other places of this narrative, joined with a plural verb, which is not the case when it means the true God. They wanted a visible representation of the object, or objects, of their worship; and perhaps at first desired more images than one: a single idol, however, satisfied them. It is probable, that the pillar of cloud and fire, which had led them, continued stationary on the mount; and they thence concluded that it would no longer go before them, and so they required other guides.

V. 2—6. If the conduct of Israel as a people was surprising, that of "Aaron, the saint of the LORD," was still

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that <sup>h</sup>my wrath may wax hot against <sup>i</sup>them, and that I may consume them: <sup>j</sup>and <sup>k</sup>I will make of thee a great nation.

11 And Moses <sup>l</sup>besought <sup>m</sup>the LORD his God, and said, LORD, <sup>n</sup>why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, <sup>o</sup>which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and with a mighty hand?

12 Wherefore <sup>p</sup>should the Egyptians speak and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? <sup>q</sup>Turn from thy fierce wrath, and <sup>r</sup>repent of this evil against thy people.

have no records so ancient, except the Scriptures, which favour the conclusion that they did. Some indeed imagine, that Aaron took the hint from the cherubim, which they suppose to have had faces as oxen: but, whatever may be decided as to this, they forget that the cherubim, on the mercy-seat and tabernacle, were not yet made, or known of except by Moses.—It is therefore probable, that Aaron complied with the wishes of the people, and formed the resemblance of a calf, in conformity to what they had seen in Egypt. (Ex. xx. 8. xxiii. 8.) With this they were mightily pleased; and, though probably but a rude representation of a beast, they stupidly considered it as a very proper similitude of the God, or gods, who brought them out of the land of Egypt! They evidently intended to worship JEHOVAH by it, however ignorant and inconsistent their language might be. But this was infinitely dishonourable to his incomprehensible majesty, and no better than “turning their glory into the similitude of an ox, that eateth grass.” Our surprise, however, at Israel’s and Aaron’s conduct may be somewhat abated, when we consider how great a part of the professing Christian Church hath for ages concurred in, pleaded for, and vindicated similar practices, in as direct opposition to every part of the word of God, as this was to the law which Israel had just heard from mount Sinai; and with no better excuses than Aaron could have pleaded, had not Moses silenced him. But when the word of God does not coincide with our interests, inclinations, and prejudices, the chief discovery of man’s ingenuity is manifested in explaining it away.—When Aaron therefore found, that the people were so well satisfied with his performance, he was induced still further to concur in their designs; and perhaps he vainly hoped by compliance to retain them within some bounds, and by allowing the use of an image, to keep them from directly worshipping other gods. He therefore proclaimed, that on the morrow a feast would be held to JEHOVAH: and the people, with great alacrity, brought burnt-offerings and peace-offerings; (for the use of these was known before;) and having offered sacrifices to the image of the calf, they feasted on the residue of the oblations, and were engaged in mirth and diversion, if not more gross sensuality, when interrupted by the return of Moses.

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V. 11—14. Instead of at all mentioning the proposal, which God had made to him, or neglecting to pray for his people, Moses interceded for them with such earnestness, as put him into an agony of mind; for so the word (מַעַד) seems to signify. He did not, however, attempt to palliate or excuse their sin; but he pleaded the glory of the divine perfections as concerned in the event: for if the Lord should destroy Israel, (of whom he says, “thy people whom thou hast brought out,”) the Egyptians would impeach his justice and goodness. The destruction of the nation could not apparently be reconciled with his promises and oath to Abraham, Isaac, and Israel: and, whatever their sin deserved, surely JEHOVAH would not give occasion to any injurious reflections being cast upon his own

<sup>a</sup> Lev. xxvi. 42. <sup>b</sup> Deut. vii. 8. <sup>c</sup> ix. 27. <sup>d</sup> Luke i. 54, 55. <sup>e</sup> Gen. xxii. 16. <sup>f</sup> xxvi. 3, 4. <sup>g</sup> Heb. vi. 13. <sup>h</sup> Gen. xii. 2. <sup>i</sup> 7. <sup>j</sup> xiii. 15, 16. <sup>k</sup> xv. 5. <sup>l</sup> 18. <sup>m</sup> xxvi. 4. <sup>n</sup> xxviii. 13, 14. <sup>o</sup> xxxv. 11, 12. <sup>p</sup> xviii. 16. <sup>q</sup> 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. <sup>r</sup> 1 Chr. xxi. 15. <sup>s</sup> Ps. cvi. 45. <sup>t</sup> Jer. xlviii. 8. <sup>u</sup> xxvi. 13. <sup>v</sup> 19. <sup>w</sup> Joel ii. 13. <sup>x</sup> Jom. iii. 10. <sup>y</sup> iv. 2. <sup>z</sup> xxiv. 18. <sup>aa</sup> Deut. ix. 15. <sup>ab</sup> See on xvi. 24.—<sup>ac</sup> xl. 20. <sup>ad</sup> Deut. v. 22. <sup>ae</sup> Ps. xix. 7. <sup>af</sup> Rev. v. 1. <sup>ag</sup> xxxi. 18. <sup>ah</sup> xxxiv. 1. <sup>ai</sup> 4. <sup>aj</sup> Deut. ix. 9.—<sup>ak</sup> 11. <sup>al</sup> x. 1. <sup>am</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 3. <sup>an</sup> 7. <sup>ao</sup> Heb. viii. 10. <sup>ap</sup> See on xvii. 9. <sup>aq</sup> xxiv. 13. <sup>ar</sup> 18. <sup>as</sup> Ezra vi. 11.—<sup>at</sup> 13. <sup>au</sup> Ps. xlvii. 1. <sup>av</sup> Josh. vi. 5. <sup>aw</sup> 10. <sup>ax</sup> 16. <sup>ay</sup> 20. <sup>az</sup> Judg. xv. 14. <sup>ba</sup> 1 Sam. iv. 5. <sup>bb</sup> 6. <sup>bc</sup> xvii. 20. <sup>bd</sup> 52. <sup>be</sup> Job xxxix. 25. <sup>bf</sup> Jer. li. 14. <sup>bg</sup> Am. i. 14. <sup>bh</sup> ii. 2. <sup>bi</sup> Heb. weakness. <sup>bj</sup> xv. 1. <sup>bk</sup> &c. Dan. v. 4. 23.

13 <sup>a</sup> Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, <sup>b</sup> to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, <sup>c</sup> I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of, will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever.

14 And the LORD <sup>a</sup> repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.

15 ¶ And Moses <sup>a</sup> turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of <sup>a</sup> the testimony *were* in his hand: the tables *were* <sup>a</sup> written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other *were* they written.

16 And <sup>a</sup> the tables *were* the work of God, and the writing *was* the writing of God graven upon the tables.

17 And when <sup>a</sup> Joshua heard the noise of the people as <sup>a</sup> they shouted, he said unto Moses, <sup>a</sup> There is a noise of war in the camp.

18 And he said, *It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome: but the noise of them that sing do I hear.*

19 And it came to pass as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that <sup>b</sup> he saw the calf, and <sup>c</sup> the dancing: and Moses's <sup>d</sup> anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and <sup>e</sup> brake them beneath the mount.

20 And he <sup>a</sup> took the calf which they had made, and burnt *it* in the fire, and ground *it* to powder, and strawed *it* upon the water, and <sup>a</sup> made the children of Israel drink *of it*.

21 And Moses said unto Aaron, <sup>a</sup> What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?

22 And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou <sup>a</sup> knowest the people <sup>a</sup> that they *are set* on mischief.

23 For <sup>a</sup> they said unto me, Make us gods which shall go before us: for *as* for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

24 And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let him break *it* off. <sup>a</sup> So they gave *it* me: then I cast *it* into the fire, and there came out this calf.

<sup>b</sup> 4—6. Deut. ix. 16.

<sup>c</sup> xv. 20. 2 Sam. vi. 14. 1 am. v. 15.

<sup>d</sup> 11. Num. xii. 3. Matt. v. 22. Mark iii. 5. x. 14. Eph. iv. 26.

<sup>e</sup> Deut. ix. 17. xxvii. 26. Jer. xxxi. 32. Zech. xi. 10, 11. 14.

<sup>f</sup> Deut. vii. 5. 25. ix. 21. 2 Kings xxiii. 6. 15.

<sup>g</sup> Prov. i. 31. xiv 14.

<sup>h</sup> Gen. xx. 9. xxvi. 10. Deut. xiii. 6—8. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. 1 Kings xiv. 16. xxi. 22. 2 Kings xxi. 9—11.

<sup>i</sup> xiv. 11. xv. 24. xvi. 2—4. 20. 28. xvii. 2—4. Deut. ix. 7. 24.

<sup>j</sup> 1 Sam. xv. 24. Ps. xxxvi. 4. Prov. iv. 16.

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<sup>l</sup> 4. Gen. iii. 12, 13. Luke x. 29. Rom. iii. 10.

great name. (Note, Deut. xxxii. 26, 27.) This regard to the divine honour was well pleasing to the Lord, who graciously intimated his design of sparing them, as he had before seemed determined upon their destruction; which change, in the external discovery of his purpose, is called "repenting of the evil, which he thought to do to his people." (Note, Gen. vi. 6, 7.)—Thus Moses did not go down from the mount till mercy was promised; and his example instructs us in the most affecting manner, how to pray, what pleas to urge, and whence to deduce encouragements for persevering in our supplications.

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V. 19. Moses's anger was hot, and he intended to express his abhorrence of Israel's crime: yet his breaking of the tables of the covenant was no rash sally of passion, as some have imagined; but a significant action, done probably by a divine suggestion, to denote that the covenant was broken; and that the people lay exposed to the severest vengeance of God.

V. 20. The people seem to have been overawed by the presence of Moses, and not to have attempted any resistance, while he took away their idol to destroy it.—As it is very difficult to reduce gold to powder, many conjectures have been formed on the manner, in which it was done on this occasion: but the text leads us to consider Moses, as first destroying the form of the idol, by melting it down; and then proceeding to reduce it, by violent friction or filing, to a fine powder. (Marg. Ref.) No doubt this would require much labour; but many might assist him, both of those who had kept clear of this vile idolatry, and of such as were brought to a sense of their guilt; and it is absurd to suppose that it was impossible to be done.—It was proper that the treasure, thus employed in idolatry, should finally perish, as an accursed thing; and that the idol itself should be rendered as contemptible as possible, before its stupid worshippers. By strewing the powder in the stream, which ran perhaps rapidly from the rock, the people would be forced to drink some of it with the water: which intimated, that they must expect to experience the fatal effects of their sin, as bringing a curse upon all their comforts.

V. 21—24. Moses did not enquire of Aaron, what induced him to concur with the people in this detestable idolatry; but in what they had offended him, that he should revenge himself by leading them into so great a wickedness. This most emphatically declares his judgment of Aaron's conduct, and confutes all the pleas, which

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21 And Moses said unto Aaron, <sup>a</sup> What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?

22 And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou <sup>a</sup> knowest the people <sup>a</sup> that they are set

23 For <sup>a</sup> they said unto me, Make us gods which shall go before us: for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

24 And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let him break it off. <sup>a</sup> So they gave it me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf.

V. 20. The people seem to have been overawed by the presence of Moses, and not to have attempted any resistance, while he took away their idol to destroy it.—As it is very difficult to reduce gold to powder, many conjectures have been formed on the manner, in which it was done on this occasion: but the text leads us to consider Moses, as first destroying the form of the idol, by melting it down; and then proceeding to reduce it, by violent friction or filing, to a fine powder. (Marg. Ref.) No doubt this would require much labour; but many might assist him, both of those who had kept clear of this vile idolatry, and of such as were brought to a sense of their guilt; and it is absurd to suppose that it was impossible to be done.—It was proper that the treasure, thus employed in idolatry, should finally perish, as an accursed thing; and that the idol itself should be rendered as contemptible as possible, before its stupid worshippers. By strewing the powder in the stream, which ran perhaps rapidly from the rock, the people would be forced to drink some of it with the water: which intimated, that they must expect to experience the fatal effects of their sin, as bringing a curse upon all their comforts.

V. 21—24. Moses did not enquire of Aaron, what induced him to concur with the people in this detestable idolatry; but in what they had offended him, that he should revenge himself by leading them into so great a wickedness. This most emphatically declares his judgment of Aaron's conduct, and confutes all the pleas, which

25 And when Moses saw that the people *were* <sup>m</sup>naked; (for <sup>a</sup>Aaron had made them naked unto *their* <sup>o</sup>shame, amongst <sup>r</sup>their enemies;)

26 Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, <sup>p</sup>Who *is* on the LORD's side? *let him come* unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.

27 And he said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, *and go in and out, from gate to gate, throughout the camp, and* <sup>q</sup>slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour.

28 And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and

'there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.

29 <sup>r</sup>For <sup>s</sup>Moses had said, <sup>t</sup>Consecrate yourselves to-day to the LORD, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother, that he may bestow upon you a blessing this day.

30 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, 'Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the LORD; <sup>u</sup>peradventure I shall make an <sup>v</sup>atonement for your sin.

31 And Moses <sup>w</sup>returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have <sup>x</sup>sinned a great sin, and have <sup>y</sup>made them gods of gold.

Ezra ix. 6, 7, 15. Neh. ix. 33. Dan. ix. 5, 8, 11

have been invented to palliate it. Indeed, no wise man ever made a more unmeaning and foolish excuse, than Aaron did. We should never have supposed "that he could "speak well," were we to judge of his eloquence by this specimen. If the people were bent upon mischief, Aaron, the saint and servant of the Lord, who was entrusted with authority over Israel, should have ventured and suffered all extremities in opposing their mad design: but while he was as pliant as they could wish, and very active in the business, he charged all the blame on others, and spake as if the golden calf had been produced almost by accident, without his concurrence, and beyond his expectation; and he seemed only intent to deprecate the anger of Moses, not that of God!—No wonder that "the LORD was angry "with him also to have destroyed him:" but Moses prayed for him too; (*Deut. ix. 20*;) and we may be sure that he was ever after deeply humbled, and greatly ashamed of his conduct.

V. 25. The sin of the people had despoiled them of all claim to the Lord's protection, and had left them exposed without excuse to his righteous vengeance, and the scorn and rage of their enemies. They had stripped themselves of part of their ornaments to make the golden calf; and they were ordered to lay aside the rest in a way of humiliation, on this shameful occasion. (*Note, xxxiii. 4—6*.) Perhaps also, in their dancing and sensual festivity, many of them had uncovered themselves in an indecent and shameful manner; as well as exposed themselves to the danger of being assaulted, and ignominiously scattered by their enemies.—Idolatrous feasts have scarcely ever, in any age or nation, been free from shameful indecencies.

V. 26—29. The Levites with one consent, having come promptly at the call of Moses, as decidedly "on the Lord's "side," in this general defection, were commissioned to slay the ringleaders in this wickedness, without respect to friendship, relation, or any other social tie: for idolatry was a crime to be punished by their magistrates. Yet it seems none were executed, but those who openly and boldly stood forth as disposed to vindicate their conduct: while those who retired as ashamed were spared. This commission, being faithfully executed, brought a great

blessing upon the tribe; and was a preparation for its being appointed to the service of the sanctuary, which was a very honourable and advantageous distinction. For, however men might blame them, they made it manifest, that though doubtless some individuals were guilty, as the words, "Every man upon his son, and upon his brother," imply; (*Note, Deut. xxxiii. 9*;) yet, as a tribe, they had been peculiarly free from this national idolatry, notwithstanding Aaron had set them so bad an example; and that they were valiant for God and for his honour. And as they were seconded by the divine power, which confounded and intimidated the transgressors, no opposition was made to the execution. It does not however appear, that any from the other tribes joined the Levites; and it is thence supposed, that all the rest had concurred in the idolatry.

V. 30—33. It may be supposed, that Moses expatiated before the people on the exceeding heinousness, and the many aggravations, of their crime; and attempted to bring them to humble themselves in deep repentance on account of it, while he went to intercede in their behalf before God. His words were suited to preserve them in a due medium between desponding fear and presumptuous confidence: "Peradventure I shall make an *atonement* for "your sin." Perhaps he expected that a sin-offering for the nation might be appointed, and that through this typical *atonement* their crime might be pardoned: or he referred to the proposal which he was about to make. His words however imply, that without an *atonement* there could be no forgiveness; and that they could make no atonement for themselves. He had received some intimation from the Lord, that he would spare the nation, before he went down from the mount; yet he was so affected by a nearer view of the guilt which they had contracted, that he seems almost to have questioned, whether this could consist with the honour of God. When therefore he went to meet him, (probably not on the top of the mount Sinai, but at a distance from the camp,) he mournfully deplored the great sin of his people; and pleaded for them in an imperfect sentence, implying rather an ardent desire, than a direct request. The meaning of his vehement language has been much disputed: and some contend, that he ex-

Num. xvi. 32—35. 4. 1 Cor. x. 8. Heb. ii. 2, 3.  
† Or, And Moses said, Consecrate yourselves to-day to the LORD; because every man hath been against his son and against his brother, &c.  
Num. xxv. 11—13. Deut. xii. 6—11. 1 Sam. xv. 18—22. Zech. xiii. 3. Matt. x. 37.  
‡ Heb. Fill your hands  
§ 31. 1 Sam. ii. 17. xii. 20. 2 Sam. xii. 9. 2 Kings xvii. 21. Luke vii. 47.  
|| 2 Sam. xvi. 12. Am. v. 16. Jon. iii. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 25.  
x 32. Num. xvi. 47. xxv. 13. Rom. ix. 3. Gal. iii. 13.  
y xxxiv. 28. Deut. ix. 18, 19.  
z See on 30—33. x. 4, 23.

<sup>b</sup> Num. xiv. 19. <sup>c</sup> 32 Yet now, <sup>b</sup> if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, <sup>a</sup> blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.

<sup>d</sup> 33 And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath <sup>d</sup> sinned against me, him will I blot out of <sup>c</sup> my book.

<sup>e</sup> 34 Therefore now go, lead the peo-

ple unto *the place* of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, <sup>f</sup> mine angel shall go before thee: nevertheless, in <sup>g</sup> the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them.

<sup>h</sup> 35 And the Lord plagued the people, because <sup>h</sup> they made the calf, which Aaron made.

pressed his willingness to be blotted out of the book of life, and finally to perish, provided this might be accepted as an atonement for the sin of his people; and they put the same construction on the words used by St. Paul, on a somewhat similar occasion. (*Note, Rom. ix. 1—3.*) But this interpretation seems inadmissible; for the spiritual law of God requires us to “love our neighbour as our-selves,” and not *more* than ourselves, which surely is implied, in being willing to be for ever miserable, either for their temporal or eternal salvation. Even Christ, of whom Moses is supposed to be a type in this proposal, was only willing for our salvation to die a temporal death, with every possible circumstance of inward and outward suffering; not to be eternally miserable: and the apostle says, “We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren;” not that we ought to devote our souls to destruction for them.—No doubt, zeal for the honour of God glowed in the heart of Moses, when he thus expressed himself; and perhaps he could not conceive, how that could be secured and manifested, either by destroying or sparing his people. But it should be remembered, that not only final misery, but final desperate enmity to God, is implied in the proposal, if thus understood; and it is wonderful how any man could ever think, that a willingness to be eternally wicked, and a desperate hater of God, can spring from love to him, and be a proper expression of zeal for his glory!—If therefore Moses referred to this proposal, when he said, “Peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin;” the words may be thus paraphrased; ‘O Lord, instead of destroying Israel as a sacrifice to thy justice, and making of me a great nation; let me be the sacrifice, and spare them: and if it may not consist with thy glory to spare them otherwise, and my death may suffice for that purpose, exclude me from Canaan, and take me out of life, in any way which thou seest good, that my people may be preserved and thy name glorified.’—Or perhaps he only meant to say, ‘If my people must be destroyed, cut me off also, and let me not survive or witness their destruction.’—The expression, “Blot me out of thy book,” is an allusion to the affairs of men, which is used in various senses in the Scriptures. (*Marg. Ref. c.*)—Whatever Moses meant by the request, the Lord did not accede to it, at least on that occasion; but only answered, that he would “blot” those who had sinned out of his book;” that is, he would punish the guilty, not the innocent: yet, when Moses afterwards offended God, and was excluded from Canaan while his people inherited it, he would no doubt remember this request.

*If thou wilt, &c.* (32) Εἰ μὲν ἀφεις αυτοῖς τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, ἀφεις, εἰ δὲ μὴ, κ. τ. λ. *Sept.*—‘If thou wilt forgive them their sin, forgive; but if not, &c.’ *Comp. Luke xiii. 9. Gr.*

V. 34, 35. The Lord, in commanding Moses to lead

the people to Canaan, and in merely promising that his angel should go before him, intimated that he would not immediately pour out his vengeance upon them, to destroy them; but at the same time he declared, that their national violation of the covenant would be remembered against them, when their other crimes should induce him to visit them in anger. The Jews have to this day a saying current among them to this effect, ‘That all the calamities, which have ever since befallen the nation, have in them a measure of the Lord’s indignation for the sin of the golden calf.’—It is not said, in what manner he *plagued* the people at this time; but in some way they sensibly felt the effects of his displeasure: and it is particularly to be noticed, that however Aaron endeavoured to exculpate himself, and whatever things have since been urged in his excuse; yet God expressly mentioned him, as a *principal* agent in this heinous transgression of Israel.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—14.

It is not in general advisable for magistrates, ministers, or heads of families, to be long absent from their respective charges; and if they have no good reason for such absence they will in great measure be answerable for all the consequences.—They who are so soon weary of waiting upon God, as to be eager to return to their worldly interests and pleasures, have evidently profited very little by instruction: and as the people rushed into wickedness, because they did not expect the return of Moses; so unbelief, as to a future judgment, lies at the root of the ungodliness of vast multitudes. (*Matt. xxiv. 48—51. 2 Pet. iii. 4.*)—High affections, urgent terrors, confident professions, and transient comforts, are not sufficient evidences of true conversion; for they frequently go off, and leave the heart more hard, and the conscience more callous, than before: nor can any external means, mercies, or judgments, change the heart, or for any long time win or awe men even into exterior good behaviour.—The servants of God should not expect much gratitude or respect from those, who ungratefully and contemptuously rebel against him: and after being favoured with sweet fellowship with him, they must often return to witness, to mourn over, and to bear testimony against, the wickedness even of those among whom they have laboured, and for whom they have poured out their souls in prayer.—No carnal heart can long endure the humbling truths, the holy precepts, and the spiritual worship of God: and they who hate his glorious perfections, must dislike his image in his faithful people. But a god, a priest, a worship, a doctrine, and a sacrifice, suited to a carnal mind, will always meet with abundance of devotees: nay, the very gospel itself may be *sophisticated*, so as to suit their taste; its hearers, having

## CHAP. XXXIII.

The Lord orders Moses to lead the people to Canaan, under the conduct of an angel, refusing himself to go with them, 1—3. The people express sorrow and humiliation, 4—6. Moses removes the tabernacle out of the camp; and the Lord there displays his glory, and communes with Moses, while the people worship at their tent-doors, 7—11. Moses prevails with the Lord to accompany them, and desires to behold his glory, 12—23.

offered their sacrifice, “will sit down to eat and drink, and “rise up to play;” and while they can render selfishness, self-gratification, and dissipation, consistent with religion, by their views of Christianity, they will cry them up as loudly and zealously, as Israel did the golden calf, and call the whole “a feast unto the LORD!” Yea, their example, influence, persuasion, and discourses, will draw in some ill-judging, compliant Aarons, to sanction and give credit to this motley religion; though the whole be as contrary to that of Christ, as “the works of the flesh are to the fruits “of the Spirit!” We have the more need to be upon our guard against such delusions, when we consider that “the “heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked;” and that Satan can easily blind the understanding, pervert the judgment, and mislead the conscience of the best of men, if left to themselves. Soon do we, when in this case, forget the terrors of mount Sinai, and the more affecting scenes which Gethsemane and Golgotha exhibit, yea, all our sweet experience of the love of Christ: while some golden or gilded idol usurps his throne and his worship; and we are easily induced to disgrace his gospel, and gratify his enemies.—Well is it for us, that the “Prophet “like unto Moses,” but infinitely more powerful and merciful, once veiled his majesty, made atonement for our souls, and interested the glory of the Father in our salvation, and now effectually intercedes in our behalf; else we should in a moment be consumed by his hot displeasure.

## V. 15—35.

While we rejoice in the intercession and grace of Christ, we should recollect, that the law is now written in the hearts of the true Israel, who love and obey its precepts, and deeply repent whenever they break them; and we should enquire whether we have this good evidence, that our sins are pardoned, and that the everlasting covenant is ratified with us; for otherwise sin hath “made us naked “to our shame,” and hath left us without protection in the hands of our enemies, yea, exposed us to the wrath of God himself.—However sinners may now rejoice in iniquity, when Christ returns to judgment, the stoutest hearts will fail, and their mirth will be turned into “weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.” Then every vain excuse will be silenced; every one’s sin will find him out; consent in wickedness will be turned into mutual recriminations; and the tempters and the tempted will be involved in one common, though not equal, condemnation. Let us now therefore cast ourselves humbly on the divine mercy, thankfully accept of the chastisement of our sins, and earnestly seek deliverance from the wrath to come; and, as a pledge of it, deliverance from the power and love

AND the LORD said unto Moses,<sup>a</sup> De- a xxxii. 34.  
part, and go up hence, thou and the  
people which<sup>b</sup> thou hast brought up  
out of the land of Egypt, unto<sup>c</sup> the  
land which I swore unto Abraham, to  
Isaac, and to Jacob, saying,<sup>d</sup> Unto thy  
seed will I give it:

2 And I will send<sup>e</sup> an angel before  
thee; and I will drive out<sup>f</sup> the Ca-

of sin in this world.—Of all the crimes which we commit, none are so injurious to man, as those which tempt or encourage others to sin: and if we would shew ourselves decidedly on the Lord’s part in this rebellious world, we must not shrink from any service, however difficult, dangerous, or contrary to our natural feelings; nor must we in such a case “know any man according to the flesh.” Yet we have a cause for thankfulness, that our testimony against sin, and our service for God, are not now of that nature, which were frequently required in these ancient times. But though his judgments are, under the Christian dispensation, more spiritual, let presumptuous sinners remember, that they will at length be on that very account the more dreadful.—Our abhorrence of sin, and indignation against it, are never too strong, if we be able, in the midst of our hot displeasure, to pray earnestly for sinners, and labour disinterestedly to do them good: and as the glory of God may be pleaded with him as a good argument, why he should not destroy his people; may it not be also pleaded with them as a cogent argument why they should not sin against him, and cause his holy name and religion to be blasphemed?—He will surely honour those, who are preserved from prevailing sins, and who boldly protest against them: and retirement and communion with him are happy means of keeping us out of the way of temptation.—Yet, if we have been thus preserved, we must give God the glory, and become supplicants in behalf of others; for “the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth” sometimes to the saving of a nation. But alas! the most zealous may often be ashamed, when they compare the assiduity, liberality, and earnestness of idolaters, and of the idolatrous devotees of worldly interests, pleasures, and preferments, with their own supineness, lukewarmness, and want of generosity in the service of God.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIII. V. 1, 2. Moses had pleaded the promise and oath of God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and interested his glory in preserving Israel, and putting them in possession of Canaan: therefore he was commanded to lead them directly thither, without any mention of erecting the tabernacle, or establishing the worship of JEHOVAH among them. As if he had said, ‘Let them have the land flowing with milk and honey; and an angel shall go before them, and put them in possession of it: but let them have it without any special blessing, or further religious advantages, to distinguish them from the nations around them.’—It is observable, that as Moses, when he had seen their wickedness, did not call them the Lord’s people, but said, “Oh, this people;” (xxxii. 31;) so the

g xlii. 1. Lev. xx. 24. Num. xlii. 27. xiv. 8. xvi. 13. Josh. v. 6. Jer. xl. 5.

h 15—17. xxxii. 10. 14. Num. xiv. 12. Deut. xxxii. 26. 27. 1 Sam. ii. 30. Jer. xvii. 7—10. Ez. iii. 18, 19. xxxiii. 13—16. Jon. iii. 4. 10.

i xxxii. 9. Deut. ix. 6—13. Ps. lxxviii. 8. Acts vii. 51.

k xxxii. 21. Num. xvi. 45. Am. iii. 13, 14.

l Num. xiv. 39. Hos. vii. 14. Zech. vii. 3, 5.

m Lev. x. 6. 2 Sam. xix. 24. 1 Kings xxi. 27. 2 Kings xix. 1. Ezra ix. 3. Esth. iv. 1—4. Job i. 20. ii. 12. Is. xxxii. 11. Ez. xxiv. 17. 28. xxvi. 16. Jon. iii. 4.

n Num. xvi. 21. 45. Job xxxiv. 20. Ps. lxxiii. 19. Lam. iv. 6.

o Is. xxii. 12.

p Gen. xviii. 21. xxii. 12. Deut. viii. 2. Ps. cxxxix. 23.

q 4. xxxii. Jer. ii. 19.

naanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite :

3 Unto <sup>a</sup> a land flowing with milk and honey: <sup>b</sup> for I will not go up in the midst of thee, for thou <sup>c</sup> art <sup>d</sup> a stiff-necked people; <sup>e</sup> lest I consume thee in the way.

4 And when the people heard these evil tidings <sup>f</sup> they mourned: <sup>g</sup> and no man did put on him his ornaments.

5 For the LORD had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye <sup>h</sup> are a stiff-necked people: I will come up into the midst of thee <sup>i</sup> in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now <sup>j</sup> put off thy ornaments from thee, that <sup>k</sup> I may know what to do unto thee.

6 And the children of Israel <sup>l</sup> stripped themselves of their ornaments, by the mount Horeb.

Lord calls them, "the people whom thou hast brought up "out of Egypt," as though he disdained to have any more to do with them: but Moses, having thus far prevailed, was encouraged still further to urge his intercession.

V. 3. *I will not, &c.*] Such declarations rather shew, what God justly might do, what it would become him to do, and what he would do, were it not for some intervening consideration, than his *irreversible* purpose; and they always imply a reserved exception, in case the party offending be truly penitent. The Lord therefore expressed himself, as if he would not have a tabernacle, or dwelling place, among the people, or in any way manifest his special presence and glory in the midst of them; seeing that they were disposed to treat him with such insufferable contempt, that these favours would only serve to increase their guilt, and to provoke his jealousy to their destruction.

V. 4—6. The people had parted with some of their ornaments to make the golden calf; yet doubtless they had generally arrayed themselves in festive garments to worship the idol; but they laid the whole aside, when they heard of the Lord's hot displeasure against them, and no more attempted to resume them. For the Lord had intimated an intention of destroying them in a moment; yet at the same time he had ordered them to assume the habit of mourners or penitents, while he, as it were, deliberated how to act towards them. This implied a design of mercy, provided they shewed signs of repentance; and as they complied without hesitation, and seemed more grieved because the Lord refused to go with them, than on account of the terrible execution recorded in the foregoing chapter, it may be supposed that several of them were truly humbled; and the others, by an external humiliation, gave glory to God, which made way for him honourably to avert the national judgment. (Note, 1 Kings xxi. 27—29.)—The words (אֶת־הָעֹרֹת) rendered "by the mount Horeb," seem

7 And Moses took the tabernacle, and pitched it without the camp, <sup>a</sup> afar off from the camp, and called it <sup>b</sup> the Tabernacle of the congregation. And it came to pass, <sup>c</sup> that every one which <sup>d</sup> sought the LORD, <sup>e</sup> went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation which <sup>f</sup> was without the camp.

8 And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the tabernacle, <sup>g</sup> that all the people rose up, <sup>h</sup> and stood every man <sup>i</sup> at his tent-door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle.

9 And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the <sup>j</sup> cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and <sup>k</sup> the LORD <sup>l</sup> talked with Moses.

10 And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand <sup>m</sup> at the tabernacle-door:

to mean, *at a distance* from the holy mount; which was another token of humiliation.

V. 7. The tabernacle, here mentioned, seems to have been a tent that Moses had prepared, in which he administered justice, and answered the enquiries of those who applied to him. It is also probable that before the Tabernacle was erected, as prescribed on the mount, the people assembled here to worship, and the pillar of fire and cloud appeared on the top of it. We may suppose that Moses did not inform the people, how far he had succeeded in making up the breach; as it was his purpose to bring them to repentance: and, in removing this tent to a distance from the camp, no doubt by divine direction, he gave them another indication of the Lord's heavy displeasure, who, as it were, refused to dwell any longer among them.—On this occasion he called it "The Tabernacle of the "congregation," or *of meeting* (אֶת־הָעֵדֻת); that is, the place where the Lord met his people; the name given to the sanctuary afterwards erected. But the Israelites in general were not worthy of being thus honoured and favoured: and if any were desirous of seeking God and humbling themselves before him, or of offering sacrifice to him, they were required to follow the tabernacle out of the camp.

V. 8—11. When Moses left the camp, and went to the tabernacle now pitched at a distance, the people in general came out to see what the event would be, and kept their eyes on him till he had entered the tabernacle. It is probable, that after the making of the golden calf, the cloudy pillar had disappeared; but now it again descended, and rested at the door of the tabernacle. This re-appearance of it, not over the camp, but at a distance, where Moses was, ratified all that he had done; and the people were so impressed by it, that they prostrated themselves in solemn worship, at the door of their tents, before the symbol of the divine presence.—In the mean while,

<sup>a</sup> iv. 11. 1 Kings viii. 14. 22. Luke xviii. 13. and all the people rose up and \* worshipped, every man *in* his tent-door.

<sup>b</sup> 9. Gen. xxxii. 30. Num. xii. 8. Deut. v. 4. <sup>c</sup> 2 Chr. xx. 7. Job xvi. 21. Is. xlii. 8. John iii. 29. xi. 11. xv. 14. 15. Jam. ii. 23. <sup>d</sup> xvii. 9. xxiv. 13. xxxii. 17. 11 And the LORD <sup>b</sup> spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto <sup>c</sup> his friend. And he turned again into the camp; but <sup>a</sup> his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.

<sup>e</sup> 1 xxxii. 34. 12 ¶ And Moses said unto the LORD, See, <sup>a</sup> thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, 'I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight.

<sup>f</sup> 17. Gen. xvi. 19. Pa. i. 6. Jer. i. 5. John x. 14. 15. 2 Tim. ii. 19. <sup>g</sup> See on 17.—xxxiv. 9. <sup>h</sup> Pa. xxxv. 4. xxxvii. 11. xxxviii. 11. cxi. 33. Cant. i. 7. 8. Is. xxx. 21. <sup>i</sup> 28. John xxi. 3. Eph. i. 17. Col. i. 10. 2 Pet. iii. 18. <sup>j</sup> xxxii. 7. Deut. ix. 26. 29. Is. lxiii. 17. 19. Joel ii. 17. Rom. xi. 28. <sup>k</sup> xlii. 21. xl. 34.—28. Josh. i. 5. Is. lxiii. 9. Matt. xvi. 20. 13 Now therefore, I pray thee, <sup>a</sup> if I have found grace in thy sight, <sup>b</sup> shew me now thy way, 'that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and <sup>c</sup> consider that this nation *is* thy people.

14 And he said, <sup>k</sup> My presence shall

go *with thee*, and I will give thee rest.

15 And he said unto him, <sup>m</sup> If thy presence go not *with me*, carry us not up hence.

16 For wherein shall it be known here, that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? *Is it* not <sup>n</sup> in that thou goest with us? So shall we be <sup>o</sup> separated, I and thy people, from all the people that *are* upon the face of the earth.

17 And the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>p</sup> I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for <sup>q</sup> thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name.

18 And he said, I beseech thee, <sup>r</sup> shew me thy glory.

19 And he said, I will make <sup>s</sup> all my goodness pass before thee, and I will <sup>t</sup> proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will <sup>u</sup> be gracious to

the Lord conversed with Moses, not as in a dream or vision, but by an audible voice, in the most familiar manner; even as when a man speaketh *face to face* with his friend. There does not seem to have been any visible appearance in human form at the time: but it may be supposed, that the cloud appeared *within* as well as *above* the tabernacle; and that the voice came from the cloud, as when our Lord was transfigured. After some time Moses returned to the camp, probably to instruct and encourage the people: and, as it does not appear why Joshua should remain at the tabernacle when Moses left it, the latter clause has been thus rendered by some expositors; "He turned again to the camp with his servant 'Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man.' But 'He' (that is, the Lord, as appearing in the cloud) 'departed' 'not out of the tabernacle.'" Thus the Lord still refused to manifest himself in the camp of Israel.—Joshua was at this time about fifty-three years old; but he was a *young man* compared with Moses, and this was a common title for those who acted as servants to others.

V. 12—16. This is either the substance of the conference before spoken of (11), or else Moses returned to the tabernacle, and thus pleaded and prevailed for his people.—The Lord had promised to send an angel with him, to put Israel in possession of Canaan: but his refusal to accompany them implied that this would be merely a created angel, the minister of his providence. (Notes, 1—3.) Moses therefore pleaded, that God had not informed him whom he would send with him; though he had given him the fullest assurances of his special grace and favour. But if indeed he was thus distinguished, as one known by God; he prayed that he would "shew him *his way*," the method according to which he purposed to deal with Israel, or the way in which he would have his people walk before him; that he might more fully know

him, and continue to enjoy his special favour. Yet even this was not all he desired; for he earnestly requested the Lord to consider, that Israel was his people whom he had chosen, and who alone of all nations worshipped him. He could not endure to have his interests separated from those of his brethren: and this emphatically implied a request, that the Lord, though offended, would vouchsafe his special presence with his people, and set up his tabernacle among them, over which the cloudy pillar might rest, and in which his glory might appear above the mercy-seat. This plea, resulting from disinterested love to Israel, united with zeal for the honour of God, prevailed: and the Lord assured Moses, that his gracious presence should accompany him, in leading Israel to Canaan, the promised rest. But he, desiring still more particular and explicit assurances, intreated that they might proceed no further without that presence, and the religious advantages which it implied: as these only could fully prove, that the Lord specially favoured him and his people; and thus alone they would be distinguished and kept separate from all other nations on earth.

V. 17. The Lord at length, well pleased with Moses's importunity, fully granted his requests; and for his sake, (who was in this transaction a remarkable type of Christ,) the breach was made up. Accordingly, in the following chapters we read, that the tabernacle was erected, and the ordinances appointed, by which Israel was separated from other nations: and though Moses never entered the rest of Canaan, he found rest to his soul in the ways of the Lord, and in the comfort of his presence; and entrance into "the rest, which remaineth for the people of God."

V. 18, 19. Encouraged by the condescending mercy of God, Moses ventured to request that he would "shew *him* his glory," as a pledge of his special favour, and an earnest of the accomplishment of his promises.—He seems

<sup>l</sup> Deut. iii. 20. Josh. xxi. 49. xxxiv. 4. xxxii. 1. Ps. xcv. 11. Jer. vi. 16. Matt. xi. 28. Heb. iv. 8, 9. m 3. xxxiv. 9.

<sup>n</sup> Num. xiv. 14. Matt. i. 23. <sup>o</sup> viii. 22. xix. 5, 6. xxxiv. 10. Num. xxxii. 9. Deut. iv. 7. 34. 2 Sam. vii. 23. 1 Kings viii. 53. Pa. cxlvii. 20. 2 Cor. vi. 17. <sup>p</sup> Gen. xlviii. 32. xix. 21. Is. lxxv. 24. John xvi. 23. Jam. v. 16. 1 John v. 14, 15. <sup>q</sup> 12. Gen. vi. 8. xix. 19. 21. <sup>r</sup> 20. Pa. iv. 6. John i. 18. 2 Cor. iii. 18. iv. 6. 1 Tim. vi. 16. Tit. ii. 13. Rev. xxi. 23. <sup>s</sup> Neh. ix. 25. Pa. xxxv. 13. Marg. lxxv. 4. Jer. xxxi. 12. 14. Zech. ix. 17. Rom. ii. 4. Eph. i. 6—8. <sup>t</sup> See on iii. 13—15. xxxiv. 5—7. —Is. vii. 14. ix. 6. xii. 4. Marg. u Rom. ix. 15—18. 23.

whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.

xxiv. 10. Gen.  
xxxii. 20. Deut.  
v. 24. Judg. vi.  
22. Is. vi. 5  
John i. 18. Rev.  
i. 16, 17.

20 And he said, 'Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.

21 And the LORD said, Behold, *there* is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock.

22 And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee 'in a cleft of the rock; and will 'cover thee with my hand while I pass by.

Ps. xviii. 2.  
Cant. ii. 8. Is.  
xxxii. 2. 1 Cor.  
x. 4. 2 Cor. v. 19  
Deut. xxxiii. 12  
Ps. xci. 1. 4.

23 And I will take away mine hand, and 'thou shalt see my back-parts: but my face shall not be seen.

Job xi. 7. xxvi  
14. 1 Cor. xiii  
12. 1 Tim. vi. 16

to have meant something distinct from the external displays which he had witnessed, and of a more spiritual nature. Accordingly, the Lord promised to "cause all his goodness to pass before him;" that he might have a clear discovery of his holy perfections, which, though transient in itself, would leave a permanent impression on his mind.—The *goodness* of God may either mean, in general, the holy excellence of his nature, which is altogether lovely; or his kindness to sinful men, in all its varied exercises; but especially his unfathomable love and mercy, as manifested, in harmony with infinite justice and holiness, in the salvation of Christ: for this is the grandest display which we are capable of beholding, and to us by far the most interesting. (1 John iv. 8—10.)—At the same time, the Lord promised to proclaim his name before Moses; and an account of this transaction is recorded in the next chapter. He also added, "And I will be gracious to whom I will be 'gracious, and I will shew mercy on whom I will shew 'mercy." As if he had said, 'I will pardon what sinners I please; nor shall any degree of guilt bar this sovereign exercise of my mercy.' (Note, Rom. ix. 15—18.) Thus, while some, whose crimes appear to us of inferior malignity, are left to hardness of heart, and suffer the *deserved punishment of their evil deeds*; in other instances, "where 'sin hath abounded, grace much more abounds."

V. 20—23. "No man hath seen God at any time," for he "dwelleth in the light which no man can approach 'unto;" so that "no man hath seen him, or can see 'him." It is therefore evident, that all the appearances of God, spoken of in Scripture, were far different from a visible display of his *essence*, or essential glory, which in its own nature is invisible: and this applies equally to the familiar appearances with which the patriarchs were favoured; the more awful and glorious manifestations which were made to the prophets in vision; the *Shechinah*, or visible glory which appeared above the mercy-seat; and the manifestations vouchsafed to Moses, when "the LORD 'spake to him face to face, as a man speaketh to his 'friend." And not only must the divine essence always continue invisible to our bodily eyes; but even the full discovery of the divine glory to our souls, or such an external splendour as might be rendered visible, would overwhelm and dissolve the feeble frame of man in his present state. In this sense, it seems to have been, that the Lord said to Moses, "Thou canst not see my face: for there 'shall no man see me, and live." Yet, as far as mortal man could endure the sight, Moses should have his request granted. In some place, near the spot where he was communing with God, he should stand upon a rock; (perhaps the rock in Horeb, whence the waters miraculously flowed;) and while the Lord passed by, in some most august display of his glory, he would put him in a

cleft of the rock, and "cover him with his hand," or shelter him by his power, or perhaps veil the glory by a cloud. But when the overwhelming splendour was past, he would remove his hand, that Moses might behold his glory; as if a man should see, not the countenance, but the back of some august personage who passed by him.—It is not agreed what external appearance attended this display; but there is no sufficient reason to conclude that it was in human form, as the words, *face*, *hands*, and *back-parts*, seem to be used figuratively. The transaction, however, was doubtless emblematic. We can, in this world, see the glory of God, only as reflected from his works, or as revealed in his word: for the more direct display of his essential glory to the soul is reserved for the beatifick vision.—The rock on which Moses stood, and in the cleft of which he was sheltered, was doubtless an emblem of Christ; in whose person, character, and salvation alone, we sinners may by faith see the glory of God and live: for there it appears in softened splendour; as the sun, when his brightness is diminished by a mist, is beheld more distinctly by the human eye.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—11.

While multitudes of professed Christians perish in sin, God knows how to secure the honour of his faithfulness.—He often confers outward prosperity *in anger* on wicked men, who take it as their portion and look no further. But, while the conscience remains tender, prosperous ungodliness, and the removal of divine ordinances, will be dreaded as the heaviest judgments.—Yet obstinate wickedness, under the means of grace, ensures the severest vengeance.—Every commandment of God to sinners implies some degree of encouragement; and in humble obedience they should wait to see what the Lord will do with them.—When he calls to weeping and mourning, those enjoyments and ornaments, which at other times are allowable, will be laid aside and slighted by the true penitent: and indeed it is most shameful, if Christians refuse to part with their ornaments, in compliance with the demands of decency, charity, and perhaps justice, while idolaters give up theirs for the sake of their worthless idols!—Yet alas! external expressions of humiliation do not *always*, or indeed *generally*, prove that the heart is truly humbled before God.—When the Lord appears about to leave a degenerate church or people, we must be decided in protesting against prevailing iniquities, in withdrawing from obstinate offenders, and in following the word and ordinances of God, whithersoever they go, let who will stay behind: and when young persons love his courts, it promises a useful and honourable old age. (Note, Ps. xcii. 13—15.)

## CHAP. XXXIV.

Moses is commanded to hew two tables of stone, and to ascend mount Sinai alone, 1—4. The Lord proclaims his name, and Moses worships, 5—9. The Lord renews his covenant with Israel, and repeats many laws before given, 10—27. Moses, after forty days' fasting, returns with the tables of the law: his face shines, and he covers it with a veil, 28—35.

**AND** the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>a</sup> Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and <sup>b</sup> I will write upon these tables <sup>c</sup> the words that were in the first tables, <sup>d</sup> which thou brakest.

2 And be ready in the morning, and

come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me <sup>e</sup> in the top of the mount.

3 And no man shall <sup>f</sup> come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount: neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount.

4 And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone.

5 And the LORD <sup>g</sup> descended in the

e xix. 20, 24. xxiv. 12, Deut. ix. 25. xix. 12, 13. 21. Lev. xxi. 17. 1 Tim. ii. 8. Heb. xii. 20.

g xix. 18. xxxviii. 9. Num. xi. 17. 25. 1 Kings viii. 10—12. Luke ix. 34, 36.

## V. 12—23.

The Lord will shew such tokens of his favour to his approved servants, as shall be evident to all their opposers; and in communion with himself will make them rich amends for all their troubles.—Whatever interest we have at a throne of grace, we should improve it in behalf of others; remembering that our God delights in and honours importunity: and we should take encouragement from success, to request still more and more.—If we have any useful knowledge of him, it arises from our having been first noticed by him with distinguished regard: and it will lead us to desire to know more of him, of his ways, and of his special grace, day by day. We shall therefore in every undertaking, and in all our removals, urgently desire to be under his guidance; earnestly pray, “that unless his presence go with us he will not carry us up thence;” and be careful that covetousness or convenience do not draw us from our proper place, or to a distance from his ordinances. Nor should we forget, that as the Lord’s people are distinguished and separated by peculiar privileges from others; so they are called to separate themselves, that they may “be unto him a peculiar people “zealous of good works;” which is both the effect of divine teaching, the evidence of divine grace, the present rest of the soul, and the earnest of everlasting rest.—They, who have been favoured with a glimpse of the Lord’s glory and a taste of his goodness, will ardently desire more full discoveries and communications; and, as here “they “see through a glass darkly,” they will by that desire be gradually rendered willing to depart hence, that they may “see him face to face.” In the mean time they will thankfully, as sheltered in the rock of salvation from the consuming fire of his holiness and justice, contemplate his footsteps and the discoveries made of his glorious perfections, in all his works, but especially in the work of redemption: and these views are peculiarly suited to humble them; to wean them from the world, and to eclipse all its vain splendour; and gradually to transform them into the image of him, whom they thus contemplate by faith, through the teaching of his Holy Spirit. (Note, 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18.) If then he causes all his goodness to pass before us, and makes us acquainted with his NAME, as a God of grace and mercy; while we acknowledge our obligations to our heavenly Advocate, who by his prevailing interces-

sion hath completely repaired the breach which sin hath made; we may well be willing to wait for further discoveries, till we depart hence to be with him.—Finally, let not sinners forget, that “he, who is gracious to whom he “will be gracious, and hath mercy on whom he will have “mercy,” hath also assured us, that “him, who cometh “unto him, he will in no wise cast out.”

## NOTES

CHAP. XXXIV. V. 1. (xxxii. 15, 16.) To remind the people of the sin, through which the former tables had been broken, the Lord would not prepare these himself, but Moses was ordered to hew them, or prepare them, for the writing; which it seems was not a work of very great labour or exactness, for it was speedily performed.—When God made man in his own image, the moral law was written in his heart without any external created concurrence: but since the covenant then made with him was broken, the ministry of men has been used, both in giving the Scriptures, and in bringing sinners to believe and obey them. Yet the whole writing is the Lord’s: all Scripture was given by inspiration from him; and he alone can write the law in the heart, so as to produce true conviction of sin, penitent faith in Christ, and willing and unreserved obedience.

V. 2, 3. The people were tried forty days more, whether they would wait for the return of Moses, though they “knew not what was become of him:” and the injunctions given on a former occasion, being now rendered still more strict, would tend also to impress them with an awful sense of the divine holiness, their own exceeding unworthiness, and the Lord’s special regard for Moses. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 4. It does not appear whether any persons were left in authority at this time, or not. Aaron had greatly offended, and Hur is no more mentioned in the history. (xxiv. 14.)

V. 5—7. According to the promise made in the preceding chapter, the Lord met Moses in a cloud on the mount, and thence proclaimed his NAME, or concerning his NAME; that is, those perfections, and that character, which are denoted by the name JEHOVAH. This was proclaimed in an audible voice, that Moses, and from him Israel, and all the earth, might know the God with whom they had to do: not only that there was a God, but what

cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed <sup>h</sup> the name of the LORD.

6 And the LORD <sup>i</sup> passed by before him, and <sup>k</sup> proclaimed, <sup>l</sup> The LORD, the LORD God, <sup>m</sup> merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and <sup>n</sup> abundant in goodness and <sup>o</sup> truth,

<sup>h</sup> xxxiii. 19. Deut. xxxiii. 3. Ps. cii. 21. Prov. xviii. 10. Is. i. 10. i xxxiii. 20—23. 1 Kings xix. 11. k Num. xiv. 17—19. Is. xli. 4. l iii. 13—16. m Deut. v. 10. n Chr. xxx. 9. Neh. ix. 17. Ps. lxxxvii. 5. 15. ciii. 8—13. cxi. 4. cxli. 4. cxvi. 5. cxiv. 8. Joel ii. 18. Jon. iv. 2. Rom. ii. 4. n Ps. xxxi. 19. Mic. vii. 18. Rom. v. 20, 21. Eph. i. 7, 8. o Ps. lviii. 10. xci. 4. cviii. 4. cxi. 8. cxxxviii. 2. cxlvi. 6. Lam. iii. 23. Mic. vii. 20. John i. 17.

his moral perfections were; and consequently what he must require of them, and what they might expect from him. When the Lord made himself known to Moses by the name, I AM THAT I AM, he declared unto him, (as in this passage by the words, “the LORD, the LORD God,”) his self-existence, unchangeableness, eternity, omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence; with his authority, as everlasting, absolute, and universal Sovereign, Lawgiver, and Judge; who, having created the whole world, and still upholding and providing for it, demands all love, worship, and obedience from his rational creatures. But here especially are made known the *moral* perfections of this eternal God: for he first, in a variety of expressions, declared his mercy and grace, with which sinners are especially concerned; that they may both be certified there is hope, and know from whence that hope arises. “The LORD *God is merciful*,” that is, condescending and compassionate, as a father to his children; ready to relieve the indigent, and to rescue the miserable: *gracious*, or propense to bestow unmerited benefits, nay, to be kind to such as deserve his hot displeasure: and *long-suffering*, or slow to anger, patiently bearing the multiplied provocations of his rebellious creatures, affording them space for repentance, and not delighting in their misery; but only punishing when the honour of his name and law, and the welfare of his universal and everlasting kingdom, require it. He is also “abundant in goodness and truth;” that is, the riches of his liberality and bounty are infinite; the whole creation is replete with his benefits; all creatures, even sinners, abundantly receive them, though they abuse them and are ungrateful for them: and all that he reveals is infallible truth; all that he proposes, is in absolute sincerity; and all that he promises, is in perfect faithfulness; while he hath revealed, proposed, and promised, even to us sinners, such abundant goodness, as can neither be expressed nor conceived.—“Keeping mercy for thousands;” that is, continually shewing mercy in all its various exercises, to thousands of sinners, and having still inexhaustible treasures for thousands more, yea, for increasing numbers till the end of time: doing all good to those who trust in his mercy at present, and *reserving* good for them in future, even to eternity: and not for them only, but for their “children’s children;” “for his mercy endureth for ever.”—“Forgiving iniquity and transgression and *sin*,” because all his mercy and goodness either make way for the full, free, and everlasting forgiveness of every kind and degree of sin which can be specified; or they consist in it, or result from it.—“And that will by no means clear the guilty:” all this mercy and grace consist with the most entire hatred of all moral evil, and the most absolute determination to punish it: indeed, the holiness and justice of God are a part of his goodness and

7 <sup>p</sup> Keeping mercy for thousands, <sup>q</sup> forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that <sup>r</sup> will by no means clear *the guilty*; <sup>s</sup> visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

p xxxiii. 7. 21. Num. xiv. 18—23. Deut. xxxii. 35. Josh. xxiv. 19. Job x. 14. Ps. ix. 16, 17. xl. 5, 6. lviii. 10, 11. cxxxvi. 10. 15. Is. xlv. 21. Mic. vi. 11. Nah. i. 2, 3, 6. Rom. ii. 4—9. iii. 19—26. ix. 22, 23. Heb. xii. 29. Rev. xx. 15. xxi. 8. q xxx. 6. Deut. x. 10. Neh. i. 5. ix. 32. Jer. xxxiii. 18. Dan. ix. 4. Ps. ciii. 3. cxxx. 4. Dan. ix. 9. Matt. vi. 14, 15. xii. 31. xviii. 32. —35. Luke vii. 42, 48. Acts v. 31. xiii. 38. Rom. iv. 7, 8. Eph. i. 7. iv. 32. 1 John i. 9. r xxxiii. 7. 21. Num. xiv. 18—23. Deut. xxxii. 35. Josh. xxiv. 19. Job x. 14. Ps. ix. 16, 17. xl. 5, 6. lviii. 10, 11. cxxxvi. 10. 15. Is. xlv. 21. Mic. vi. 11. Nah. i. 2, 3, 6. Rom. ii. 4—9. iii. 19—26. ix. 22, 23. Heb. xii. 29. Rev. xx. 15. xxi. 8. s See on xx. 5.

love, considered in their exercise towards all his rational creatures, throughout universal space and everlasting duration. For mercy and forgiveness are never exercised by our holy and righteous God, but through the atonement of the death of Christ, and to those who believe in his name; and in the sufferings which he endured, the holiness and justice of God have their grand display, and the evil of sin is most fully manifested. None are pardoned but those who *repent*, and forsake the allowed practice of every sin; forgiving mercy being always attended by converting and sanctifying grace. Nay, even they, for whose sins the blood of Christ hath fully atoned, are severely chastised in this world for those failures, into which, through the remaining sinfulness of the heart and the power of temptation, they are betrayed. But that sinner, who remains *guilty*, having not, by repentance and faith, obtained an interest in the great Sacrifice for sin, shall by no means be acquitted or escape; nor any who pervert, neglect, or despise so great salvation, in impenitence and unbelief. The severest vengeance of God shall fall upon the heads of such persons; the very mercy which they have perverted into an encouragement to sin, shall occasion their deeper condemnation; and if Israel, or any other nation, dare to abuse such a proclamation of the name of a merciful God, national judgments on them and their posterity shall vindicate the honour of his insulted justice. (Notes, xx. 5. Num. xiv. 13—19. Nah. i. 2—6.)—As the word *guilty* is not in the original, many commentators interpret the words to mean, “that, in executing judgments, the Lord will not proceed to extremities with his people.” But the words literally signify, *clearing he will not clear*: and in such a solemn proclamation of the NAME of JEHOVAH, it would be wonderful, if no intimation should be given of holiness and justice; which are as essential to the perfection of his character, and the honour of his government, as even his grace and truth. Yet if this interpretation be adopted, these attributes are not so much as hinted at.—The marginal references will shew the careful student, that the exposition above given accords to the general tenour of Scripture; and every one, who knows the plan of Christianity, must see the importance of the views thus set before us, to the right knowledge of God, our Lawgiver and Saviour. There should then be very cogent arguments adduced, before we consent to give up the instruction conveyed by our translation; which indeed seems clearly to express the genuine meaning of the original.

Will by no means clear the guilty. (7) נִקְיָה לֹא יִנְקֶה. Καὶ οὐ καθαρῶς τον ενοχον. Sept. The same words, Num. xiv. 18, are rendered Καθαρισμῶς οὐ καθαρῶς τον ενοχον. But the same expression, Nah. i. 3, is rendered Ἀδων οὐκ ἀδωνάσει, Will not absolve the innocent; which gives no clear meaning.

1 iv. 31. Gen. xvii. 3. 2 Chr. xx. 18  
8 And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.

2 xxxiii. 13. 17.  
9 And he said, 'If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, 'let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; (for it is 'a stiff-necked people;) and 'pardon our iniquity and our sin, and 'take us for thine inheritance.

10 And he said, Behold, 'I make a covenant; before all thy people 'I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation; and all the people, amongst which thou art, shall see the work of the LORD: for it is 'a terrible thing that I will do with thee.

11 ¶ 'Observe thou that which I command thee this day: Behold, 'I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite.

12 'Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, whither thou goest, 'lest

it be for a snare in the midst of thee.

13 But 'ye shall destroy their altars, break their 'images, and cut down their groves.

14 For thou shalt 'worship no other god: for the LORD, 'whose name is Jealous, is a 'jealous God:

15 Lest thou 'make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a 'whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one 'call thee, and thou 'eat of his sacrifice;

16 And 'thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods.

17 Thou shalt make to thee 'no molten gods.

18 ¶ The 'feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee, in the time of the month Abib: for in the month Abib thou camest out from Egypt.

19 All that 'openeth the matrix is

The doctors explain it, He cleanses those that repent; but those who are unwilling to repent, he does not cleanse...Who so remits sins, that he may sanctify himself, and prove himself just.' In Robertson.

V. 8, 9. This proclamation of the name of God had its proper effect upon Moses, who, immediately bowing down in reverential worship, seized, as it were, the encouraging words from the mouth of the Lord, and pleaded his mercy, as an argument with him to forgive Israel, to continue his special presence with them, and to take them for his inheritance, "though a stiff-necked people." Or, if we retain our translation, he makes even that circumstance an additional reason; as they, being a stiff-necked people, needed the conduct of such a merciful and gracious God; they could not otherwise be done any good to, and would afford him full opportunity of glorifying his mercy and grace.

V. 10. The prayer of Moses being granted, the Lord again promised to make a covenant with Israel, that is, to renew the covenant which had been broken: and he assured Moses, that in fulfilling this covenant, he would do such wonders as had not been done on earth. The word signifies created (וַיִּבְרָא): and the astonishing miracles, by which Israel was brought into Canaan, and made triumphant over every foe, and which seemed to reverse in many things the settled order of creation, were especially meant. Yet the effects of JEHOVAH's power in the midst of the people, were as terrible to them when disobedient, as at other times to their enemies.

V. 11—17. The covenant made with Israel was a marriage-covenant; idolatry was considered as adultery, and the name of God is JEALOUS, so that every approach to

that sin, would provoke him to jealousy. (Notes, 5—7. xx. 5.) They were commanded therefore to destroy every monument of idolatry, however curious and costly; to reject all treaties of alliance, friendship, or marriage with idolaters, however advantageous; to refuse all invitations to idolatrous feasts (Marg. Ref. r); and especially, not to repeat their old crime of making a molten image of God. The repetition of these laws, with enlargement, and additional cautions and warnings, was peculiarly suitable and seasonable at the renewing of the covenant, after the late shameful violation of it. (Notes, xxiii. 20—23. 32, 33.)—The same observation is also applicable to many of the subsequent laws, which had before been given, but were on this occasion enforced with greater energy and authority.—(Marg. Ref.)

Whose name is Jealous. (14) The idols of the nations were not characterised as jealous; at least in any great degree. They were not supposed to be offended, by their worshippers paying occasional, or even stated worship to other deities, provided the number and value of the sacrifices offered to them, were not diminished. Hence arose what has been called an intercommunity of the worshippers of different idols with each other; who scrupled not to worship the gods of other nations, especially when among them. But this, JEHOVAH, the one living and true God, would not endure. Hence conscientious Israelites were universally counted bigots.

V. 18. Marg. Ref. u. Notes, xii. 15—20. xiii. 3—7.

V. 19, 20. Marg. Ref. v—z. Notes, xiii. 2. 11—16.

Every firstling among thy cattle...that is male. (19) לְכָל בְּרִיחַ אֲדָמָה. Most Lexicographers suppose the meaning of the Niph. of נָטַח (which occurs only in this place), to be

mine, and every firstling among thy cattle, *whether ox or sheep, that is male.*

20 But <sup>a</sup>the firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a <sup>a</sup>lamb: and if thou redeem *him* not, then shalt thou break his neck. All <sup>b</sup>the first-born of thy sons thou shalt redeem: and <sup>c</sup>none shall appear before me empty.

21 <sup>a</sup>Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in <sup>b</sup>earing-time and in harvest thou shalt rest.

22 And thou shalt observe <sup>a</sup>the feast of weeks, of the first-fruits of wheat-harvest, and the feast of in-gathering at the <sup>b</sup>year's end.

23 <sup>a</sup>Thrice in the year shall all your men-children appear before the LORD God, <sup>a</sup>the God of Israel.

24 For <sup>a</sup>I will cast out the nations before thee, and <sup>b</sup>enlarge thy borders: neither shall any man <sup>b</sup>desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the LORD thy God, thrice in the year.

25 Thou shalt not offer the blood of

my sacrifice with <sup>a</sup>leaven, neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the passover <sup>b</sup>be left unto the morning.

26 The <sup>a</sup>first of the first-fruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the LORD thy God. Thou shalt not <sup>m</sup>see the a kid in his mother's milk.

27 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>a</sup>Write thou these words: for after the tenour of these words <sup>a</sup>I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.

28 And he was there with the LORD <sup>b</sup>forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water: and <sup>a</sup>he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten <sup>a</sup>commandments.

29 ¶ And it came to pass when Moses came down from mount Sinai, with the <sup>a</sup>two tables of testimony in Moses's hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses <sup>a</sup>wist not that <sup>a</sup>the skin of his face shone, while he talked with him.

30 And when Aaron and all the chil-

x xiii. 18.

\* Or, kid

y xiii. 18. Num. iii. 45-51.

z xxiii. 15. Deut. xvi. 1 Sam. ix. 7, 8. 2 Sam. xxiv. 24.

a xx. 9-11. xxiii. 12. xxv. 2. Deut. v. 12-15. Luke xiii. 14. xxiii. 56.

b Gen. xlv. 6. Deut. xxi. 4. 1 Sam. viii. 12. 1s. xxx. 24.

c xxiii. 16. Num. xxviii. 16-31. xxix. 12-39. Deut. xvi. 10-15. John vii. 2. Act ii. 1.

† Heb. revolution of the year.

d xxiii. 14. 17. Deut. xvi. 16. Ps. lxxxiv. 7.

e Gen. xxxii. 28. xxxiii. 20.

f xxiii. 27-30. xxxiii. 2. Lev. xviii. 24. Deut. vii. 1. Ps. lxxxviii. 55. lxxx. 8.

g xxiii. 31. Deut. xii. 20. xix. 8. 1 Chr. iv. 10.

h Gen. xxxv. 5. 2 Chr. xvii. 10. Prov. xvi. 7. Acts xviii. 10.

i xii. 20. xxiii. 18. Deut. xvi. 8. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.

k xii. 10. xxiii. 18. xxxix. 34. Lev. vii. 15. Num. ix. 12.

l xxiii. 19. Deut. xxvi. 2. 10. Prov. iii. 9, 10. Matt. vi. 33. 1 Cor. xv. 20. Jam. i. 18.

m xxiii. 19. Deut. xiv. 21.

n xvii. 14. xxiv. 4. 7. Deut. xxxi. 9.

o See on 10

p See on xxiv. 18. Deut. ix. 9. 18. 25.

q 1. xxxi. 18. xxxiii. 16. Deut. iv. 13. x. 2-4. 2 Cor. iii. 7.

t Heb. words.

r See on xxxii. 15. xvi. 15. Josh. ii. 4. viii. 14. Judg. xvi. 20. Mark ix. 6. xiv. 40. Luke ii. 49. John v. 13. Acts xii. 9. xx. 1. 5.

s Matt. xvii. 2. Luke ix. 28. Acts vi. 15. 2 Cor. iii. 7-9. Rev. i. 16. x. 1.

taken from the noun <sup>a</sup>זָכָר *a male*; and the sentence is rendered by Buxtorf, 'Omne pecus tuum, quod masculum nascetur.' But זָכָר is masc. and זָכָרָה is either 3d. pers. fem., or 2d. pers. masc. of the future. They cannot therefore agree together.—The Chaldee renders it, 'Omne pecus tuum masculum sanctificabis.' But perhaps the verb has in this place also its usual signification of *remembering*, and we may translate it with Cocceus, 'Quoad omnem pecudem tuam, facies te in recordatione esse.' Or, taking in זָכָר, 'As to all thy cattle, thou shalt be mindful of the opening,' or 'of that which openeth,' viz. רֶחֶם *the womb*; as the phrase is completed in the beginning of the verse.—The word זָכָר is not rendered at all in our translation, but the words "that is male," put in italics in its stead.—Parkhurst, by rejecting the points, translates it, 'From all thy cattle thou shalt make a memorial with the firstling of the ox and of the sheep.'—See *Heb. Lex.* under זָכָר, § II; and *Robertson's Thes.* זָכָר, col. 4.

V. 21. *Marg. Ref.* a, b. *Notes*, xx. 9-11. xxxv. 2, 3. Gen. xlv. 6.

V. 22, 23. *Marg. Ref.* c, d. *Note*, xxiii. 14-18.

The LORD God, the God of Israel. (23) הָיָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, "The Lord, JEHOVAH, God of Israel."

V. 24. *Neither, &c.*] This remarkable promise would form, while the people continued to observe the solemn feasts, a full demonstration of the divine origin of their religion: and three times in the year they would put this matter to a new proof. No instance is recorded, through the whole history, of the land being invaded on these occasions, though scarcely any but women, children, and old men were left behind! No false prophet would ever have inserted such an engagement in his writings, by which his own imposture would always be liable to detection.

V. 25, 26. *Marg. Ref. Notes*, xii. 3-10. 19, 20. xxiii 19.

V. 27. Moses wrote in a book the *judicial* and *ceremonial* precepts, that he had received: but God himself wrote the ten commandments, the substance of the *moral* law, on the tables of stone. (*Note* 28.) This difference strongly marked the permanency and perpetual obligation of the moral law, and the inferior importance and temporary obligation of the ceremonial institutions; and even of the judicial law, except as coincident with the moral.—Thus the national covenant was renewed on the same terms as before.

V. 28. Moses was miraculously supported, this second time, to fast forty days and nights; and it is probable, he did not sleep at all, but spent much of his time in prayer and supplication for his people.—"He wrote;" that is, "the LORD."—(*Marg. Ref.* q. *Note* 1.)

V. 29-35. As the light of the sun causes even opaque bodies, on which it shines, to appear luminous; so, long contemplation of the divine glory caused an irradiation of the soul of Moses, which was miraculously represented to the people, by this external brightness of his countenance; but he himself was not conscious of it. His countenance did not shine when he came down the first time from the mount: but he seems, during the second time, to have had far more clear discoveries of the glorious perfections of the divine character, even of the goodness, mercy, righteousness, holiness, and truth of God, than before. Thus the Lord put honour upon him before the people, and made them stand in awe of him; so that even Aaron did not venture to approach, till Moses called him and the princes and people to him. Yet even then, the splendour of his face was too much for them to bear; and therefore he

dren of Israel saw Moses, behold the skin of his face shone, and they were

<sup>a</sup> Num. xii. 8  
<sup>b</sup> Mark ix. 3. 15  
<sup>c</sup> Luke v. 8.  
<sup>d</sup> iii. 16. xxiv. 1—3.

<sup>a</sup> afraid to come nigh him.

<sup>y</sup> Gen. xiv. 3. 15

31 And Moses <sup>x</sup> called unto them, and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation returned unto him: <sup>y</sup> and Moses talked with them.

<sup>z</sup> 1 Kings xxii. 14.  
<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxviii. 20.  
<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 23. xv. 3.

32 And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he <sup>z</sup> gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in mount Sinai.

33 And *till* Moses had done speak-

ing with them, he put <sup>a</sup> a veil on his face. <sup>a</sup> Rom. x. 4. 2 Cor. iii. 13—18. iv. 4—6.

34 But when Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, <sup>b</sup> he took the veil off, until he came out. And he came out and spake unto the children of Israel, *that* which he was commanded. <sup>b</sup> Heb. iv. 16. x. 19—22.

35 And the children of Israel <sup>c</sup> saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses's face shone: and Moses put the veil upon his face again until he went in to speak with him. <sup>c</sup> 29, 30. Ec. viii. 1. Dan. xii. 3. Matt. v. 16. xliii. 48. John v. 35. Phil. ii. 15.

covered it with a veil when he spoke to them, but took it off when he appeared before the Lord, to enquire his will, and commune with him.—Some think that this splendour continued as long as Moses lived; and others, that it ceased when the law had been fully given, and the worship at the tabernacle, under the conduct of Aaron and his sons, was fully established.—The Latin translation of the Bible, called the *Vulgate*, which is exclusively sanctioned by the church of Rome, understands the word, translated *shone*, to mean *horned*; though it seems only to refer to the manner in which rays of light are reflected. Yet, on this slender ground painters have almost universally proceeded, in drawing Moses with something like horns on his head!—The veil which he used marked the obscurity of this dispensation, compared with that of the New Testament: it was also an emblem of that veil, which pride and carnal-mindedness have put upon the hearts of men respecting spiritual things; and it represented the veil, that was and is upon the minds of such multitudes of the nation of Israel, respecting the true meaning of the Scriptures of the Old Testament; which can only be taken away by the Spirit of the Lord, shewing to them “Christ, as the End of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” (Notes, 2 Cor. iii. 12—18.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—3.

The giving of the law to sinful man, was an indication that the Lord had purposes of mercy to him; and the writing of it in our hearts is the only sure evidence that our sins are forgiven, that God hath taken us into covenant with himself, and that we are become his people: so that he who can *truly* say, “I delight in the law of God after the inward man,” notwithstanding the infirmities, conflicts, and remaining sinfulness, which cause him to “groan, being burdened,” is certainly a true believer, and reconciled to God by Jesus Christ.—When we obey the Lord's commands, implicitly and without delay, and resort to those places and ordinances which he hath appointed, he will certainly condescend to meet us, and fulfil his kindest promises. But the NAME of the Lord proclaimed to Moses, as a just God and a Saviour, can alone give relief to a burdened conscience, or encourage the prayers of a humbled sinner. Let no enquiring soul overlook this NAME; for it is intimately connected with the “great Mystery of godliness, God, manifested in the flesh,” “purchasing the Church with his own blood.” Let no discouraged sinner despond with these words of grace and

truth sounding in his ears: yet let none abuse such mercy; for God knows how to punish as well as pardon; to punish consistently with the glory of his mercy, as well as to pardon consistently with his justice and holiness; as those guilty wretches will one day know, who “sin on that grace may abound.” But a true discovery of the Lord's glory will produce a happy union of filial confidence with profound reverence, in the heart of an experienced believer, and put life and vigour into his prayers and supplications; and every perfection of the name of God will furnish him with an argument, which he may plead with him, for the forgiveness of his sins, the sanctification of his heart, and the enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom.

##### V. 10—35

Whilst we take encouragement from the promises of God, we must observe to do his commandments; else every external advantage will only serve to increase our condemnation: and in seeking assurance that the Lord hath made with us an everlasting covenant of peace, we must break every covenant with sin, renounce all needless connexion with sinners, shun every snare and temptation, avoid all appearance of evil, and not spare or covet any object that tends to it: for “the LORD whose name is “Jealous, is a jealous God,” and will endure no rival in our affections. Nor is any thing more ensnaring to souls, or more destructive to religion, than the marriages of God's people with those who are ungodly, or of a false religion.—Such is our forgetfulness in the concerns of our souls, that we need not only to have the same things repeated in our ears, but to have them committed to writing, that we may have them ever before our eyes. (Note, 2 Pet. i. 12—15.)—While we devote ourselves to the Lord's service, and attend with delight on his worship, we may entrust ourselves and our possessions to his keeping, with confidence that none can do us any real hurt: and when a due portion of our time and substance is consecrated to his immediate service, we secure a sanctified and comfortable enjoyment of the remainder.—What true believer would not willingly forego all sensual pleasures, to enjoy with Moses the sacred pleasure of the holy mount? But alas! though “it is good to be there,” how backward are we to begin the sweet service of prayer and praise, and how apt to grow weary of it! In heaven it shall be otherwise: no leisure for such things as here occupy our time and engross our hearts, no thought of them, no desire after them.—The more we now set our affections on things above, seek communion with the Lord, and enjoy the con-

## CHAP. XXXV.

Moses shews the will of God, concerning the sabbath, the voluntary offering, and the tabernacle and its furniture, 1—19. The people readily contribute and assist, 20—29. Bezaleel and Aholiab are called to the work, 30—35.

**AND** Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said unto them, <sup>a</sup>These are the words which the LORD hath commanded, that ye should <sup>b</sup>do them.

<sup>c</sup>2 <sup>e</sup>Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you <sup>d</sup>an holy day, a sabbath of rest to the LORD: <sup>d</sup>whosoever doeth work therein, shall be put to death.

<sup>e</sup>3 Ye shall <sup>e</sup>kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath-day.

<sup>f</sup>4 ¶ And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel,

temptation of his glory in the gospel, by faith and serious meditation; the more shall we be “changed into his image, from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord:” and when we come forth from our devotion, we shall shine in our holy conversation before men, and shew by our good works that we have been with God. But it is well when others behold it, and glorify him on our behalf; while we ourselves are unconscious of it, being “clothed with humility.” Indeed, while we are in this world we must accommodate ourselves to our situation, and to what those around us are able to bear: and not only should we avoid ostentation in respect of our religious experiences, and the especial favours which the Lord hath vouchsafed us; but prudently avoid speaking of them, lest we “throw our pearls before swine, which may trample them under foot, and turn again and rend us;” contented to rejoice in them, and be thankful before God in secret; for it is “a joy which a stranger intermeddleth not with.”—Indeed, in every thing we should endeavour to abate envy by condescension and courtesy, if the Lord has at all distinguished us; and to accommodate ourselves to the capacity of our weaker brethren, for their edification. But let us not forget, that we must appear before God without any veil, and just what we are, whether better or worse than men suppose us to be.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXXV. V. 1. *These, &c.*] This especially relates to the directions given to Moses in the mount, concerning the tabernacle, the worship to be there performed, and the several things which pertained to it. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2, 3. The sanctification of the sabbath, being essential to every part of religion, is again and again repeated, and enforced in a variety of ways. The annexed

saying, This is the thing which the LORD commanded, saying,

5 Take ye from among you an offering unto the LORD: <sup>f</sup>Whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD: gold, and silver, and brass,

6 And <sup>g</sup>blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and <sup>h</sup>goats' hair,

7 And rams' skins died red, and badgers' skins, and shittim-wood,

8 And <sup>i</sup>oil for the light, and <sup>k</sup>spices for anointing oil, and for the sweet incense.

9 And <sup>l</sup>onyx-stones, and stones to be set for the ephod, and for the breastplate.

10 And every <sup>m</sup>wise-hearted among you shall come, and make all that the LORD hath commanded;

11 The <sup>n</sup>tabernacle, his tent, and his covering, his taches, and his boards, his bars, his pillars, and his sockets,

penalty of death to the transgressor shews this to have been a judicial statute; and the connexion favours the opinion, that the prohibition “to kindle a fire throughout their habitations on the sabbath-day,” was meant of fires used in manufactories or trades, by smiths, plumbers, and others, of which many would be required in preparing the sanctuary: but none even of that work might be done on the holy day of God.—If fires in general be understood, we must suppose, either that it was a temporary institution, for the time, during which the people in the wilderness were miraculously provided for; or that some exceptions were allowed in favour of the sick, infirm, and children, who must suffer extremely at some seasons, even in warm climates, for want of fire; or, that a fire which was burning might be kept up, though a fresh one might not be kindled. The subsequent parts of Scripture give no light on the subject: and among the various instances recorded, in which the Israelites were reprov'd and individuals punished, for neglecting to sanctify the sabbath, this is not once mentioned; nor is any intimation given, that the Jews, in the times of Christ and his apostles, had no fires on that day, or even that they prepared no victuals. The sacred festivals would sometimes happen on the sabbath, and the paschal lamb was roasted in the house where it was eaten: some exceptions must therefore be supposed, if we understand the prohibition concerning fires in general.—The modern Jews expound it *literally*: yet they use fires in various ways on their sabbath, but employ other persons to kindle them, or keep them up! While however we conclude, that fires for ordinary purposes on the Lord's day are allowed us; we should recollect, that the permission of works which are necessary, or conducive to our own or other men's real advantage, does not warrant us to “make provision for the flesh to fulfil its lusts.”

V. 4—18. *Marg. Ref. Notes*, xxv—xxvii. xxx. xxxi. 1—9.

<sup>a</sup> See on xiv. 10—22.—xxxvii. 1—9.  
<sup>p</sup> See on xxvi. 31—35.—xxxvi. 35, 36.  
<sup>q</sup> See on xiv. 23—30.—xxxvii. 10—16.  
<sup>r</sup> See on xiv. 31—39.—xxxvii. 17—24.

12 The <sup>a</sup>ark and the staves thereof, with the mercy-seat, and <sup>r</sup>the veil of the covering,

13 The <sup>q</sup>table and his staves, and all his vessels, and the shew-bread,

14 The <sup>r</sup>candlestick also for the light, and his furniture, and his lamps, with the oil for the light,

15 And <sup>r</sup>the incense-altar, and his staves, and the anointing oil, and the sweet-incense, and <sup>r</sup>the hanging for the door at the entering in of the tabernacle,

16 The <sup>a</sup>altar of burnt-offering with his brazen grate, his staves, and all his vessels, <sup>a</sup>the laver and his foot,

17 <sup>r</sup>The hangings of the court, his pillars, and their sockets, and the hanging for the door of the court,

18 The pins of the tabernacle, and the pins of the court, and their cords,

19 <sup>r</sup>The clothes of service, to do service in the holy *place*, <sup>a</sup>the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons to minister in the priest's office.

20 ¶ And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed from the presence of Moses.

21 And they came, every one <sup>b</sup>whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they

brought the LORD's offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy garments.

22 And they came both men and women, as many as were willing-hearted, and brought <sup>a</sup>bracelets and ear-rings, and rings, and tablets, all jewels of gold: and <sup>a</sup>every man that offered, *offered* an offering of gold unto the LORD.

23 And every man with whom was found <sup>a</sup>blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' *hair*, and red skins of rams, and badgers' skins, brought *them*.

24 Every one that did offer an offering of silver and brass, brought the LORD's offering: and every man, with whom was found shittim-wood for any work of the service, brought *it*.

25 And all the women that were <sup>a</sup>wise-hearted, did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, *both* of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine linen.

26 And all the women <sup>a</sup>whose heart stirred them up in wisdom, spun goats' *hair*.

27 And the rulers brought <sup>b</sup>onyx-<sup>h</sup> <sup>h</sup>stones, and stones to be set for the ephod, and for the breast-plate;

<sup>a</sup> See on xiv. 10—22.—xxxvii. 1—9.  
<sup>p</sup> See on xxvi. 31—35.—xxxvi. 35, 36.  
<sup>q</sup> See on xiv. 23—30.—xxxvii. 10—16.  
<sup>r</sup> See on xiv. 31—39.—xxxvii. 17—24.  
<sup>s</sup> See on xxx. 1—10. 22—39.—xxxvii. 25—28.  
<sup>t</sup> See on xxvi. 36, 37.—xxxvii. 37, 38.  
<sup>u</sup> See on xxvii. 1—8.—xxxviii. 1—7.  
<sup>x</sup> See on xxx. 18—21.—xxxviii. 8.  
<sup>y</sup> See on xxvii. 9—19.—xxxviii. 9—20.  
<sup>z</sup> See on xxxi. 10—xxxix. 1. 41. Num. iv. 7—15.  
<sup>a</sup> See on xxviii. 1—31.  
<sup>b</sup> 5. 22. 26. 29. xiv. 2. xxxvi. 2. Judg. v. 3. 9. 2 Sam. vii. 27. 1 Chr. xxviii. 2. 9. xxxix. 3. 5. 6. 9. 14. 17. 18. Ezra i. 5. 6. vii. 27. Ps. cx. 3. Jer. xxx. 21. 2 Cor. viii. 12. ix. 7.

<sup>c</sup> xxxii. 8. Num. xxxi. 50. 1s iii. 19. Ez. xvi. 11.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Chr. xxix. 6. 7. 2 Chr. xxiv. 5.—14. Ezra ii. 68. 69. Neh. vii. 70.—72. 1s. ix. 9. 13. Matt. ii. 11. Mark xii. 41—44.

<sup>e</sup> See on 6—10. xxv. 2—7.

<sup>f</sup> xxxviii. 8. xxxi. 6. xxxvi. 1. 2 Kings xxiii. 7. Prov. xiv. 1. xxxii. 19.—24. Luke viii. 2. 3. Acts ix. 32. Rom. xvi. 1—4. 6. Phil. iv. 3. g 21. 29. xxxvi. 8.

V. 19. *Marg. Ref. Notes*, xxviii. xxxi. 10.

V. 20—24. When Moses had delivered his message to the people, they departed to their tents, to fetch their several oblations; and on this occasion a peculiar influence was felt, enlarging their hearts to liberality. Many of those, no doubt, who had offered towards the golden calf, were now willing to retrieve their character with Moses and their brethren, or to "bring forth fruits meet for repentance;" and such as had kept clear of that crime, were desirous of shewing themselves more zealous for the worship of God, than the idolaters had been for their idol. Yet the language used seems to imply, that only some of the people were thus liberal; and that others did not offer at all, or less freely: no compulsion however, or persuasion, was employed, but each was left to follow the dictates of his own mind. Nothing but *ear-rings* seem to have been given to make the golden calf; but various other golden ornaments were offered on this occasion, principally of the spoils of Egypt; both men and women being willing to part with their newly acquired adornings, to beautify the sanctuary of God. A rare example! But besides these articles of manufactured gold, some of the people presented such as was unwrought, and used as money; for this is thought to be meant by the words rendered, "Every

"man that offered, offered an offering of gold unto the LORD."—When this oblation was completed, those who had less valuable things to offer, brought them. Afterwards the rulers brought the precious stones, &c. (27, 28.)

V. 25, 26. *Wisdom*, in this connexion, means skill to perform the work in the best manner. As the *blue*, *purple*, and *scarlet*, are distinguished from the *fine linen*; it has generally been thought that wool dyed of these colours was meant. But wool is not once mentioned; either in the directions given to Moses, or the execution of them; as the goats' hair and badgers' skins are. All the sacerdotal garments had fine linen in their texture; and the law forbade the people to wear linen and woollen mingled together in the same garment. (*Lev. xix. 19. Deut. xxii. 11.*)—The Jews indeed say, that an exception was made to this law, in the case of the high priest alone; but the other priests also wore girdles of the same, (xxxix. 27—29,) and the Scripture does not mention this exception. In Ezekiel's vision, the priests are expressly forbidden to wear *wool* in their ministrations. (*Ezek. xlv. 17, 18.*)—The word rendered *fine linen* is used for linen of a peculiar kind, and it is allowed that several sorts were then in use; and perhaps this fine linen was woven without dyeing and then

i 8. xxx. 23—28.

28 And <sup>1</sup>spice, and oil for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense.

k 21, 22.

29 The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the LORD, every man and woman <sup>k</sup> whose heart made them willing to bring for all manner of work, which <sup>1</sup> the LORD had commanded to be made, by the hand of Moses.

l 4. Deut. xii. 32.  
Matt. xxviii. 20.

30 ¶ And Moses said unto the children of Israel, <sup>m</sup> See, the LORD hath called by name Bezaleel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah:

n See on xxxi. 2  
—6.—1 Kings vii.  
14. 1s. xxviii. 28.  
1 Cor. xii. 4. 11.  
Jam. i. 17.

31 And he hath filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship;

32 And to devise curious works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass,

33 And in the cutting of stones to set *them*, and in carving of wood to make any manner of cunning work.

o Ezra vii. 10. 27.  
Neh. ii. 12. Jam.  
i. 16. 17.

34 And <sup>a</sup> he hath put in his heart that he may teach, *both* he and <sup>o</sup> Aholiab the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan.

p 2 Chr. ii. 14.  
1 Cor. i. 5—7.  
xii. 7.

35 Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and <sup>p</sup> of the weaver, *even* of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work.

q Job vii. 6. 1s.  
xxxviii. 12.

embroidered with other linen, dyed of the several colours here mentioned.

V. 30—35. (Notes, xxxi. 1—6.) The supernatural qualifications of Bezaleel and Aholiab proved their divine appointment; yet they had an express nomination to their work: they were also miraculously qualified to instruct their assistants, as well as to superintend them. Christ alone builds the temple of the LORD, and bears the glory; but ministers and private Christians, under his direction and by his grace, may be fellow-workers together with him.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Let us here observe the faithfulness of Moses, and learn to imitate it, in every thing entrusted to us; and through him look unto Jesus, who was “faithful as a Son over his own house.”—Without a willing mind the most costly offerings would be abhorred; but with it, the meanest will meet with a gracious acceptance; and our hearts may be said to be willing, when we cheerfully contribute and assist, according to our ability, in promoting the cause of God and his truth: but, as even this is the gift and work of God, we should beseech him daily to increase in

#### • CHAP. XXXVI.

Bezaleel and Aholiab receive the oblations and begin to work, 1—3. The liberality of the people is restrained, 4—7. The several parts of the sanctuary are made, 8—38. (Notes, &c. xxvi.)

THEN wrought <sup>a</sup> Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise-hearted man, in whom the LORD put wisdom and understanding, to know how to work all manner of work <sup>b</sup> for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the LORD had commanded.

a See on xxxi. 1—  
6 xxxv. 20—25.

2 And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise-hearted man, <sup>c</sup> in whose heart the LORD had put wisdom; *even* every one <sup>d</sup> whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it.

b 3, 4. Num. vii.  
9 Heb. viii. 2

3 And they received of Moses all <sup>e</sup> the offering which the children of Israel had brought, for the work of the service of the sanctuary, to make it *withal*. And they brought yet unto him free offerings <sup>f</sup> every morning.

c See on xxxv. b  
—21. 29.

4 And all the <sup>g</sup> wise men that wrought all the work of the sanctuary, came every man from his work which they made;

f Ps. v. 3. 1s. 1. 4  
Jer. xxi. 12.  
Matt. xxiv. 45  
Luke xii. 42  
1 Cor. iii. 10.

5 And they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring <sup>h</sup> much more than enough for the service of the work, which the LORD commanded to make.

g 2 Chr. xxiv. 14  
xxxvi. 6—10.  
2 Cor. viii. 2, 3  
Phil. iv. 18.

us a willing mind, to abound unto every good work.—They, who in mean employments are diligent and humbly contented, are as acceptable to God, as those who are engaged in more splendid services. The women who spun the goats' hair were *wise-hearted*, as well as the persons who presided over the work of the tabernacle, or as Aaron who burnt incense there; because they “did it heartily to the Lord.” (Note, Col. iii. 22—25.) Thus the labourer, mechanick, or menial servant, who conscientiously attends to the work of his situation, in the faith and fear of God, may be as wise for his station as the most useful minister, and will certainly meet with the divine acceptance as well as he. In short, our wisdom and duty consist in giving God the glory and use of our talents, be they more or less; neither abusing nor burying them, but occupying with them till our Lord shall come; being satisfied that it is better to be a door-keeper in his service, than the most mighty and renowned of the ungodly.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

CHAP. XXXVI. The promptitude and alacrity, with which these builders set about their work, the exactness 2 R

6 And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing.

7 For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.

<sup>1</sup> See on xxxi. 6.  
xxxv. 10

<sup>j</sup> See on xxvi. 1—  
6.

<sup>k</sup> See on xxi. 18  
—22.

8 ¶ And every <sup>1</sup>wise-hearted man, among them that wrought the work of the tabernacle, <sup>2</sup>made ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet; with <sup>3</sup>cherubims of cunning work made he them.

9 The length of one curtain *was* twenty and eight cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits; the curtains *were* all of one size.

<sup>l</sup> Zeph. iii. 9. Acts  
ii. 1. Eph. iv. 3  
—6. Phil. ii. 2.

10 And he <sup>1</sup>coupled the five curtains one unto another: and *the other* five curtains he coupled one unto another.

11 And he made loops of blue on the edge of one curtain, from the selvedge in the coupling: likewise he made in the uttermost side of *another* curtain, in the coupling of the second.

12 Fifty loops made he in one curtain, and fifty loops made he in the edge of the curtain which *was* in the coupling of the second: the loops held one *curtain* to another.

<sup>m</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 20.  
Eph. ii. 20—22.  
1 Pet. ii. 4. 5.

13 And he made fifty *taches* of gold, and coupled the curtains one unto another with the *taches*. <sup>n</sup>So it became one tabernacle.

<sup>n</sup> See on xxvi. 7—  
18.

14 ¶ And he made <sup>n</sup>curtains of goats' *hair*, for the tent over the tabernacle: eleven curtains he made them.

15 The length of one curtain *was*

thirty cubits, and four cubits <sup>the</sup>*was* the breadth of one curtain: the eleven curtains *were* of one size.

16 And he coupled five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves.

17 And he made fifty loops upon the uttermost edge of the curtain in the coupling; and fifty loops made he upon the edge of the curtain, which coupleth the second.

18 And he made fifty *taches* of brass to couple the tent together, that it might be one.

19 And he made a <sup>o</sup>covering for the tent, of rams' skins dyed red, and a covering of badgers' skins above *that*. <sup>o</sup> See on xxvi. 14

20 ¶ And he made <sup>p</sup>boards for the tabernacle, of <sup>q</sup>shittim-wood, standing up. <sup>p</sup> See on xxvi. 15  
—25. xl. 18, 19.  
<sup>q</sup> xxv. 5. 10. Num.  
xxv. 1 Deut. x.  
3.

21 The length of a board *was* ten cubits, and the breadth of a board one cubit and a half.

22 One board had two tenons, equally distant one from another: thus did he make for all the boards of the tabernacle.

23 And he made boards for the tabernacle: twenty boards for the south side southward.

24 And forty sockets of silver he made under the twenty boards: two sockets under one board for his two tenons, and two sockets under another board for his two tenons.

25 And for the other side of the tabernacle *which is* toward the north corner, he made twenty boards,

26 And their forty sockets of silver: two sockets under one board and two sockets under another board.

with which they performed it, and the disinterested fidelity with which they objected to the people's bringing any more contributions, are well worthy of our imitation. Thus should we serve God, yea, and our earthly superiors for his sake, in all things lawful; and thus should all, who are employed in public trusts, abhor filthy lucre, be superior to covetousness, and avoid all occasions and temptations to it, or appearances of it; for robbing the publick is robbing many, which is worse than private theft; as murdering a multitude is worse than killing an individual.—Nor is the people's liberality less worthy of commendation: for this proclamation to restrain their bounty was far more reputable for them, and honourable to God, than one

would have been, which required an addition to their too scanty contributions.—It should however be carefully observed, that though the rich can never devote their substance too entirely to the service of God, yet they may exceed in the particular application of it: and there have been ages of the church, and there may still be instances, in which an ill-judged liberality has introduced pride, indolence, and luxury, where there should be bright examples of humility, diligence, and self-denial. But this is not the general fault of the age in which we live: and though some few individuals may err on this side; yet the circumstances of too many, of every denomination, who labour in the word and doctrine, as well as the appearance of

27 And for the sides of the tabernacle westward, he made six boards.

28 And two boards made he for the corners of the tabernacle in the two sides.

• Heb twinned

29 And they were \* coupled beneath, and coupled together at the head thereof, to one ring; thus he did to both of them in both the corners.

30 And there were eight boards, and their sockets *were* sixteen sockets of silver, † under every board two sockets.

† Heb. two sockets, two sockets, under one board. xxvi. 25.  
‡ See on xxvi. 25—29. xxx. 5.

31 ¶ And he made † bars of shittim-wood: five for the boards of the one side of the tabernacle,

32 And five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the tabernacle for the sides westward.

33 And he made the middle bar to shoot through the boards from the one end to the other.

34 And he overlaid the boards with gold, and made their rings of gold to be places for the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold.

• See on xxvi. 31—35.—xxx. 6.  
Matt. xxvii. 51.  
Heb. x. 20.

35 ¶ And he made \* a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen; with cherubims made he it of cunning work.

36 And he made thereunto four pillars of shittim-wood, and overlaid them with gold: their hooks *were* of gold, and he cast for them four sockets of silver.

† See on xxvi. 26, 37.

37 ¶ And he made † an hanging for the tabernacle-door, of blue and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, of † needle-work,

‡ Heb. the work of a needle-worker, or, embroiderer.

38 And the five pillars of it with their hooks: and he overlaid their chapters and their fillets with gold: but their five sockets *were* of brass.

## CHAP. XXXVII.

The ark and mercy-seat made, 1—9. The table of shew-bread, 10—16. And the candlestick, 17—24. The altar of incense, 25—28; and the holy oil and incense, 29. (Notes, &c. xxv. xxx. 1—10. 22—38.)

AND Bezaleel made \* the ark of shittim-wood: two cubits and a half *was* the length of it, and a cubit and a half the breadth of it, and a cubit and a half the height of it.

• See on xxv. 10—16. xxvi. 33. xxxi. 7. xl. 8. 20, 21. Num. x. 33—36.

2 And he overlaid it with pure gold within and without, and made a crown of gold to it round about.

3 And he cast for it four rings of gold, to be set by the four corners of it: even two rings upon the one side of it, and two rings upon the other side of it.

4 And he made staves of shittim-wood, and overlaid them with gold.

5 And he put the staves into the rings, by the sides of the ark, to bear the ark.

6 And he made the † mercy-seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half *was* the length thereof, and one cubit and a half the breadth thereof.

• See on xxv. 17—22.—Lev. xvi. 12—15. Rom. in. 25. 1 John ii. 2

7 And he made two \* cherubims of gold, beaten out of one piece made he them, on the two ends of the mercy-seat.

• 1 Kings vi. 23—29. Ps. lxxx. 1 civ. 4. Ez. x. 2

8 One cherub \* on the end on this side, and another cherub † on the other end on that side: out of the mercy-seat, made he the cherubims on the two ends thereof.

• Or, out of, &c  
† Or, out of, &c

9 And the † cherubims spread out their wings on high, and covered with their wings over the mercy-seat, with their faces one to another: even \* to the mercy-seat-ward were the faces of the cherubims.

• Gen. iii. 24. xxviii. 12. John i. 51. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Heb. i. 14.

• Eph. iii. 10. 1 Pet. i. 12.

many places of worship, evidently prove that most men, in our days, are sufficiently careful not *thus* to injure the cause of godliness. Wisdom, however, is profitable to direct: and when God puts wisdom and grace into the heart, the hands will be diligently employed in every good work, or cheerfully stretched out to contribute to it.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

CHAP. XXXVII. After what hath been already said, we need only observe, that such repetitions were peculiarly useful to the Israelites; for in these types they chiefly had

their gospel, and they were not permitted to see the things themselves, as they were placed within the sanctuary: and thus in the New Testament we have the same things related in two or three places, with not very material variations, yet not without usefulness.—The exactness of the workmen to their rule is worthy of our imitation: and it is never unseasonable to observe, that through the great Antitype, the Substance of all these shadows, our way being opened to the mercy-seat, we should continually draw near in faith; feeding daily upon him and his fulness, as the nourishment of our souls; walking through this

<sup>1</sup> See on xxv. 23—  
30.—xxxv. 13.  
xl. 4. 22, 23. Ez.  
xl. 39—42.

10 ¶ And he made <sup>1</sup>the table of shittim-wood: two cubits *was* the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.

11 And he overlaid it with pure gold, and made thereunto a crown of gold round about.

12 Also he made thereunto a border of an hand-breadth round about: and made a crown of gold for the border thereof round about.

13 And he cast for it four rings of gold, and put the rings upon the four corners, that *were* in the four feet thereof.

14 Over against the border were the rings, the places for the staves, to bear the table.

15 And he made the staves of shittim-wood, and overlaid them with gold, to bear the table.

16 And he made the vessels which *were* upon the table, his <sup>2</sup>dishes, and his spoons, and his bowls, and his covers to <sup>3</sup>cover withal, of pure gold.

<sup>2</sup> See on xxv. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Or, pour out withal.

<sup>4</sup> See on xxx. 31—  
39.—xl. 24, 25.  
Zech. iv. 2. 11.  
Matt. v. 15. John  
i. 4—9. Phil. ii  
10. Rev. i. 20.

17 ¶ And he made <sup>4</sup>the candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work made he the candlestick, his shaft and his branch, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers were of the same:

18 And six branches going out of the sides thereof; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side thereof, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side thereof:

19 Three bowls made after the fashion of almonds, in one branch, a knop and a flower; and three bowls made like almonds, in another branch, a knop and a flower: so throughout the six branches, going out of the candlestick.

20 And in the candlestick *were* four bowls made like almonds, his knops and his flowers.

21 And a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, ac-

cording to the six branches going out of it.

22 Their knops and their branches were of the same: all of it *was* one beaten work of pure gold.

23 And he made his <sup>5</sup>seven lamps, and his snuffers, and his snuff-dishes, of pure gold.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. i. 12, 20. ii. 1. v. 5.

24 Of a talent of pure gold made he it, and all the vessels thereof.

25 ¶ And he made the <sup>6</sup>incense-altar of shittim-wood: the length of it *was* a cubit, and the breadth of it a cubit, (*it was* four-square,) and two cubits *was* the height of it; the horns thereof were of the same.

<sup>6</sup> See on xxx. —  
5.—xl. 5. 26, 27.  
Luke i. 9. Rev.  
viii. 3, 4.

26 And he overlaid it with pure gold, *both* the top of it, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns of it: also he made unto it a crown of gold round about.

27 And he made two rings of gold for it under the crown thereof, by the two corners of it, upon the two sides thereof, to be places for the staves to bear it withal.

28 And he made the staves of shittim-wood, and overlaid them with gold.

29 And <sup>7</sup>he made the holy anointing oil, and the pure <sup>8</sup>incense of sweet spices, according to the work of <sup>9</sup>the apothecary.

<sup>7</sup> See on xxx. 23—  
38. 1a. xi. 2. 1a1.  
1. John iii. 34.  
2 Cor. i. 21. 22.  
1 John ii. 20, 27.  
m Pa. cxli. 2. Heb.  
vi. 25.  
n Ec. x. 1.

#### CHAP. XXXVIII.

The altar of burnt-offering made; and the laver, the pillars, and the hangings for the court, 1—20. The money collected and the use made of it, 21—31 (Notes, &c. xxvii. xxx. 11—21.)

AND he made <sup>10</sup>the altar of burnt-offering of shittim-wood: five cubits *was* the length thereof, and five cubits the breadth thereof, (*it was* four-square,) and three cubits the height thereof.

<sup>10</sup> See on xxvii. 1  
—8.—xl. 8. 29  
2 Chr. iv. 1. Ez.  
xlii. 15—17  
Heb. xiii. 10.

2 And he made the horns thereof on the four corners of it; the horns thereof were of the same: and he overlaid it with brass.

3 And he made all the vessels of the altar, the pots, and the shovels, and the basons, *and* the flesh-hooks, and the

dark world according to the light of his word, and seeking for renewed and enlarged anointings of his Holy Spirit;

that here we may rejoice in him and glorify him, and at length be for ever with him in heaven.

fire-pans: all the vessels thereof made *he of brass.*

4 And he made for the altar a brazen grate of net-work, under the compass thereof, beneath unto the midst of it.

5 And he cast four rings for the four ends of the grate of brass, *to be places for the staves.*

6 And he made the staves of shit-tim-wood, and overlaid them with brass.

7 And he put the staves into the rings on the sides of the altar, to bear it withal: he made the altar hollow with boards.

8 ¶ And he made <sup>b</sup> the laver *of brass, and the foot of it of brass, <sup>c</sup> of the looking glasses of the women <sup>†</sup> assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.*

9 ¶ And he made <sup>d</sup> the court: on the south-side southward, the hangings of the court *were of fine twined linen, an hundred cubits.*

10 Their pillars *were* twenty and their brazen sockets twenty: the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets *were of silver.*

11 And for the north-side, *the hangings were* an hundred cubits, their pillars *were* twenty, and their sockets of brass twenty: the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets *of silver.*

12 And for the west-side *were* hangings of fifty cubits, their pillars ten, and their sockets ten: the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets *of silver.*

13 And for the east-side eastward, fifty cubits.

14 The hangings of the one side *of the gate were* fifteen cubits, their pillars three, and their sockets three.

15 And for the other side of the court-gate, on this hand and that hand,

*were* hangings of fifteen cubits, their pillars three, and their sockets three.

16 All the hangings of the court round about *were of* fine twined linen.

17 And the sockets for the pillars *were of* brass: the hooks of the pillars, and their fillets, *of silver:* and the overlaying of their chapiters *of silver:* and all the pillars of the court *were* filleted with silver.

18 And the hanging for the gate of the court *was* needle-work *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen: and twenty cubits *was* the length, and the height in the breadth *was* five cubits, answerable to the hangings of the court.

19 And their pillars *were* four, and their sockets *of* brass four, their hooks *of* silver, and the overlaying of their chapiters, and their fillets *of* silver.

20 And all <sup>e</sup> the pins of the tabernacle, and of the court round about, *were of* brass.

21 ¶ This is the sum of the tabernacle, *even of the tabernacle of testimony, as it was counted, according to the commandment of Moses, for the service of the Levites, <sup>f</sup> by the hand of <sup>g</sup> Ithamar, son to Aaron the priest.*

22 And <sup>h</sup> Bezaleel the son of Uri the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the LORD commanded Moses.

23 And with him *was* Aholiab, son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver, and a cunning workman, and an embroiderer in blue, and in purple, and in scarlet, and fine linen.

24 All <sup>k</sup> the gold that was occupied for the work, in all the work of the holy place, even the gold of the offering, was twenty and nine talents, and

<sup>b</sup> See on xxx. 18—21.—xl. 7. 30—32. 1 Kings vii. 23—26. 38. Zech. xiii. 1. John xiii. 10. Tit. iii. 5, 6. Heb. ix. 10. <sup>c</sup> Job xxxvii. 18. Is. iii. 23. Jam. i. 23, 24. <sup>d</sup> Or, brazen glasses. <sup>e</sup> Heb. assembling by troops. 1 Sam. ii. 22. Prov. viii. 34. Luke ii. 37. 1 Tim. v. 5. <sup>f</sup> See on xxvii. 9—19.—xl. 8. 23. 1 Kings vi. 36. Ps. xcii. 13. c. 4.

<sup>g</sup> xxvii. 19. Ezra ix. 8. Ec. xii. 11. Is. xxii. 23. Eph. i. 21, 22. Col. ii. 19.

<sup>h</sup> xxv. 16. xl. 3. Num. i. 50. 55. ix. 15. x. 11. xvii. 7, 8. xviii. 2. Acts vii. 44. Rev. xi. 19. <sup>i</sup> Num. iv. 28. 33. Ezra viii. 26—30. <sup>j</sup> vi. 23. 1 Chr. vi. 8. xxiv. 4. <sup>k</sup> xxxii. 2. 6. xxxv. 30—35.

<sup>l</sup> 1 Chr. xxii. 14—16. xxix. 2—7. Hag. ii. 8.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XXXVIII. V. 8. *Of the looking-glasses, &c.]* These are supposed to have been plates of the finest brass, highly polished, which, before the invention of glass, served for the purpose of mirrors, and cast a much stronger reflection than those made of silver. Some women, peculiarly devoted to God, and zealous for the establishment of his worship, who were used to assemble together at the door of the tabernacle, where the Lord met his people, before the sanctuary was erected, at a time when much brass was wanted, and perhaps no great quantity was in

the camp, expressed their zeal by parting with their mirrors; which are generally deemed necessary, and which must be allowed to be very convenient. (Note, 1 Sam. ii. 22.)

V. 18. *Height, &c.]* The hangings of the court were five cubits in height; but that which was the height of the hanging for the gate, when hung up, was its breadth, not its length, as it lay on the ground.

V. 21—24. After the making of the several parts of the sanctuary; the sacred historian interrupts the narrative, to state some particulars concerning the gold and silver employed in that work. By the command of Moses, the

seven hundred and thirty shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

25 ¶ And the silver of them that were numbered of the congregation, *was* an hundred talents, and a thousand seven hundred and threescore and fifteen shekels, after <sup>1</sup> the shekel of the sanctuary.

26 <sup>m</sup> A bekah for <sup>\*</sup> every man, *that is*, half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for every one that went to be numbered, from twenty years old and upward, for <sup>a</sup> six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty men.

27 And of the hundred talents of silver, were cast <sup>o</sup> the sockets of the sanctuary, and the sockets of the veil; an hundred sockets of the hundred talents, a talent for a socket.

28 And of the thousand seven hundred seventy and five *shekels*, he made hooks for the pillars, and overlaid their chapiters, and filleted them.

29 And the brass of the offering *was* seventy talents, and two thousand and four hundred shekels.

30 And therewith he made <sup>p</sup> the sockets to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the brazen altar, and the brazen grate for it, and all the vessels of the altar,

31 And the sockets of the court round about, and the sockets of the court-gate, and all the pins of the taber-

nacle, and all the pins of the court round about.

### CHAP. XXXIX.

The several garments of the priests made, (Notes, &c. xxviii.) 1—31. The whole work finished, and reviewed by Moses, who blesses the workmen, 32—43.

AND of <sup>a</sup> the blue, and purple, and scarlet, they made <sup>b</sup> cloths of service, to do service in the <sup>c</sup> holy place, and made <sup>d</sup> the holy garments for Aaron; as the LORD commanded Moses.

2 And he made <sup>e</sup> the ephod of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen.

3 And they did beat the gold into thin plates, and cut *it into* wires, to work *it* in the blue, and in the purple, and in the scarlet, and in the fine linen, *with cunning work*.

4 They made shoulder-pieces for it, to couple *it* together: by the two edges was it coupled together.

5 And the <sup>f</sup> curious girdle of his ephod that *was* upon it *was* of the same, according to the work thereof: of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, as the LORD commanded Moses.

6 And they wrought <sup>g</sup> onyx-stones inclosed in ouches of gold, graven as signets are graven, with the names of the children of Israel.

7 And he put them on the shoulders

xxx. 13, 14. Lev. v. 18. xxviii. 3. Num. iii. 47. xxi. 16. xxxv. 15, 16. Heb. a poll.

xxx. 37. Num. i. 43. xxi. 51.

xxx. 19, 21, 23.

xxx. 37. xxviii. 10.

a xxxv. 4. xxxv. 23. b xxxi. 10. xxxv. 19. c Ez. xliii. 12. Heb. ix. 12. 25. d xxviii. 2. 4. xxxi. 10. Ez. xliii. 14.

e See on xxviii. 6 —12. Lev. viii. 7.

f See on xxxv. 9.—Is. xl. 5. Rev.—13.

g See on xxxv. 9.—Job xxviii. 16. Ez. xxviii. 13.

Levites performed the service here mentioned, under the direction of Ithamar, Aaron's youngest son.

An embroiderer. (23) This confirms what was before advanced, that the fine linen was embroidered with these colours. (Note, xxxv. 25, 26.)

V. 26—28. A shekel is about half an ounce troy weight. At half a shekel each, 6000 persons collected a talent of silver: consequently a talent consisted of about a hundred and twenty-five pounds troy, or rather more than a hundred weight. This passage fixes the weight of a talent at 3000 shekels; for both the round sum and the residue agree with this computation, and can agree with no other. This seems indeed to have been the *weight* of a talent, of whatever metal; and it may easily be computed, how much it would be worth of our current coin.—The silver, called “the ransom of their souls,” was raised as a tax which each must pay, but all the rest was voluntary. (Note, xxx. 11—16.)

### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In all ages there have been some persons more devoted to God, more constant in their attendance upon his ordi-

nances, and more willing to part with lawful things for his sake, than others. These are never censured, but always commended and honoured in the word of God: for when relative duties and social obligations are not neglected or violated, we cannot too much renounce the world, deny ourselves, and devote our all to the Lord, and seek our whole happiness from him. (Note, Luke ii. 36—38.)—It may also be added, that the inclosure of this court, being only of curtains, might intimate that it should in due time be removed: and so we may take occasion to bless God for the enlargement of his church, by the calling of us Gentiles into it; and to pray that all remaining boundaries may be removed, and the whole earth filled with the knowledge of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

### NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIX. V. 3. The art of drawing metal into wire was not known at that time, as appears from this verse; otherwise the gold might have been drawn out to any length and fineness which they chose.

of the ephod, *that they should be stones* for <sup>a</sup> a memorial to the children of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses.

<sup>b</sup> xxviii. 29. Josh. iv. 7. Mark xiv. 9. 22—25.

<sup>i</sup> See on xxviii. 4. 15—20. — Lev. viii. 8, 9. Is. lix. 17. Eph. vi. 14.

8 ¶ And he made the <sup>l</sup> breast-plate of cunning work, like the work of the ephod; of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen.

9 It was four-square; they made the breast-plate double: a span *was* the length thereof, and a span the breadth thereof, *being* doubled.

<sup>j</sup> See on xxviii. 17. 21.—Rev. xxi. 19—21.  
<sup>k</sup> Or, ruby.

10 And they set in it four rows of stones: <sup>i</sup> the first row *was* <sup>a</sup> a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this *was* the first row.

11 And the second row, an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond.

12 And the third row, a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst.

13 And the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper: *they were* inclosed in ouches of gold in their inclosings.

14 And the stones *were* according to the names of the children of Israel, twelve according to their names, like the engravings of a signet, every one with his name, according to the twelve tribes.

<sup>k</sup> Cant. i. 10.

15 And they made upon the breast-plate <sup>k</sup> chains, at the ends, of wreathen work of pure gold.

16 And they made two ouches of gold, and two gold rings: and put the two rings in the two ends of the breast-plate.

17 And they put the two wreathen chains of gold in the two rings on the ends of the breast-plate.

18 And the two ends of the two wreathen chains they fastened in the two ouches, and put them on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, before it.

19 And they made two rings of gold, and put *them* on the two ends of the breast-plate, upon the border of it which *was* on the side of the ephod inward.

20 And they made two *other* golden rings, and put them on the two sides of the ephod underneath, toward the fore-part of it, over against the *other* coupling thereof, above the curious girdle of the ephod.

21 And they did bind the breast-

plate by his rings unto the rings of the ephod, with a lace of blue, that it might be above the curious girdle of the ephod, and that the breast-plate might not be loosed from the ephod; as the LORD commanded Moses.

22 ¶ And he made <sup>l</sup> the robe of the ephod of woven work, all of blue. <sup>q</sup> See on xxviii. 35.

23 And *there was* a hole in the midst of the robe, as the hole of an habergeon, *with* a band round about the hole, that it should not rend.

24 And they made upon the hems of the robe pomegranates of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and twined linen.

25 And they made bells of pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates, upon the hem of the robe, round about between the pomegranates.

26 A bell and a <sup>m</sup> pomegranate, <sup>m</sup> a bell and a pomegranate, round about the <sup>n</sup> hem of the robe to minister in; <sup>n</sup> as the LORD commanded Moses. <sup>m</sup> Cant. i. 12. vi. 7. <sup>n</sup> Dent. xxv. 12. Matt. ix. 20.

27 ¶ And they made <sup>o</sup> coats of fine linen, of woven work, for Aaron and for his sons. <sup>o</sup> See on xxviii. 40. —42.—Lev. viii. 13. Is. lxi. 10. Ez. xlv. 18. Rom. iii. 22. xiii. 14. Gal. iii. 27. 1 Pet. i. 13.

28 And a mitre of fine linen, and goodly bonnets of fine linen, and linen breeches of fine twined linen.

29 And a girdle of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, of needle-work; as the LORD commanded Moses.

30 ¶ And they made <sup>p</sup> the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and wrote upon it a writing, *like to* the engravings of a signet, <sup>q</sup> HOLINESS TO THE LORD. <sup>p</sup> See on xxviii. 36. —38. Heb. x. 26. <sup>q</sup> Zech. xiv. 20. Tit. ii. 14. Rev. v. 10.

31 And they tied unto it a lace of blue, to fasten it on high upon the mitre; as the LORD commanded Moses.

32 ¶ Thus was all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation finished: and the children of Israel did <sup>r</sup> according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did they. <sup>r</sup> xxv. 40. Dent. xii. 32. 1 Sam. xv. 22. 1 Chr. xxviii. 19. Mat. xxviii. 20.

33 And they brought the tabernacle unto Moses, <sup>s</sup> the tent, and all his furniture, his taches, his boards, his bars, and his pillars, and his sockets, <sup>s</sup> See on xxi. 7—11. xxxv. 7—10.

34 And the covering of rams' skins dyed red, and the covering of badgers' skins, and the veil of the covering,

35 The ark of the testimony, and the staves thereof, and the mercy-seat,

36 The table, *and* all the vessels thereof, and the shew-bread,

37 The pure candlestick, *with* the lamps thereof, *even with* the lamps to be set in order, and all the vessels thereof, and the oil for light.

38 And the golden altar, and the anointing oil, and the <sup>a</sup> sweet incense, and the hanging for the tabernacle door,

<sup>a</sup> Heb. the incense of sweet spices

39 The brazen altar, and his grate of brass, his staves, and all his vessels, the laver and his foot,

40 The hangings of the court, his pillars, and his sockets, and the hanging for the court-gate, his cords and his pins, and all the vessels of the service of the tabernacle, for the tent of the congregation,

c. l. xxxi 10

41 The <sup>a</sup> cloths of service to do service in the holy *place*, and the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and his sons' garments to minister in the priest's office.

42 According to all that the LORD

commanded Moses, so the children of Israel made all the work.

43 And Moses <sup>a</sup> did look upon all the work, and behold, they had done it as the LORD had commanded, even so had they done it: and Moses <sup>b</sup> blessed them.

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xiv. 19  
<sup>b</sup> Lev. ix. 22, 24  
Num. vi. 24-27.  
2 Sam. vi. 18  
1 Kings viii. 14  
2 Chr. xxx. 27

## CHAP. XL.

Moses, at God's command, sets up the tabernacle, and consecrates it with its furniture, 1-33. The Lord, by the cloud and glory, takes possession of it, and guides and protects Israel, 34-38.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 On the first day of <sup>a</sup> the first month shalt thou set up the <sup>b</sup> tabernacle of the tent of the congregation:

<sup>a</sup> 17. xii. 1, 2 xiii.  
4. Num. vii. 1.  
<sup>b</sup> 6. 19. xxvi. 7. 30  
xxvii. 21. xxx.  
36. xxxv. 11.  
xxxvi. 18. Job  
xxi. 28. Marg.  
c 21 See on xxv.  
17-22. xxvi. 33,  
34.—Num. iv. 5  
Rev. xi. 19. xv.  
5.

3 And thou shalt put therein <sup>a</sup> the ark of the testimony, and cover the ark with the veil.

4 And thou shalt bring in <sup>a</sup> the table, and set in order <sup>a</sup> the things that are to be set in order upon it, and thou shalt bring in <sup>a</sup> the candlestick, and light the lamps thereof.

d 22. See on xxv.  
23-30. xxvi. 35  
36.  
e Heb. the order thereof. Lev. xxiv. 5, 6.  
e 24, 25.—See on xxv. 31-39.

5 And thou shalt set <sup>a</sup> the altar of gold, for the incense, before the ark of

f 26, 27.—See on xxx. 1-5.—xxxvii. 25-28.  
1 John ii. 1, 2.

V. 43. The words, "as the Lord commanded Moses," or to that effect, are used no less than ten times in this chapter. This shews the importance of the exact observance of the directions given, to the acceptableness of the service; without which the liberality and activity of the people, and the skill of the workmen, would have been of no avail.

### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When unanimity, diligence, and zeal animate the hearts of numbers in a good cause, much may be done in a short time: and when the commandment of God is continually attended to, as the rule and standard of every service, the whole will be done well.—We ought indeed daily to prove our own work, to take the counsel and regard the judgment of others, to present all we do before the Lord, and beg to be shewn how far he approves or disapproves it: but the grand trial of all our actions will be at the conclusion of them. We ought not therefore *rashly* to judge others, or their works, before the time; nor be elated by man's applause, or cast down by his reproach, which are often alike erroneous and unmerited: but we should exercise ourselves to keep a conscience void of offence, be contented with its testimony, and wait that day, "when the Lord shall come, and bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God." For though the glory of all the good we do belongs to him, and our best needs much forgiveness; yet, if by his grace our hearts are humbly upright and willing, and we work

by his rule, for his glory, and in dependence on his teaching and assistance, he will graciously applaud us, and say, "Well done, good and faithful servants;" and his blessing will abundantly repay our labour, which indeed is even here its own reward. After his example, therefore, as well as that of Moses, parents, masters, ministers, magistrates, and others, should learn not to be always finding fault; but to shew themselves pleased with, and to commend, the honest endeavours of others to do well.—They who serve the cause of religion have a claim to our prayers, even as if they were our own benefactors; and we should both thank God for them, and beg of him to bless them.

### NOTES.

CHAP. XL. V. 2. On the fifteenth day of the first month the Israelites came out of Egypt; on the fiftieth day after that event the law was given; and with several intervening delays, Moses spent at least eighty days upon the mount. Half the year must therefore have passed, or perhaps more, before they began to work upon the tabernacle; in half a year, or somewhat less, the whole was completed; and immediately Moses received directions for setting it up.—"The tabernacle" means the whole building; "the tent," the curtains by which it was covered. (Marg. Ref.)

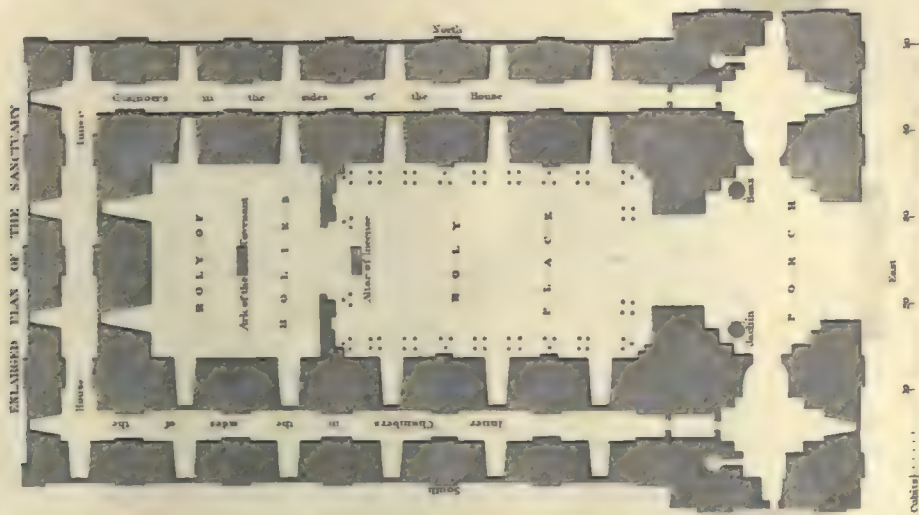
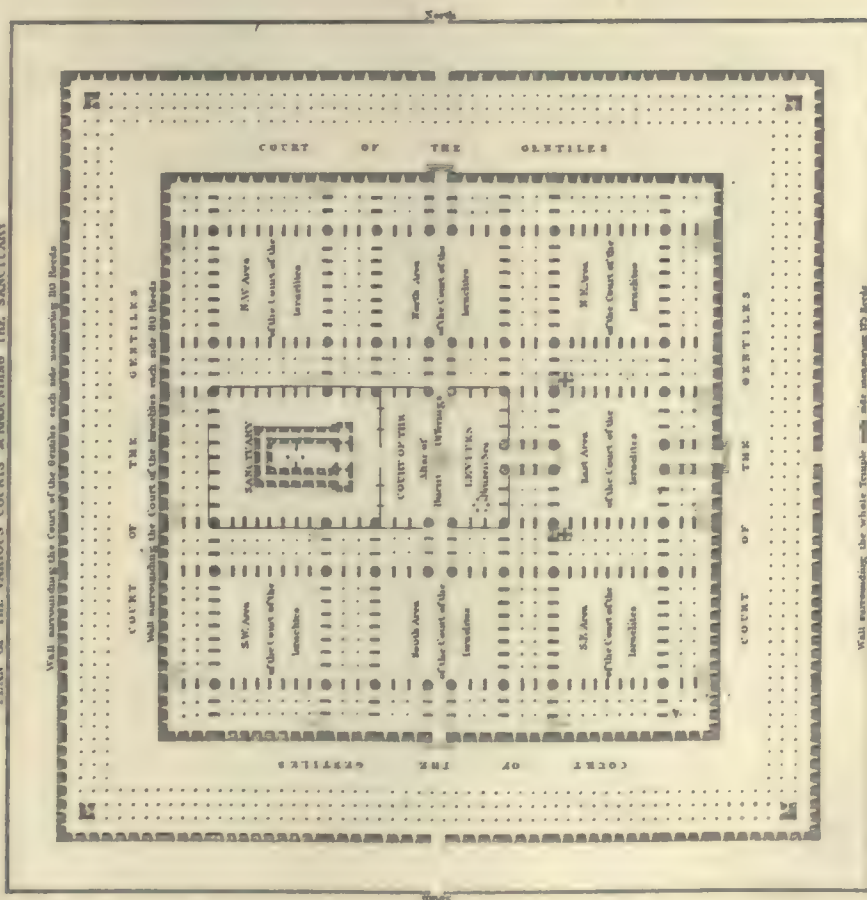
V. 3, 4. Marg. Ref. c—e. Notes, xxv. 10-39.

V. 5. Marg. Ref. f, g. Notes, xxvi. 36, 37. xxx. 1-8.

# PLAN OF THE TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM

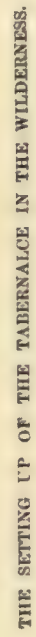
AS REVEALED BY SURVEY OF THE TEMPLE MOUNTED BY THE ARABIC SURVEY OF 1892.  
 A PLAN OF THE TEMPLE MOUNTED BY THE ARABIC SURVEY OF 1892.

## PLAN OF THE VARIOUS COURTS SURROUNDING THE SANCTUARY



London: Published for the Proprietors by Messrs. W. & A. G. & Co., 15, Abchurch Lane, E.C. 4.





Exodus xl.



28. xxvi. 36, 37. the testimony, and <sup>a</sup>put the hanging  
xxxvi. 37, 38. of the door to the tabernacle.

4. 29 See on xxvii. 6 And thou shalt set <sup>b</sup>the altar of  
1—8.—xxxviii. 1 the burnt-offering before the door of  
—7. the tabernacle of the tent of the con-  
gregation.

1 30—32.—See on 7 And thou shalt set <sup>c</sup>the laver be-  
xxx. 18—21. tween the tent of the congregation  
xxxviii. 8. Ps. and the altar, and shalt put water  
xxxvi. 6. Zech. therein.  
xiii. 1.

4. 33.—See on 8 And thou shalt set up <sup>d</sup>the court  
xxvii. 9—19. round about, and hang up the hanging  
xxxviii. 9—19. at the court-gate.

1 xxx. 23—33. 9 ¶ And thou shalt take <sup>e</sup>the anoint-  
xxxvii. 20. Ps. ing oil, and anoint the tabernacle and  
xiv. 7. Is. xi. 2. all that is therein, and shalt hallow it,  
lxi. 1. Matt. iii. and all the vessels thereof: and it shall  
16. John iii. 34. be holy.  
1 John ii. 20.

on xxix. 36, 37. 10 And thou shalt anoint the altar  
Lev. viii. 11. of the burnt-offering, and all his ves-  
• Heb. holiness of sels, and <sup>f</sup>sanctify the altar: and it  
holiness. shall be an altar <sup>g</sup>most holy.

11 And thou shalt anoint the laver  
and his foot, and sanctify it.

12 ¶ And thou shalt <sup>h</sup>bring Aaron  
and his sons unto the door of the ta-  
bernacle of the congregation, and wash  
them with water.

13 And thou shalt put upon Aaron  
the holy garments, and <sup>i</sup>anoint him,  
and sanctify him; that he may mini-  
ster unto me in the priest's office.

14 And thou shalt bring his sons,  
and clothe them with coats:

15 And thou shalt anoint them, as  
thou didst anoint their father, that they  
may minister unto me in the priest's  
office: for their anointing shall surely  
be an <sup>j</sup>everlasting priesthood, through-  
out their generations.

16 Thus did Moses: according to  
all that the LORD commanded him, so  
did he.

17 ¶ And it came to pass, in <sup>k</sup>the  
first month, in the second year, on the  
first day of the month, *that* the taber-  
nacle was reared up.

18 And Moses <sup>l</sup>reared up the taber-  
nacle, and fastened his sockets, and  
set up the boards thereof, and put in  
the bars thereof, and reared up his pil-  
lars.

19 And he spread abroad <sup>m</sup>the tent  
over the tabernacle, and put the co-  
vering of the tent above upon it; as  
the LORD commanded Moses.

20 And he took and put <sup>n</sup>the testi-  
mony into the ark, and set the staves  
on the ark, and put the <sup>o</sup>mercy-seat  
above upon the ark.

21 And <sup>p</sup>he brought the ark into  
the tabernacle, and set up the veil of  
the covering, and covered the ark of  
the testimony; as the LORD com-  
manded Moses.

22 And <sup>q</sup>he put the table in the  
tent of the congregation, upon the side  
of the tabernacle <sup>r</sup>northward without  
the veil.

23 And he <sup>s</sup>set the bread in order  
upon it, before the LORD; as the LORD  
had commanded Moses

24 And he put <sup>t</sup>the candlestick in  
the tent of the congregation, over  
against the table, on the side of the ta-  
bernacle southward.

25 And he lighted the lamps before  
the LORD, as the LORD commanded  
Moses.

26 And he put the <sup>u</sup>golden altar in

V. 6. *Marg. Ref. Note*, xxvii. 1—8.

V. 7, 8. *Marg. Ref.* i, k. *Notes*, xxvii. 9—19. xxx.  
18—21.

V. 9—11. *Marg. Ref.* l, m. *Notes*, xxix. 35—37. xxx.  
22—33.

V. 12—14. *Marg. Ref.* n, o. *Notes*, xxix. 1—37.

V. 15. *Everlasting.*] This priesthood endured, in the  
family of Aaron, till Christ came; and in him, the Sub-  
stance of all these shadows, it rests for ever.—The sons of  
Aaron were anointed with the same holy oil, as their father;  
but it is not generally supposed, that it was poured on their  
heads, as it was on his. At least this is never mentioned  
concerning any other than the high priest. (xxix. 7. *Lev.* viii.  
12. xxi. 10. *Ps.* cxxxiii. 2.) The anointing oil was

vol. 1.

“sprinkled both on Aaron and his garments, and on his  
“sons, and on their garments.” (xxix. 21. *Lev.* viii. 30.)—  
In this respect, “Moses anointed them, as he anointed  
“their father:” and perhaps some of the oil might be ap-  
plied to their heads, though not poured on them, as on  
that of their father. The distinction between the anointed  
priest, or high priest, and the other priests, seems marked  
through all the subsequent part of the Old Testament,  
wherever the subject is introduced.

V. 16. Moses <sup>v</sup>took the same care in erecting the ta-  
bernacle, and disposing every thing in its place, that the  
workmen had done in making all things according to the  
mind of God.’ *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 17—33. (*Marg. Ref.*) In the whole of this solemn

2 S

the tent of the congregation, before the veil.

27 And he burnt sweet incense thereon; as the LORD commanded Moses.

d 5. xxvi. 36, 37.  
xxxviii. 9-19

28 And he <sup>d</sup> set up the hanging at the door of the tabernacle.

e 6. xxviii. 1-8.  
xxxviii. 1-7.  
Heb. xiii. 10.

29 And he put <sup>e</sup> the altar of burnt-offering *by* the door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation, and offered upon it the burnt-offering, and the meat-offering; as the LORD commanded Moses.

f 7. xxx. 18-21.  
xxxviii. 8. Ez.  
xxxvi. 25.

30 And he set <sup>f</sup> the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and put water there, to wash *withal*.

g John xiii. 10.

31 And Moses, and Aaron and his sons, <sup>g</sup> washed their hands and their feet thereat.

32 When they went into the tent of the congregation, and when they came

near unto the altar, they washed; as the LORD commanded Moses.

33 And he reared up <sup>h</sup> the court round <sup>h</sup> 8. xxvii. 9-16. about the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the court gate: <sup>i</sup> so Moses finished the work.

34 ¶ Then <sup>k</sup> a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

35 And Moses <sup>l</sup> was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.

36 And <sup>m</sup> when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Israel <sup>n</sup> went onward in all their <sup>n</sup> Heb. journeyed. journeys:

37 But if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not, till the day that it was taken up.

38 For the cloud of the LORD was

i xxxix. 32. 1 Kings vi. 9. Zech. iv. 9. John iv. 34. xxvii. 4. 2 Tim. iv. 7. Heb. iii. 2-5. k xiii. 21, 22. xiv. 19, 20, 24. xxi. 8, 22. xxix. 43. xxxiii. 9. Lev. xvi. 2. Num. ix. 16-23. 1 Kings viii. 10. 2 Chr. v. 13. Is. vi. 4. Ez. xliii. 4-7. Hag. ii. 7, 9. l 1 Kings viii. 11. 2 Chr. v. 14. vii. 2. Rev. xv. 8.

m Num. x. 11-13. 33-36. Neh. ix. 19. 1 Cor. x. 1. n Heb. journeyed.

service, Moses acted as a priest, and as a type of him, who unites in his own person the offices of a Prophet, Priest, and King. (Note, Deut. xviii. 15-19.) But after Aaron and his sons were fully established in their office, it does not appear, that Moses performed any of the services, to which they were especially appointed. As however he went into the tabernacle to enquire of the Lord, it may be supposed that, on these occasions, he washed his hands and feet at the laver, as Aaron and his sons did in their daily ministrations.—The time, in which the anointing and consecrating of the sacred vessels took place, seems to have been the same, as that in which Aaron and his sons were consecrated; though Moses in this general narrative did not specially mention it.

V. 34, 35. The Lord testified his acceptance of the services of the people, and his entire reconciliation to them as a nation, by his gracious residence among them in the cloud, the symbol of his special presence. This rested above the tabernacle, while a more resplendent glory filled it, so that Moses himself could not enter for a time; but probably it afterwards was confined to the holy of holies, above the mercy-seat between the cherubim.

V. 36-38. (Note, Num. ix. 16-23.) In allusion to this special guidance of Israel, many pious persons use the expression, "moving of the cloud," as denoting the providential and gracious direction which God now affords his people: and doubtless it is allowable thus to accommodate and apply these *typical* passages to our own circumstances, provided it be done with sobriety, judgment, and caution. But we should be careful not to introduce a new rule of duty; or give occasion to uncertainty, error, or enthusiasm, by a vague and indeterminate use of such allusions. We are not under the same evident infallible guidance that Israel was: the word of God, soberly explained, is our only and our sufficient rule of duty; and in understanding it, and in applying general precepts to particular circum-

stances, good counsel, fervent prayer, and a careful observance of Providence, should be employed. Some things are always our duty, when we have opportunity and ability; and these need no other direction: other things are lawful in themselves; but it may be doubtful, whether in our case and situation they are adviseable; that is, whether they are likely, all things considered, to conduce to the glory of God and our own real good, and the good of our brethren and neighbours. When, after mature consultation and fervent prayer, such matters *still remain doubtful*; the events of Providence may be of some weight in the decision, especially in cases where self-denial must be exercised, and danger encountered. But, when any undertaking is evidently wrong, or plainly inexpedient, or unadviseable in the opinion of impartial judges, and yet the inclination leans that way; in this case, that which men call the "moving of the cloud," or the opening of Providence, is generally no more than a temptation of Satan. The suggestions of that enemy are often mistaken for divine impressions; and men fancy they are following <sup>n</sup> the Lord, when they are gratifying their own wayward inclinations. Upon the whole, in all matters, let us refer "to the law and to the testimony." Plain precepts and maxims of wisdom are far surer rules, than the most ingenious allusions: and the book of Providence, as well as the supposed guidance of the Spirit, must be examined by, and brought to the test of, the plain rules of the written word, "which are the light of our feet and the lantern of our paths."

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The several parts of divine revelation, the distinct offices of Jesus Christ, and the various graces of the Christian character, are never seen in their glory and beauty, till they are viewed as united in one harmonious *whole*; which *whole* the believer values, desires, and seeks to call his own.—The periodical return of the seasons should remind us

<sup>d</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 14. upon the tabernacle by day, and <sup>a</sup> fire  
<sup>cy. 39. Is. iv. 5,</sup> was on it by night, in the sight of all

the house of Israel, throughout all their  
 journeys.

of the duties to God and our souls, to which we are called : and we may hope for a good year, month, week, or day, if we begin it with serious attention to the worship of God, and solemn dedication of ourselves to him. But when we remember that within this very year, which was entered upon in so promising a manner, the Lord was not well pleased with the most of the Israelites, and doomed "their carcasses to fall in the wilderness;" we may justly fear, lest we should amuse and deceive ourselves with a form of godliness : and the consideration, how few of them entered Canaan, should warn young people not to postpone the care of their souls till they are settled in life, lest that should prove too late.—Happy they, who like Moses receive repeated testimony from God, that they do his will

and keep his commandments ! But, through him, let us look unto Jesus Christ, who collects his people from all nations and ages ; and according to the will of the Father, having washed them in his blood, and anointed them with the unction of his grace, forms them into one holy temple, "a habitation of God through the Spirit," in which he dwells to illuminate, to purify, to guide, and to defend them through life, and in which he will dwell for ever. Being then taught by the Spirit to imitate Christ, as well as to depend on him, devoutly to attend on his ordinances, and obey his precepts ; we shall be preserved from losing our way, and be "led in the midst of the paths of judgment," till we come to heaven, the habitation of his holiness.

## THE THIRD BOOK OF MOSES,

CALLED

## LEVITICUS.

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IN the Hebrew Bible this book, like the preceding, is named from the first word (ויקרא): but, after the Greek translation, we call it **LEVITICUS**: because it records the solemn consecration of Aaron and his sons, who were of the tribe of Levi, to be the priests of the Lord, and the confirmation of the priesthood to their descendants in all subsequent ages, while that dispensation endured; and because directions for their various ministrations are here very particularly given; though many things respecting the separation of the rest of the tribe, and the services allotted to them, are recorded in the subsequent book. It contains little history, except the awful death of Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, as soon as consecrated, for irreverence in their sacred office: and it principally consists of ritual laws, delivered to Moses from above the mercy-seat, during the first month after the Tabernacle was erected; though moral precepts are frequently interspersed.—In these ceremonies the gospel was preached to Israel: and the solemn and exact manner, and the many repetitions, with which they are enforced, are suited to impress the serious mind with a conviction, that something immensely more important and spiritual, than the external observances, is couched under each of them. We are indeed thus taught, that all true religion must be grounded on divine revelation, and be regulated by it; and not be left in any degree to human invention: yet one inspired apostle calls the legal institutions “beggarly elements,” and “the law of a carnal commandment;” and another allows, that they formed “a yoke which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear.”—But if we look carefully into the New Testament, we shall be convinced, that these ordinances, which to numbers appear so unmeaning and unreasonable, were not only “shadows of good things to come,” but real prophecies; which, being exactly accomplished in the gospel, prove the book in which they are found to be divinely inspired.—It is not known how far the Israelites observed the singular law concerning the sabbatical year, and that of Jubilee, which, it is evident, were very frequently neglected; but no impostor would have ventured to enact such statutes; much less to have committed himself by these words: “And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase. Then I will command my blessing on you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in, ye shall eat of the old store.” (xxv. 20—22.) Yet we do not find, in the whole history, a single complaint that this extraordinary promise failed of an exact accomplishment.—The twenty-sixth chapter likewise contains an evident prediction of the present state of the nation of Israel, which amidst all its dispersions and oppressions has hitherto been preserved a distinct people, apparently in order to the performance of the promises made them in the close of the chapter.—It seems peculiarly useful, in this sceptical age, to introduce each book in the sacred volume, by some notice of those prophecies found in it, which have received an evident accomplishment, many ages after the time when we have full proof the books were extant; as this tends to establish, not only their authenticity, but also their divine authority, far more than human testimony can do.—In addition to this we may observe, that the sacred writers, in all the subsequent parts of Scripture, and even our Lord, as well as his apostles, quote or refer to this book in language which proves, both that it is the genuine work of Moses, and also that the statutes contained in it are the word of God; the two points which many, called Christians, seem at present ready to concede to scepticks and infidels. (2 Chron. xxx. 16. Ezra vii. 6. 12. Matt. viii. 4. Luke ii. 22—24. Rom. x. 4, 5. Comp. xxvi. 12 with 2 Cor. vi. 16; and xix. 18 with Gal. v. 14.) Let us therefore adhere to the testimony of these unexceptionable witnesses, and study it as a part of “the oracles of God;” and very important instruction will be derived from it, even to us in this remote age, though we are no longer under the obligation of its ritual appointments.

## CHAP. I.

The law of the burnt-offering, of a bullock, 1—9:  
of a sheep, or goat, 10—13: of fowls, 14—17.

**AND** the LORD <sup>a</sup>called unto Moses, and spake unto him <sup>b</sup>out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying, <sup>c</sup>  
2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, <sup>d</sup>If any man of you bring an offering unto the LORD, ye shall bring your offering of the

cattle, *even* of the herd, and of the flock.

3 If his offering *be* <sup>a</sup>a burnt-sacrifice of the herd, let him offer <sup>b</sup>a male without blemish: he shall offer it of <sup>c</sup>his own voluntary will, <sup>d</sup>at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD.

4 And he shall <sup>b</sup>put his hand upon

those alone which represented most aptly what Christ would be, and what his people ought to be; as the laborious, patient ox; the gentle, harmless, and cleanly sheep; and the tender, loving dove: for even the useful goat was sacrificed far less frequently, than sheep and oxen.—It is known that the heathens offered various animals, which were deemed unclean by the Israelites; especially swine and horses.

V. 3. The burnt-offering, or *the offering which ascended*, that is, in smoke from the altar, was the principal sacrifice, and the most ancient. No part of it was eaten, either by the priest, or the offerer; but the whole, when it had been duly prepared, was consumed by fire on the altar, as consecrated to the Lord. When an Israelite brought this offering to the sanctuary, he *professed* his willing devotedness to the worship of God: and the transaction aptly represented the true believer's dedication of himself without reserve, in body and soul, to the service and glory of God, whether by doing or suffering his will; "whether by life, or death:" (*Phil. i. 20*;) but this is always accompanied by repentance, and faith in the atonement of Christ. Whatever else therefore was denoted by these sacrifices, they especially typified Christ, in the *intensity* of his sufferings, both of body and soul, when he gave himself a sacrifice for our sins; and when, at the time that man shed his blood, "it pleased the LORD to bruise him and to put him to grief:" and they likewise shewed forth the perfection of that zeal and love, with which he voluntarily went through his inexpressible sufferings.—A male *without blemish* was deemed the most complete of the kind: thus Christ was without spot or blemish; and his people must serve him with their best in every thing, and they are in themselves the excellent of the earth. (*Ps. xvi. 3*).—The sacrifices of the congregation, daily, weekly, monthly, and annually, as well as those for the great feasts, were prescribed by express laws; and so were the sin-offerings and the trespass-offerings: but the burnt-offerings here spoken of were voluntary.—The word (*וּבְרִיבָה*) rendered *voluntary will*, may indeed signify, *for his acceptance*, that is, that he might be accepted before the Lord. *Ex. xxviii. 38. Is lx. 7. Heb.*

*Burnt sacrifice.* בָּרִיבָה (*à* בָּרִיבָה *ascendere*). Ὁλοκαυτωμα. *Sept. —Tota cremanda.—Holocaustum, sic dictum, quod totum igne assumptum sursum ascenderet, et evanescret.* Robertson.

V. 4. The offerer, by laying his hand on the head of the young bull about to be sacrificed, acknowledged the Lord as the Giver of all that he possessed; and surrendered the animal entirely to him, for the purposes of his glory.

## NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. The laws, recorded in the book of Exodus, were either delivered to the people immediately from Sinai, or to Moses on the top of that mountain; but after the sanctuary had been erected, the remaining part of the law was delivered to Moses by an audible voice from the divine glory, which first filled the tabernacle, and then rested above the mercy-seat. When this glory filled the holy place, Moses was not able to enter; but the Lord called to him to draw nigh, and as he stood without he spake the laws to him.—The word rendered *offering*, (*קָרְבָּן* *Corban*, *Mark vii. 11*;) signifies *brought near*, and, in general, means any oblation presented to God; and therefore the meat-offerings, regulated in the next chapter, were intended, as well as the burnt-offerings, &c.—The sacrificing of innocent animals had been an institution of true religion from the fall of Adam; and thence by tradition it was derived into the various species of false religion, which prevailed in the world.—Among the worshippers of the true God, no animals but those called *clean* were offered. In most cases the head of the family, or the person presenting the sacrifice, officiated as priest. (*Note, Ex. xxiv. 5*.) The blood of the animal was shed, and then the body was consumed by fire on an altar: or sometimes only a part of it; and then the remainder was feasted on by the person who sacrificed, along with his family and friends. (*Gen. xxxi. 54. Note, Ex. xviii. 12*.) But, under the Mosaic dispensation, very particular laws were given upon this subject, which were connected with the exclusive appointment of Aaron's family to the priesthood. In general, all the sacrifices in various ways typified Christ; and also shadowed out the believer's duty, character, privilege, and communion with God: and indeed, if we except the divine Person, the miracles, and the meritorious mediation, of the Lord Jesus, there is scarcely any thing in the whole Scripture spoken of him, which is so *appropriate*, as not to have also a subordinate meaning that concerns his people; and therefore we need not hesitate to apply the same things, both to Christ and to Christians, in different respects.—Such animals only were allowed in sacrifice, as are most useful and valuable to man, which he is able to possess as property, and the increase of which he promotes: and not all of *them*; but those only which are most domestick, harmless, patient, cleanly, and whose flesh is most commonly used for food. Neither filthy swine, nor devouring lions, nor the warlike horse, nor the subtle fox, nor the voracious dog, nor any creature which subsists on animal food, was appointed for sacrifice; nor yet the timorous hare or deer, which flees from the intercourse of man: but

i xxii. 21. 27. Ia. lvi. 7. Rom. xii. 1. Phil. ix. 18. j. ix. 20. 26. 31. 35. v. 6. vi. 7. ix. 7. xvi. 24. Num. xv. 28. xxv. 13. 2 Chr. xxix. 23. 2 Dan. ix. 24. Rom. iii. 25. v. 11. k. 11. iii. 2. 8. 13. xvi. 15. 2 Chr. xxx. 22-24. Mic. vi. 6. 11. 15. 2 Chr. xxxv. 11. Heb. x. 11. m. 11. iii. 2. 8. 13. Ex. xxiv. 6-8. xxix. 16. Num. xvi. 17. 18. 19. 15. Ez. xxxvi. 25. Heb. xii. 24. 1 Pet. i. 2. n. vii. 8. Gen. iii. 21

the head of the burnt-offering: and it shall <sup>1</sup>be accepted for him to make atonement for him.

5 And he shall <sup>2</sup>kill the bullock before the Lord: and <sup>3</sup>the priests, Aaron's sons, shall bring the blood, and <sup>4</sup>sprinkle the blood round about upon the altar, that *is* <sup>5</sup>by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

6 And he shall <sup>6</sup>slay the burnt-offering, and cut it into his pieces.

7 And the sons of Aaron the priest shall put <sup>7</sup>fire upon the altar, and <sup>8</sup>lay the wood in order upon the fire.

8 And the priests, Aaron's sons, shall <sup>9</sup>lay the parts, the head, and the fat, in order upon the wood, that *is* on the fire which *is* upon the altar.

9 But his <sup>10</sup>inwards and his legs shall he wash in water: and the priest shall <sup>11</sup>burn all on the altar, *to be* a burnt-sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a <sup>12</sup>sweet savour unto the Lord.

But this significant action more especially implied a humble confession of sin, as deserving the wrath of God, and the penalty denounced against transgressing the law; with a desire that the *guilt*, (or exposedness to punishment and death,) might be transferred from the offerer to the innocent animal; and that the shedding of its blood, and the burning of its body at the altar might be accepted, instead of his bearing the deserved vengeance in his own person.—Accordingly, the Lord promised, that it should be “accepted for him to make atonement for him.”—It is surprising that any one should argue, in opposition to the express words of the text, that it was not an atoning sacrifice; merely because there were other atoning sacrifices, appointed for *particular occasions*: for this was a *general oblation*, when a man was humbly conscious of sin, in numerous instances of his daily conduct, in his spirit and temper, and in his best services; though he had not committed those special offences, for which the sin-offerings or trespass-offerings were required; or those against which death was denounced, and no sacrifice appointed.—The sacrifices, which from the beginning prefigured “the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world,” were generally burnt-offerings; and so were the morning and evening-sacrifices offered day by day continually. Indeed, the sacrifice of Christ was prefigured more aptly, and far more frequently, by this than by any other oblation. And though it never was “possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin,” as to the conscience; yet these sacrifices were so far accepted from the Israelites in general, that their peculiar advantages were continued to them, through the typical atonement, notwithstanding their numerous offences.

V. 5—9. It is a common opinion, that none but the priests and Levites were employed in killing the sacrifices, and preparing them for the altar; but it does not seem to be founded on Scripture. Indeed Moses, who acted as a priest in the consecration of Aaron and his sons, was directed to slay the sin-offering, the burnt-offering, and the ram of consecration; and no doubt he observed the direction. (Note, viii. 15.—Ex. xxix. 11. 16. 20.) After the seven days of consecration were expired, Aaron slew his *own* sin-offering and burnt-offering, and the sin-offering of the people whom he represented. (ix. 8. 15. 18.) And in the days of Hezekiah, the Levites slew the paschal-lambs, for such as *were not clean*. (2 Chr. xxx. 17.)—But these were particular cases: and in general the person, who brought the sacrifice, was required to slay it; which

more exactly typified Christ crucified *by* sinners, as well as *for* them. Indeed, these verses seem expressly to declare what the priests should do, and what the offerer. The offerer was directed to kill the sacrifice, and the priests to receive and sprinkle the blood. Then the offerer was to strip off the skin, and cut the animal in pieces; and the priests to prepare the fire, and lay the wood in order upon it, and the several parts of the sacrifice on the wood, in that manner which best subserved the intention of speedily consuming them to ashes. It seems also that the *offerer* was required to wash the legs and intestines; and then the priests laid them on the other parts that they might be burnt on the altar. It is however very probable, that when the Levites, and afterwards the Nethinims, were appointed to the service of the sanctuary, they assisted those who presented the sacrifices, especially such as were not expert at these employments.—A great part of the expositions of many learned men, on this part of Scripture, consists of the opinions held by the Jewish Rabbies on the subjects treated on. But I would once for all observe, that the Jewish writers knew nothing more about these ancient rites, with any certainty, than what they learnt from the very words of the law, to which we have equal access. Most of them, quoted as authorities on such questions, lived many centuries after sacrifices had ceased in consequence of the destruction of the temple: and the few who lived at a more early period, could only know, at most, the practice of the priests, at a time when the traditions of the elders had greatly corrupted their religion. Every degree of attention therefore to their opinions, further than as they throw light upon the words of the sacred writer, is sanctioning these traditions; and always adds something to the law, takes something from it, or alters something in it.—The sacrifices offered, during the consecration of Aaron and his sons, and of the sanctuary, seem to have been consumed by fire kindled in the common way; but afterwards, the fire which came down from heaven was preserved and tended by the priests, and the sacrifices were consumed by it.—The “sprinkling of the blood” denoted the application of the atonement, to render the religious services of the offerer acceptable to a holy God: and the particular mention of washing the inwards and legs, might signify the inward purity and the outward holy walk, which became the worshippers of God, and were found absolutely perfect in Jesus Christ. The expression, “of a sweet savour *to the Lord*,” must be supposed to refer in a subordinate sense to the devotion of the offerer; but in a far higher, to

u 2. Gen. iv. 4.  
viii. 20. 1a. liii.  
6, 7. John i. 29.  
Acts viii. 32

10 ¶ And if his offering be <sup>a</sup> of the flocks, *namely*, of the sheep, or of the goats, for a burnt-sacrifice; he shall bring it <sup>a</sup> a male without blemish.

x See on 3. iv. 23.  
xxii. 19. Mal i.  
14.

y See on 5  
z vi. 25. vii. 2

11 And <sup>y</sup> he shall kill it on the side of the altar <sup>z</sup> northward before the LORD: <sup>a</sup> and the priests, Aaron's sons, shall sprinkle his blood round about upon the altar.

a See on 7—9. ix.  
12—14.

12 And he shall cut it into his pieces, with his head and his fat: and the priest shall lay them in order on the wood that is on the fire which is upon the altar.

13 But he shall wash the inwards and the legs with water: and the priest shall bring it all, and burn it upon the altar: it is a burnt-sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

14 ¶ And if the burnt-sacrifice, for his offering to the LORD, <sup>b</sup> be of fowls; then he shall bring his offering of turtle-doves, or of young pigeons.

b v. 7. xii. 8. Luke  
ii. 24. 2 Cor  
viii. 12.

15 And the priest shall bring it unto the altar, and <sup>\*</sup> wring off his head, and burn it on the altar: and the blood thereof shall be wrung out at the side of the altar.

\* Or, *princh off the head with the nail.*

16 And he shall pluck away his crop with <sup>†</sup> his feathers, and cast it beside the altar, on the east part, <sup>c</sup> by the place of the ashes.

† Or, *the fowl thereof.*

17 And he shall cleave it, with the wings thereof, *but* <sup>d</sup> shall not divide it asunder: and the priest shall burn it upon the altar, upon the wood that is upon the fire: <sup>e</sup> it is a burnt-sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

d Gen. xv. 10.

e 10. 13. Rom. xii  
1. Heb. x. 6—  
12. xiii 15, 16

the sacrifice of Christ thus typified, and the glorious display of the divine perfections made in it. (*Notes, Gen. viii. 20—22. Eph. v. 1, 2.*)

V. 11. It is not said, that the other burnt-offerings should be slain on the north-side of the altar; but it is generally understood, that this was peculiar to the larger victims. The reason is not known.

V. 13. Though the sacrifice of a ram or he-goat was much less expensive than that of a young bull; yet it was equally accepted, when expressive of the offerer's repentance, faith, and devotedness to God; and when it accorded to his circumstances.

V. 14—17. No birds but turtle-doves or *young pigeons*, (the former, say some, being best when full grown, and the latter when young,) were allowed in sacrifice at the altar. Even the other tame fowls were passed by, either as feeding grossly, or as fierce in their nature: but the cleanly, gentle nature of the dove aptly typified the holy, harmless Saviour, and represented the character of his true disciples.—As the blood of this sacrifice also must be sprinkled or poured out by the priest, he was ordered to kill it, lest the blood should be wasted, being but little in all. The priest was also required to prepare it for the altar, in which great exactness was needful. It was the sacrifice of the poor, and as acceptable as more costly oblations, when brought in a right spirit: it was therefore proper the priests should attend particularly to it, though neither splendid in itself, nor attended with any perquisites to them; (vii. 8;) to teach them, that the souls of the poor were to be as carefully watched over, as those of the wealthy.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It might have been said of all these sacrifices, "To what purpose is this waste?" All these bulls, and rams, and goats, might have been "sold for very much, and given to the poor," and would have supported very many indigent families: why then burn all this flesh upon the altar? Yet were they appointed by God himself, and were "a sweet

"savour unto him." That can never be wasted which is spent in a manner acceptable to the Lord, and honourable to his name: and be our obedience ever so expensive, we can be no losers in the event; for he can supply our wants, and repay our losses, and also furnish us with a sufficiency to give to the poor, whom we have always with us. But, if an Israelite might not grudge the expense, labour, and inconvenience of his religion; how inexcusable are we, if we ungratefully refuse the easy, pleasant, and reasonable service, which is required of us under the Christian dispensation! Indeed, the Lord always prevents us with his goodness: and we can no more offer the sacrifice of a broken heart, or of praise and thanksgiving, than an Israelite could offer a bull or a goat, except as God hath first given unto us. Of his own we present unto him; and the more we do in his service, the greater are our obligations to him, both for the will, the ability, and the opportunity. (*Note, 1 Chr. xxix. 10—19.*) Though in many things he leaves us to determine the proportion, which shall be immediately spent in his service, whether of our time or of our substance; and though two doves, or two mites, may in some cases be more acceptable, than thousands of gold and silver in others: yet, where Providence hath put more into a man's power, such scanty oblations will not be accepted; because they are no proper expressions of a willing mind. "But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."—While we, in all these sacrifices, have our own sinfulness and Christ's sufferings brought to remembrance, we should call upon ourselves to renew our repentance; to exercise faith in the Saviour, and love to him; to reflect deeply upon the freeness and vastness of his love to us, and the immense price which our salvation cost him: that so we may deduce arguments and motives to increase our abhorrence of all sin, and determination of heart against it; and our devotedness in body and soul to his service, whatever he may call us to renounce, venture, do, or suffer for his sake. Nor let us forget, that though

## CHAP. II.

The law of the meat-offerings of flour, with oil and incense, raw or baked, 1—10. No leaven or honey to be used in them, 11. The first-fruits not to be burnt on the altar, 12. Salt to be used with every offering, 13. The meat-offering of first-fruits in the ear, 14—16.

**AND** when any will offer a <sup>a</sup> meat-offering unto the LORD, his offering shall be of <sup>b</sup> fine flour; and he shall <sup>c</sup> pour oil upon it, and put <sup>d</sup> frankincense thereon.

**2** And he shall bring it to Aaron's sons, the priests: and he shall take thereout his handful of the flour thereof, and of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof; and the priest shall burn <sup>e</sup> the memorial of it upon the altar, *to be* an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

**3** And <sup>f</sup> the remnant of the meat-offering shall be Aaron's and his sons':

a vi 14-18. 20-23. ix. 17. Num. xv. 2-21. 1a. lvi. 20. John vi. 35. b Ex. xxix. 2. Num. vii. 13. 19. Joel i. 9. ii. 14. c 4-8. 15, 16. vii. 10-12. 1 John ii. 20. 27. Jude 20. d 1st. i. 11. Luke i. 9, 10. Rev. viii. 3. e 9. v. 12. vi. 15. xxiv. 7. Ex. xxx. 16. Num. v. 18. Neh. xiii. 14. 22. Is. lxvi. 3. Acts x. 4. f vi. 16. 17. 26. vii. 9. x. 12. xxi. 22. Num. xiv. 9. 1 Sam. ii. 29.

*it is a thing* <sup>g</sup> most holy of the offerings of the LORD made by fire.

**4** ¶ And if thou bring an oblation of a <sup>h</sup> meat-offering baked in the oven, *it shall be* <sup>i</sup> unleavened cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, or unleavened <sup>k</sup> wafers anointed with oil.

**5** And if thy oblation *be* a meat-offering baked <sup>l</sup> in a pan, it shall be of <sup>m</sup> fine flour unleavened, mingled with oil.

**6** Thou shalt <sup>n</sup> part it in pieces, and pour oil thereon: *it is* a meat-offering.

**7** And if thy oblation *be* a meat-offering baked in the frying-pan, it shall be made <sup>o</sup> of fine flour with oil.

**8** And thou shalt bring the meat-offering that is made of these things, unto the LORD: and when it is presented unto the priest, he shall bring it unto the altar.

**9** And the priest shall take from the meat-offering a memorial thereof, and shall burn *it* upon the altar: *it is* <sup>p</sup> an

our bodies should be living sacrifices unto God, yet the body of sin must be destroyed; the flesh with its lusts, crucified; and the soul baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire, consuming all its dross, and kindling all holy affections there. Nay, possibly, we may not only be called to other suffering and self-denying services, but even to lay down our lives for him, who was made a Sacrifice for our sins. In the mean time, contemplating those animals, which were appointed as emblems of the Saviour's purity, patience, meekness, and usefulness; let us endeavour, and pray to be enabled, to transcribe every amiable and heavenly line in his perfect character, into our own temper and conversation; that we may be conformed to his image, and walk in his steps, as an evidence that we are washed in his blood, and stand accepted in his righteousness, "in whom the Father is well pleased."

## NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1—3. Meat-offerings were appointed along with other sacrifices; but these, here prescribed, were offered alone, as a voluntary oblation: yet the single circumstance, that a part of them was eaten by the priests, shews them to have been entirely of a different nature from the burnt-offerings. Some expositors say, that the Israelites, who could not afford any other sacrifice, might bring this: but a sufficient quantity of flour, oil, and frankincense, would not, except in very peculiar cases, be less expensive than a single pigeon.—The meat-offerings may typify Christ, as presented to God for us, and as being the Bread of life to our souls; but they rather seem to have been a thankful acknowledgment to God for providential blessings, and to have represented good works as acceptable to God, when performed in the proper manner. They are therefore mentioned after the burnt-offerings; for without

a believing reliance on the sacrifice of Christ, and devotedness of heart to God, other services could not be accepted.—They must consist of fine flour, one of the most useful of the productions of the earth; with oil poured upon it, which was used as butter is with us, and was therefore proper for an oblation which was food for the priests: it might also denote the necessity of the influences of the Holy Spirit, which are often represented by anointing with oil. Frankincense likewise was added, which might represent the intercession of Christ. All the frankincense and part of the oil and flour, as burnt upon the altar of burnt-offering, might remind the people, that their best services must be offered through the atonement of the Saviour, presented through him, and done for his sake; and that their good works would thus come up as a memorial before God, and also be serviceable to men. This was signified by the residue of the meat-offering being eaten by the priests, who alone might partake of "the most holy things."

V. 4—8. Some of these meat-offerings would be prepared before they were presented, in different ways according to the customs of those times: but oil must always be used, either as mixed with them, or poured on them; and a part must be burned on the altar, as an oblation to God, before the priests ate the remainder. It is supposed, that provision was made in the court of the tabernacle and temple, for preparing these meat-offerings; and perhaps this was the case when Israel was settled in Canaan, and such oblations were greatly multiplied; but the law seems rather to imply that the offerers first made them, and then brought them to the priests.

V. 9. The priest, and not the offerer, seems to have taken the portion from the meat-offerings, which he burnt on the altar; though the second verse leaves this rather doubtful.

offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

p See on 8.

10 And <sup>p</sup> that which is left of the meat-offering, *shall be* Aaron's and his sons': *it is* a thing most holy of the offerings of the LORD made by fire.

q vi. 17. Ex. xii. 19, 20. Matc. xvi. 6, 12. Mark viii. 15. Luke xii. 1. 1 Cor. v. 6-8. Gal. v. 9.

r Prov. xxiv. 13. xxv. 16, 27. Luke xxi. 34. Acts xiv. 22. 1 Pet. iv. 2.

s xxiii. 10, 11. 17. Ex. xxii. 29. xxiii. 19. Num. xv. 20. Deut. xxvi. 10. 2 Chr. xxxi. 5. 1 Cor. xv. 20. Rev. xiv. 4.

t Heb. ascend. 1 Esdr. vii. 22. Ex. xliii. 24. Matt. v. 18. Mark ix. 49. 50. Col. iv. 6.

11 ¶ No meat-offering which ye shall bring unto the LORD, shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn <sup>a</sup> no leaven, nor any <sup>t</sup> honey, in any offering of the LORD made by fire.

12 As for <sup>a</sup> the oblation of the first-fruits, ye shall offer them unto the LORD: but they shall not <sup>a</sup> be burnt on the altar for a sweet savour.

13 And every oblation of thy meat-offering shalt thou season <sup>t</sup> with salt;

neither shalt thou suffer <sup>a</sup> the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat-offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.

14 ¶ And if thou offer <sup>a</sup> a meat-offering of thy first-fruits unto the LORD, thou shalt offer, for the meat-offering of thy first-fruits, green ears of corn dried by the fire, *even* <sup>y</sup> corn <sup>v</sup> beaten out of full ears.

15 And thou shalt <sup>a</sup> put oil upon it, <sup>a</sup> and lay frankincense thereon: *it is* a meat-offering.

16 And the priest shall burn <sup>a</sup> the memorial of it, *part* of the beaten corn thereof, and *part* of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof: *it is* an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

<sup>a</sup> Num. xviii. 19  
<sup>2</sup> Chr. xiii. 6

x xxiii. 14-17. 20.  
Num. xxvii. 2.  
Deut. xxvi. 2.  
Prov. iii. 9, 10

<sup>v</sup> 2 Kings iv. 42.

<sup>a</sup> See on 1.

<sup>a</sup> See on 2. 9.—Ps cxli. 2

V. 11. Leavened bread, and probably honey, might be offered for the use of the priests; but no part of it must be burnt on the altar. (*Marg. Ref. q, r. Note, vii. 12-14.*)—Leaven is the known emblem of pride, malice, and hypocrisy, as honey may be of sensual indulgence: and these are opposite to the believer's character, and hindrances to his fruitfulness. Christ was perfect in humility, truth, and love; his suffering life and agonizing death were the opposite to worldly pleasure; and his people must follow him and be conformed to him.—It is thought that leaven and honey were much used by the heathen in their sacrifices: but we know scarcely any thing of their customs in those early ages; and afterwards they in some things imitated the Israelites, and in others adopted contrary observances.

V. 12. These first-fruits seem to be such as individuals brought, for a voluntary oblation out of all their increase; and not such as were offered by the congregation at the festivals: In this case, honey and leaven might form a part, as the priests used the whole for food, and no part was burned on the altar. (*Notes, xxiii. 15-21. Num. xv. 17-21.*)

V. 13. *Salt of the covenant, &c.*] Covenants were generally ratified at an amicable feast, in which salt was always used; hence it became an emblem of friendship. Many Scriptures represent reconciliation to God, and communion with him, as a feast to which the Lord invites us, and at which he ratifies his covenant with us. Salt is an emblem of incorruption: and while this use of it intimated the *perpetuity*, yea, *eternity*, of the covenant made with believers; it also represented the grace of the Holy Spirit, by which their services and worship are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, and their example and conversation useful and instructive to mankind; in counteracting the effects of human depravity, and communicating a savour of piety around them. (*Marg. Ref. t, u.*)

V. 14-16. These first-fruits also, seem to have been the voluntary oblation brought by individuals, of the finest

ears of corn out of the field, before the harvest was ripe, and prepared by drying or *parching* them at the fire, and then beating them out for use. As this was intended to be an early acknowledgment of the Lord's goodness in giving the increase of the earth; and as corn was used in this form for food among the Israelites, (1 *Sam. xxv. 18*;) it was presented as a meat-offering, and the rules before given were to be observed in respect of it.—Cain brought this kind of oblation; but Abel brought also the firstlings of his flock. (*Note, Gen. iv. 3-5.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

There is that excellency in Christ, and in his mediatorial work, which no types and shadows, however varied and multiplied, can adequately represent: and our need of him is so entire, and our reliance on him should be so constant, that we ought never to lose sight of it in any thing we do. Even our sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, our works of mercy, charity, and righteousness, yea, every good work, must spring from his grace, and from love to him; ascend, as it were, with his sacrifice from the altar of burnt-offering; and be presented through his intercession; that "whatsoever we do, in word and in deed, "we may do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving "thanks to God and the Father by him." Thus presented, our acknowledgments of common mercies, and our most ordinary actions of justice and benevolence to men, and especially of kindness to his servants and to the poor, will be "a sweet savour unto the LORD." (*Note, Col. iii. 16, 17.*) But let us take care, that we leaven not our works with pride and ostentation, hypocrisy or malice; or spoil them with indulging "fleshly lusts which war against the "soul:" and that they be seasoned with the salt of grace, and continued in with perseverance; that so they may be comfortable to us, honourable to God, and instrumental to the good of others. In all this we must look unto Jesus, and follow his example, devoting the first and best of every thing which we possess to the service of God through him.

## CHAP. III.

The law of the peace-offerings, of the herd, 1—5 : of the flock, 6—11 : of a goat, 12—16. A prohibition to eat the fat, or the blood, 17.

**AND** if his oblation be <sup>a</sup> a sacrifice of peace-offering, if he offer *it* of the herd, whether *it* be a male or female; he shall offer it <sup>b</sup> without blemish before the LORD.

**2** And he shall <sup>c</sup> lay his hand upon the head of his offering, and <sup>d</sup> kill it at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation : and Aaron's sons the priests shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about.

**3** And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace offering, an offering made by fire unto the LORD ; <sup>e</sup> the <sup>f</sup> fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards :

**4** And the two kidneys, and the fat

that is on them, which is by the flanks, and the <sup>g</sup> caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away.

**5** And <sup>h</sup> Aaron's sons shall burn it on the altar <sup>i</sup> upon the burnt-sacrifice, which is upon the wood that is on the fire : *it is* an offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

**6** ¶ And if his offering for a sacrifice of peace-offering unto the LORD, <sup>j</sup> be of the flock, <sup>k</sup> male or female ; he shall offer it without blemish.

**7** If he offer a lamb for his offering, then shall he <sup>l</sup> offer it before the LORD.

**8** And <sup>m</sup> he shall lay his hand upon the head of his offering, and kill it before the tabernacle of the congregation : and Aaron's sons shall sprinkle the blood thereof round about upon the altar.

**9** And he shall offer of the sacrifice of the peace-offering, an offering made

<sup>†</sup> Or, midriff over the liver, and over the kidneys

<sup>†</sup> i. 9. iv. 31. 25. vi. 12. ix. 9, 10. Ex. xxix. 13. 1 Sam. ii. 15, 16. 1 Kings viii. 64. 2 Chr. xxxv. 14. Ez. xlv. 7, 15. g vi. 12. 1 Pet. ii. 5

<sup>h</sup> 1. 1. 2. 10. 1s. 1s. 7. i Gal. iii. 28.

<sup>k</sup> 1 Eph. v. 2. Heb. ix. 14. 1 See on 2—5.

## NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. The original name for this oblation is (שְׁלֵמִים) *a sacrifice of peace, or peace*; for the word is plural.—*Peace*, in Scripture, is often used for all kinds of prosperity and comfort; and the language may imply, that, through the typical priesthood and atoning sacrifices, Israel would enjoy all blessings in the favour of God, dwelling among them upon a mercy-seat, while they adhered to his worship and service.—The burnt offerings were wholly consumed on the altar; the priests had a part of the meat-offering; but the peace-offering was divided between the altar, the priests, and the offerer, and formed a kind of feast, in which the Lord, and his priests and people, met together.—Either male or female of the herd or flock if without blemish, might be offered in these sacrifices, both being good for food; but pigeons or turtle-doves are not mentioned; for the division of such small creatures into the proper proportions would have been inconvenient.—The peace-offerings seem to have especially represented the application of the redemption of Christ to the heart and conscience; the communications of peace and comfort through him; and the sweet communion which his reconciled people hold with him, and with each other, in his ordinances: (Matt. xxvi. 29. Rev. iii. 20:) while “his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed” to their souls; and while they are enabled to exercise faith in his atonement, love and gratitude to him, and love to each other for his sake, with enlarged hearts rejoicing in each other's comfort, and communicating to one another's necessities. The peace-offerings might likewise intimate, that all the blessings which sinners enjoy, come through the sacrifice of Christ; and that the greatest sweetness even of temporal mercies arises from receiving them as the fruit of his atonement and the pledges of his love, and from sharing them with his people. They were voluntary

oblations, either in the performance of a vow, in acknowledgment of mercies received, in seeking some special blessing from God, or in expressing love to his worship, his priests, and people.

V. 2—5. When the offerer laid his hand on the head of the peace-offering, it may be supposed that he both confessed his sins, and devoted the animal to God, as a typical atonement, to suffer in his stead; and also rendered thanks for the mercies which he had received, and prayed for the blessings which he sought.—From the language here used, it seems evident, that the offerer slew the sacrifice, and brought the portion that was burnt on the altar, devoting it to God: and that the priests only sprinkled the blood, and burnt the fat on the altar, along with the daily burnt-offerings, or on the fire which had been prepared for them. (Note, vii. 29—34.)—This observance might denote that we should be *inward* and *heart*y in all our services, calling “on our souls, and all that is within us” to exercise repentance, faith, love, and gratitude; and giving up our hearts to the Lord. Or it may rather imply, that our inward lusts must be mortified, if we would have peace and communion with God; especially, that the insensibility and obduracy of the heart and conscience must be removed; for *fatness of heart* is a scriptural representation of this insensibility, as the fat of a living animal is supposed to be destitute of feeling.—This was to be laid on the burnt-offering: for no self-denial, mortification of the flesh, or devotedness to God, can find acceptance with God, except through the sacrifice of Christ, and by the supply of his Spirit, which, as fire, consumes our lusts and purifies our hearts.—When these appointments had been complied with, the priests had a portion of the peace-offering assigned them, and then the offerer and his friends religiously feasted upon the remainder.

V. 9. As the tail, or rump, of the sheep is large and

by fire unto the LORD: the fat thereof *and* the whole rump, it shall he take off hard by the back-bone: and the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards:

10 And the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away.

11 And the priest shall burn it upon the altar: *it is* the food of the offering made by fire unto the LORD.

12 ¶ And if his offering be a goat, then he shall offer it before the LORD.

13 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of it, and kill it before the tabernacle of the congregation: and the sons of Aaron shall sprinkle the blood thereof upon the altar round about.

14 And he shall offer thereof his offering, *even* an offering made by fire unto the LORD; the fat that covereth

the inwards, and all the fat that is upon the inwards,

15 And the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them; which is by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away.

16 And the priest shall burn them upon the altar: *it is* the food of the offering made by fire, for a sweet savour. All the fat is the LORD's.

17 *It shall be* a perpetual statute for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood.

#### CHAP. IV.

The law of the sin-offering for a priest, 1—12: for the congregation, 13—21: for a ruler, 22—26: for a private person, 27—35.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel,

fat in those countries, it was added to the inward fat to be burnt upon the altar.

V. 11. *The food, &c.*] This part of the offering fed the sacred fire, which was emblematical of the divine justice, and typified the satisfaction made for sin by the death of Christ. Communion with God, as reconciled to believers through this atonement, is in this ceremonial constantly represented as a feast in which God meets with his worshippers; and therefore that portion of the sacrifice, which was consumed on the altar, is often called the *bread*, or *food*, of God; as the reader may see by turning to the Scriptures referred to in the margin.—What with the daily sacrifices, the occasional burnt-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings and other sacrifices, the fire upon the altar would generally be supplied (16).

V. 17. *That ye eat neither fat nor blood.*] That is, neither the blood which is contained in the larger veins and arteries, nor the suet or the fat which is within the animal: for the blood which assumes the form of gravy, and the fat which is intermixed with the other flesh, might be eaten. This law not only related to the sacrifices, but to all the cattle which the Israelites slaughtered for food; which might teach them self-denial. But especially it led them to observe the distinction between common and sacred things; it preserved them uninfected with the superstitions of idolaters, and separate from their company; and it tended to impress them more deeply with the idea of some most important mystery, inculcated in shedding the blood and burning the fat of the solemn sacrifices. *Note*, vii. 23—27.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Penitent confessions, and a believing dependence on Christ, must accompany all our thanksgivings, praises, and prayers; and even all our undertakings or enjoyments, if we would prosper and be comfortable.—He, as the Prince

of Peace, having “made peace with the blood of his cross,” now preaches it to sinners who are afar off: through him the believer is reconciled to God; and having his peace in his conscience and heart, he is disposed to follow peace with all men. Thus *peace* is his legacy, his privilege, and his employment; and to be peaceable, and a peace-maker, are his distinguished characteristic. ‘Feeding in his heart upon Christ by faith with thanksgiving,’ he enjoys sweet communion with God and his saints; becomes lively and zealous in religious exercises; learns to treat divine things, and especially the blood of atonement, with sacred reverence; and grows gradually more and more indifferent about sensual indulgences, while at the same time he has double relish for common mercies. He becomes also liberal and zealous, and increases his social enjoyments, by sharing them with others around him; and by avoiding selfishness, pride, and contention, which are the bane of real happiness.—Thus amiable, useful, and happy are consistent Christians: may the Lord multiply grace, mercy, and peace to all who have attained to, or are aspiring after such privileges, and who would bear such a character; and may he fill all the nations of the earth with these sons of peace and love. Amen.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 2. *If a soul sin.*] That is, *if any person sin*. The soul is the agent, the body only the instrument, in committing sin: it must however be allowed, that this exact precision is not observed in the language of the Scriptures.—The “sin-offering” seems to have been appointed for such violations of express prohibitions, when ignorantly and heedlessly fallen into, (especially in those things which more immediately related to the worship of God,) as, if committed *presumptuously*, were punishable with death.

a v. 15. 17. Num. xv. 22—29. Deut. xxx. 4. 1 Sam. xiv. 27. Ps. xix. 12. 1 Tim. i. 18. Heb. v. 2. ix. 7. 27. Gen. xx. 9. Jam. iii. 10.

saying, If a soul shall sin \*through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD, *concerning things* <sup>b</sup> which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them :

c viii. 12. xxi. 10. —12. Ex. xxix. 7. 21.

d 14. ix. 2. xvi. 6. 11. Er. xliii. 13.

e v. 6. Ex. xxix. 14. xxx. 10. Num. viii. 8. Ezra viii. 35. Rom. viii. 3. 2 Cor. v. 21. Heb. v. 3. vii. 27. 28.

f i. 3. Ex. xxix. 10. 11.

g See on i. 4. xvi. 21.—is. liii. 6. Dan. ix. 26. 1 Pet. iii. 18.

3 If <sup>e</sup> the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people ; then let him bring for his sin which he hath sinned, <sup>d</sup> a young bullock without blemish, unto the LORD, <sup>e</sup> for a sin-offering.

4 And he shall <sup>f</sup> bring the bullock unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD ; and shall <sup>g</sup> lay his hand upon the bullock's head, and kill the bullock before the LORD.

5 And the priest that is anointed shall <sup>b</sup> take of the bullock's blood, and bring it to the tabernacle of the congregation.

i 17. 25. 30. 34. viii. 15. ix. 9. xvi. 14. 19. Num. xix. 4.

k xiv. 16. 27. xxv. 8. xxvi. 18. 24. 28. Josh. vi. 4. 8.

6 And the priest shall <sup>i</sup> dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle of the blood <sup>k</sup> seven times before the LORD, before the veil of the sanctuary.

7 And the priest shall put *some* of the blood upon <sup>j</sup> the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD, which *is* in the tabernacle of the congregation ; and shall pour <sup>m</sup> all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of

the altar of the burnt-offering, which *is* at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

8 And he shall take off from it <sup>n</sup> all the fat of the bullock for the sin-offering ; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that *is* upon the inwards.

9 And the two kidneys and the fat that *is* upon them, which *is* by the flanks, and the caul above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away,

10 As it was taken off from the bullock of the sacrifice of peace-offerings : and the priest shall burn them upon the altar of the burnt-offering.

11 And <sup>o</sup> the skin of the bullock, and all his flesh, with his head and with his legs, and his inwards and his dung,

12 Even the whole bullock shall he carry forth <sup>p</sup> without the camp, unto a clean place where <sup>q</sup> the ashes are poured out, and burn him on the wood with fire : <sup>r</sup> where the ashes are poured out, shall he be burnt.

13 ¶ And if the whole congregation of Israel sin <sup>s</sup> through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done *some-*

it to the horns of the golden altar ; evinced that this offence, though committed ignorantly, had polluted all his services : nor could any thing, which he did, be profitable either to himself or the people, except it were expiated by the blood of the sin-offering. The seven-fold sprinkling, which was only used in extraordinary cases, shewed the difficulty of atoning for his heinous crime.

V. 11. The skin and the flesh of the sin-offerings in general were the perquisite of the priests : (vii. 7, 8. x. 16, 17 :) but when the high priest offered the sin-offering for himself, or for the congregation, the whole was burnt ; as a more effectual expression of the greatness of the offence, and the abhorrence in which he held it. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12. Thus the guilt was typically conveyed away from the whole congregation, who were otherwise liable to suffer for it.—Christ, who was made *Sin*, or a *Sin-offering*, for us, suffered without the gate of Jerusalem, as bearing away the sin of his people ; that when it is sought for, it may no where be found. (*Note, Heb. xiii. 9—14.*) This was also expressive of the nature of true repentance, which expels sin with abhorrence, drives it to a distance out of the camp, and refuses to have any thing more to do with it. [*Place where the ashes are poured out.*] See *Note, vi. 8—13.*

V. 13—21. The sin of the whole congregation required

V. 3. "The priest that is anointed," is generally supposed to mean the high priest, who was most solemnly anointed : and, as he was the typical mediator between God and the people, and their appointed representative ; the whole nation was more immediately concerned in his transgression, than in that of the other priests ; who, (if not here included,) were under the same law in this respect as the common Israelites. If the high priest were so ignorant of the divine law, as to violate some express precept unwittingly ; or so regardless of it, as to do this heedlessly ; he must be very criminally negligent, and would be likely to mislead the people also : his crime therefore was peculiarly heinous.—The same original word (הִשָּׁאָה or הִשָּׁאָה) is rendered both *sin*, and *sin-offering* ; (*Dan. ix. 24.* Heb.) and this remark may throw light on some passages in the New Testament. (*Rom. viii. 3. 2 Cor. v. 21.*)

V. 4—7. The high priest himself, if he were exclusively meant in this law, was required to kill the sin-offering, and to perform the several ceremonies here instituted. This might tend to awaken his conscience the more to a sense of his guilt. Laying his hand on the head of the innocent animal, as confessing his sin, and transferring to it his guilt, or desert of death ; then shedding its blood, and witnessing its dying agonies ; and afterwards sprinkling the atoning blood seven times before the veil, and applying

*what against* any of the commandments of the LORD, *concerning things* which should not be done, and <sup>r</sup>are guilty:

r v. 3, 17 v. 4.  
Ezra x. 19 Hos.  
v. 15 Marg.  
1 Cor. xi 27.

14 When the sin which they have sinned against it is known, then the congregation shall offer a <sup>a</sup>young bullock for the sin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation.

a See on 3

15 And <sup>t</sup>the elders of the congregation shall <sup>u</sup>lay their hands upon the head of the bullock before the LORD: and the bullock shall be killed before the LORD.

t Ex xxiv. 1, 9.  
Num. xi. 16, 25  
Deut. xxi. 3-9.  
u See on 4 i. 4-  
xvi. 21.

16 And <sup>x</sup>the priest that is anointed shall bring of the bullock's blood to the tabernacle of the congregation.

x See on 5-12.—  
Heb ix. 12-14.

17 And the priest shall dip his finger in *some* of the blood, and sprinkle it seven times before the LORD, *even* before the veil.

18 And he shall put *some* of the blood upon the horns of the altar, which *is* before the LORD, that *is* in the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall pour out all the blood at the bottom of the altar of the burnt-offering, which *is at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

19 And he shall take all his fat from him, and burn *it* upon the altar.

20 And he shall do with the bullock as he did with the bullock for a sin-offering, so shall he do with this: and

the priest shall make an <sup>y</sup>atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them.

21 And he shall carry forth the bullock without the camp, and burn him as he burned the first bullock: it is <sup>a</sup>a sin-offering for the congregation.

22 ¶ When a <sup>a</sup>ruler hath sinned, and <sup>b</sup>done *somewhat* through ignorance *against* any of the commandments of the LORD his God, *concerning things* which should not be done, and *is* guilty;

23 Or <sup>c</sup>if his sin, wherein he hath sinned, come to his knowledge; he shall bring his offering, <sup>d</sup>a kid of the goats, a male without blemish.

24 And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the goat, and kill it <sup>e</sup>in the place where they kill the burnt-offering before the LORD: *'it is a sin-offering.*

25 And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin-offering with his finger, and <sup>f</sup>put *it* upon the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, and shall pour out his blood at the bottom of the altar of burnt-offering.

26 And he shall burn all his fat upon the altar, as <sup>h</sup>the fat of the sacrifice of peace-offerings: and the priest shall make <sup>i</sup>an atonement for him as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him.

27 ¶ And if <sup>k</sup>any one of the <sup>l</sup>common <sup>m</sup>people sin through ignorance,

y i. 4, v. 6, vi. 7  
xii. 8, xiv. 18  
Ex. xxxii. 30  
Num. xv. 25  
Dan. ix. 24, Rom.  
v. 11, Gal. iii.  
13, Heb. i. 3, ii.  
17, ix. 14, x. 10  
—12, 1 John i.  
7, ii. 2.

z xvi. 15, 21, 2Chr  
xxix. 21-24.  
Ezra viii. 35  
Matt. xx. 28  
2 Cor. v. 21  
1 Tim. ii. 5, 6  
a Ex. xviii. 21  
Num. xvi. 2  
2 Sam. xxi 1-  
3, xxiv 10-17.  
b See on 2. 13

c 14. 2 Kings xxii  
10-13.

d ix. 3, xxii. 19  
Num. vii. 16, 22  
28, 34, xv. 24  
xxviii. 15, 30  
xxix. 5, 11, 16.  
19, Rom. viii. 3.  
e i. 11, vi 25 vii  
2.

f See on 3

g 7, 18, 30, 34, viii  
10, 15, ix. 9, xvi  
18, Heb. ix. 22

h 8-10, 35.—See  
on iii. 5.—vi. 20  
—20.

i See on 20, Num  
xv. 28.

\* Heb. any soul. 2  
Num. xv. 27.

† Heb. people of  
the land.

k See on 2. 13.—  
Ex. xii. 49, Num.  
v. 6, xv. 16, 29

the same expiation, as that of the high priest. By a *criminal oversight*, or misconstruction of the law, it might happen, that some prohibition of the ceremonial institutions should be generally violated, and thus become the sin of the nation at large; even when the worship at the sanctuary was regularly maintained, and idolatry carefully shunned: and in this case, when the error was discovered, the national sin-offering was appointed.—The elders (who are distinguished from the congregation) were directed to lay their hands on this sacrifice, as confessing their sin and the sin of the people, and typically laying the guilt upon the animal; not only as the representatives of the nation, but also as the principals in the crime, who had misled the people. It is not said, who should slay the sacrifice; but probably this was done by one of the elders, or perhaps of the priests, as the part of the high priest is separately mentioned. The other ceremonies exactly accord with those of the high priest's sin-offering.

V. 22-26. The word (נָשִׂא) rendered "ruler," frequently denotes the *head of a tribe*; but the Jews understand it to mean the president of the sanhedrim, or national

council. When the nation had judges, or kings, or any ruler distinct from the high priest; he, as well as those next under him in authority over the several tribes, would be concerned in this law. Yet the sin offering to be offered for him, when he discovered his offence, was not only of less value than that appointed for the high priest or congregation, but it was sacrificed with very different rites: for it was not expected, that the civil magistrates should understand the ordinances of religion so well as the high priests; nor was he so absolutely the representative of the nation before God, as this typical mediator.—As the ruler's sacrifice was a sin-offering of a distinct nature from those before mentioned, it was slain in the same place where the burnt-offerings were; whereas the other sacrifices were killed in any part of the court. Any priest, as far as it appears from the text, might officiate; the blood was not carried into the sanctuary, nor was the body burnt without the camp, but eaten by the priests.

V. 27-35. The sin-offering for one of the people was of something less value than that of the ruler; but it was presented with exactly the same ceremonies. The trans-

while he doeth *somewhat against* any of the commandments of the LORD, *concerning things* which ought not to be done, and be guilty;

28 Or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, <sup>1</sup>a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned.

123 Gal iii 28.

m See on 4. 15. 24.  
—Heb x. 4—14

29 And he shall <sup>m</sup>lay his hand upon the head of the sin-offering, and slay the sin-offering in the place of the burnt-offering.

30 And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar.

n iii 14

o l. 9. iii. 5. Ezr.  
xxix. 18. Ezra  
vi. 10. Job xlii.  
8. Ps. xl. 6, 7.  
ii. 16, 17. Luke  
50, 51. 1a. xlii.  
21. iii. 10. Matt.  
iii. 17. Eph. v. 2.  
1 Pet. ii. 4, 5.

31 And he shall take away <sup>a</sup>all the fat thereof, as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace-offerings; and the priest shall burn *it* upon the altar, for <sup>o</sup>a sweet savour unto the LORD: and the priest shall make an

atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.

32 And if he bring <sup>a</sup>a lamb for a sin-offering, he shall bring it a female <sup>p</sup>without blemish. <sup>p</sup>John i. 29. 1 Pet. i. 19, 20.

33 And <sup>a</sup>he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin-offering, and slay it for a sin-offering, in the place where they kill the burnt-offering. <sup>e</sup>Eph. v. 27. Heb ix. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 22. iii. 18. <sup>r</sup>See on 4.—29—31.

34 And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin-offering with his finger, and put *it* upon <sup>a</sup>the horns of the altar of burnt-offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar. <sup>a</sup>30 John xvii. 19.

35 And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat of the lamb is taken away from the sacrifice of the peace-offerings: and the priest shall burn them upon the altar, <sup>t</sup>according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: and the priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him. <sup>t</sup>See on iii. 5.

gression of the high priest and that of the whole congregation brought a kind of typical pollution on the interior part of the sanctuary, as endangering the very essence of religion: the blood of the sin-offering was therefore applied to the altar of incense; for without expiation the typical intercession could no longer be accepted. But the sin of the ruler, or of the private Israelite, did not interrupt this important observance; the blood of the sin-offering therefore was only applied to the altar of burnt-offering, that their sacrifices might there be presented with acceptance.—We may suppose, that some place was made at the bottom of the altar, to receive and carry away the blood of the victims: and that various methods were used to preserve the court sweet and clean, while so many animals were continually slaughtered in it.—It is observable that the words, “a sweet savour to the LORD,” are added to none of these sin-offerings, but that of the private Israelite; which might imply an encouragement to offenders to present their offerings, when conscious of having sinned, though their sin was not known by others; for, though less costly than those appointed for other orders, they would be equally acceptable to God.—In all the cases however it is implied, that the atonement would be accepted and the offence pardoned.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is evident that God hath never had any infallible vicegerent in his church on earth: for even the high priest appointed by himself, with Urim and Thummim, who had access to his oracle in the holy place to enquire of him, and the whole church of God under that dispensation, were supposed liable to fall into *sins of ignorance*; and to

sanction by their authority, example, and general usage, such practices as were directly contrary to some of the commandments of God. All pretensions therefore to infallibility, whether in an individual, or in a multitude, are presumptuous usurpations, claims of arrogance, and sure marks of Antichrist.—We are indeed all liable to err, and ignorance is an alleviation of guilt; yet it is not a sufficient excuse: with the Bible in our hands, it is generally the effect of pride, sloth, and inattention; and would be avoided, were we duly anxious to know the truth and the will of God; and our consequent transgressions arise from want of circumspection. We have need therefore to use frequent self-examination, joined with serious perusal of the Scriptures, and earnest prayers for the convincing influences of the Spirit of God, that we may detect our sins of ignorance, in order that we may repent of them, and so obtain forgiveness through the blood of Jesus Christ.—But let us beware of presumptuous sins: for though they also may be forgiven through his all-sufficient sacrifice; yet when they gain the dominion, they often provoke God to leave the offender to final impenitence and unbelief.—They who sustain publick characters much more dishonour God and injure others by their sins, than more obscure individuals: they have therefore double need of circumspection, and earnest prayer for the divine teaching and assistance; and they have also a peculiar right to expect a place in the prayers of others, who are all interested in their conduct. This is especially the case of ministers of the gospel, in whom ignorance of God's commandments is peculiarly shameful; to whose sacred character every sin is a direct contradiction; and whose evil examples will operate as a fatal and swift-spreading infection.—In all

## CHAP. V.

The law of the trespass-offering, in some special cases, 1—13: in respect of holy things, 14—19.

**AND** if <sup>a</sup>a soul sin, and <sup>b</sup>hear the voice of swearing, and <sup>c</sup>is a witness, whether he hath seen or known *of it*; if he do not utter *it*, then he shall <sup>d</sup>bear his iniquity.

**2** Or if a soul <sup>e</sup>touch any unclean thing, whether *it be* a carcase of an unclean beast, or a carcase of unclean cattle, or the carcase of unclean creeping things, and *if it be* <sup>f</sup>hidden from him; he also shall be unclean, <sup>g</sup>and guilty.

**3** Or if he touch <sup>h</sup>the uncleanness of a man, whatsoever uncleanness *it be* that a man shall be defiled withal, and

*it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty.*

**4** Or if a soul swear, pronouncing with *his lips* <sup>i</sup>to do evil, or to do good, whatsoever *it be* that a man shall pronounce with an oath, and *it be hid from him; when he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty in one of these.*

**5** And it shall be when he shall be guilty in one of these *things*, that he shall <sup>j</sup>confess that he hath sinned in that *thing*.

**6** And he shall bring his <sup>k</sup>trespass-offering unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned, <sup>l</sup>a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin-offering: and <sup>m</sup>the priests

h xxvii. 2. &c.  
Josh. ii. 14. ix.  
16. Judg. xi. 31.  
xxi. 7. 18. 1 Sam.  
i. 11. xiv. 24—28  
xxiv. 21. 22. xxv.  
22. 2 Sam. xxi.  
7. 2 Kings vi. 31  
Ps. cxxii. 2—5  
Ec. v. 2—6. Ez.  
xvii. 18. 19  
Matt. xiv. 7. 9.  
Acts xiii. 12.

i xvi. 21. xxvi. 40  
Num. v. 7. Ezra  
x. 11. 12. Job  
xxiii. 27. Prov  
xxxiii. 18. Jer  
iii. 13. 1 John i  
8—10.  
k iv. 28. 32. vi. 6  
vii. 1—7. xiv. 12.  
13. xix. 21. 22.  
Num. vi. 12. Ez.  
xi. 39. xlii. 13  
xlv. 29. xlv. 20  
l iv. 28. 32.  
m See on iv. 20.

cases public scandals require public confession, however contrary to the pride of our hearts.—Nations, in their political capacity, should, by their rulers, prevent, or punish and purge, our national sins, if they would escape national calamities.—None are so highly advanced in rank, or so sacred by their office, as to be excused from exercising repentance and humiliation before God, or as to have no occasion for the atonement of Christ: and none are so low and inconsiderable, as either to be exempted from the same duties, or excluded from the same advantages. Let us then learn in this way to put away the guilt, the love, and the practice of sin. And let us adopt the language of the Psalmist, “Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins: let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my Strength, and my Redeemer.” Ps. xix. 12—14.

## NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1. If a man were adjured, or required upon oath to bear testimony, in a court of justice, and did not declare what he knew, though he did not bear positive false witness, he must consider himself as guilty of a great sin; and exposed to punishment from God, however he might escape detection from men.

V. 2, 3. When a man had in any respect contracted ceremonial uncleanness, and had neglected the appointed purification; or had inadvertently attended upon sacred things while thus unclean; he, by his carelessness, contracted guilt before God.

V. 4. This relates to rash oaths and vows, which a man was afterwards unable to perform, or which it would have been sinful in him to adhere to. Of these some instances are referred to in the margin.—The expression, “He shall be guilty in one of these,” is supposed by some to mean; that he who had rashly sworn to do an unlawful thing, must be guilty either of breaking his oath, or of

adding sin to sin by keeping it, and would either way need a trespass-offering.

V. 5. *Confess.*] This implies a voluntary acknowledgment of the offence, from conviction of conscience, previous to a discovery of it by man. Perhaps, some punishment would have been awarded, if the offender had been detected, before he had made his confession. The typical sacrifices could only exempt the offerer from the temporal effects of his sin, and not purge the conscience from guilt; and the benefit of the efficacious sacrifice of the great Antitype, belongs only to those who humbly confess their sins, and seek an interest in it by faith. As this referred equally to the three cases before stated, and was preparatory to a *trespass-offering* for each; it is plain that all the sacrifices appointed in this chapter were *trespass-offerings*: yet many expositors are of another opinion.

V. 6. The difference between the sin-offering for the high priest, or for the whole congregation, and that for the ruler, or for a common Israelite, was briefly noted in the former chapter: and the distinction between the latter *sin-offering* and the *trespass-offering*, should here be clearly and precisely stated. Few things have more perplexed commentators; and the discordant, and even opposite sentiments of the most learned and laborious expositors, yield little satisfaction, at least to the Author's mind.—It is evident on the one hand that the two words, translated *sin-offering*, and *trespass-offering*, are often used for each other, as the attentive reader even of the translation may observe: yet, on the other hand, the marginal references shew, that these are frequently mentioned as distinct kinds of sacrifice; (*Marg. Ref.* k;) and indeed the blood of the sin-offering was put on the horns of the altar, while that of the trespass-offering was sprinkled about the altar. (9. iv. 25. 30.) The word (פֶּשַׁע) rendered “trespass-offering” signifies also *trespass*, as that rendered “sin-offering” signifies also *sin*; which is a strong proof that the guilt, or exposedness to punishment, was typically translated from the offender to the innocent animal which was to be sacrificed. The root whence it is derived signifies *to be guilty*, with reference either to *actual criminality*, or to the *con-*

shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin.

<sup>a</sup> 11. xii. 8. xiv. 21. 2 Cor. vii. 12. Jam. ii. 8, 6. <sup>b</sup> Heb. his hand cannot reach to the sufficiency of a lamb. <sup>c</sup> i. 14. 15. Matt. iii. 16. x. 16. Luke ii. 24. <sup>d</sup> 8. 9. ix. 8. xiv. 22. 31. xvi. 14. 15. 30. xvi. 5. Heb. x. 6—10.

7 ¶ And <sup>a</sup> if <sup>a</sup> he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass which he hath committed, <sup>b</sup> two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, unto the LORD; <sup>c</sup> one for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering.

<sup>d</sup> i. 15. 8 And he shall bring them unto the priest, who shall offer *that which is* for the sin-offering first, and <sup>e</sup> wring off his head from his neck, but shall not divide *it* asunder.

<sup>f</sup> See on i. 5. iv. 25. 30. 34. vii. 2. <sup>g</sup> iv. 7. 18. 25. 9 And he shall <sup>h</sup> sprinkle of the blood of the sin-offering upon the side of the altar; and the <sup>i</sup> rest of the blood shall be wrung out at the bottom of the altar: *it is a sin-offering.*

10 And he shall offer the second for a burnt-offering, according to the

<sup>Or, ordinance See on i. 14—17.</sup> manner: and the priest <sup>†</sup> shall make <sup>†</sup> an atonement for him for his sin <sup>†</sup> which he hath sinned, and it shall be forgiven him.

<sup>n</sup> See on 7. 11 ¶ But <sup>a</sup> if he be not able to bring two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons; then he that sinned shall bring for his offering <sup>b</sup> the tenth part of <sup>c</sup> an ephah of <sup>d</sup> fine flour for a sin-offering; he shall put <sup>e</sup> no oil upon it, neither shall he put <sup>f</sup> any frankincense thereon: <sup>g</sup> for it *is a sin-offering.*

12 Then shall he bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take his handful of it, *even* <sup>b</sup> a memorial thereof, and burn *it* on the altar, <sup>c</sup> according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: *it is a sin-offering.*

13 And <sup>d</sup> the priest shall make an atonement for him, as touching his sin that he hath sinned in one of these,

consciousness of that criminality; and the same word is used when the prophet says, "Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin," or a trespass-offering. Is. liii. 10. But this does not shew the nature of the trespass-offering, or how it differed from the sin-offering.—In general, neither of them were voluntary oblations, as the peace-offerings, and many of the burnt-offerings were: but some of the sin-offerings were appointed at stated seasons, and others were required in particular cases; while all the trespass-offerings were occasional. The sin-offering seems to have been the expiation of offences committed in matters of religion, from a mistake or inadvertency respecting the law. But the trespass-offerings were required for the casual deviations from the ritual law, when known, through inattention or surprise; or for crimes committed against the moral precepts, which implied injustice to men. In short, all the cases, in which trespass-offerings were appointed, may be referred to the following heads: First, Transgressions of the ritual law, by oversight or surprise. When a man discovered his offence in this case, he was required to bring a trespass-offering, as guilty and needing an atonement and forgiveness from God. (2, 3.) The trespass-offering of the leper seems to have been of this nature; for amidst the various and exact rules laid down for his conduct, it could hardly be supposed that he had never once deviated from any of them, at least by oversight; (xiv. 12;) and that required in a particular case of the Nazarite, was evidently of this kind. (Num. vi. 9—12.) Secondly, Such as were appointed when a man had violated the moral law, in some particular which was injurious to his neighbour; even if he had sinned wilfully and knowingly, provided some circumstances in the case exempted him from punishment by the magistrate. (Notes, vi. 2—7. xix. 20—22.) Thirdly, Such as were required, where an inadvertent infringement of a moral precept, of the first table, might also prove injurious to man. (Note, 4.) Lastly, Such as were appointed for trespasses inadvertently

committed in holy things, which violated both the ritual and moral law, and were a robbery of God and an injustice to the priests. (15—19. Mal. iii. 8, 9.)—The burnt-offerings were typical atonements for sin in general, especially against the moral law; but these were superadded on particular occasions.

V. 7—10. The preceding sacrifice was the same as had been appointed for the sin-offering of the common people; and it was offered with the same observances, except that the blood was not put on the horns of the altar. (iv. 25. 34.) But, as deviations from some or other of the numerous and particular ritual laws would frequently be committed, even where considerable pains had been taken to understand and observe them; it was proper that a less expensive sacrifice should be appointed for the poor, who otherwise might be discouraged from owning their offences, when conscious of them: and the gracious and condescending Lord was pleased to accept two turtle-doves, or young pigeons, from him who could not afford a lamb or a kid. One of these was offered as a sin-offering, and as such was eaten by the priests, (which appointment had a typical meaning, as it will hereafter appear; (Note, x. 16—18;) and the other was consumed on the altar, as a burnt-offering; for otherwise no part of the oblation would have been presented immediately to God. Thus the two distinct sacrifices made one trespass-offering; and therefore one dove could not be accepted, as in the case of the voluntary burnt-offerings. (i. 14—17.)

V. 11—15. In general, it might have been supposed that two young pigeons, (the smallest animals allowed in sacrifice,) would have been procured, as readily as the oblation here substituted: but circumstances might render it impracticable, at some seasons of the year, for a poor man to procure them; and in this case of necessity, an offering of fine flour would be accepted, when presented with voluntary confession of sin. The tenth part of an ephah was about five pints.—Part of this oblation was

and it shall be forgiven him; and *the remnant* \* shall be the priest's, as a meat-offering.

14 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

15 If 'a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, ' in the holy things of the LORD; then he shall bring for his trespass, unto the LORD, <sup>b</sup> a ram without blemish out of the flocks, with <sup>c</sup>thy estimation by shekels of silver, after <sup>k</sup>the shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass-offering.

16 And he shall <sup>l</sup>make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add <sup>m</sup>the fifth part thereto, and give it unto the priest: <sup>n</sup>and the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the

trespass-offering. and it shall be forgiven him.

17 And if ° a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD; ° though he wist *it* not, yet is he guilty, ° and shall bear his iniquity.

18 And he ° shall bring a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, ° for a trespass-offering unto the priest; and ° the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his ignorance wherein he erred, and wist *it* not; and it shall be forgiven him.

19 It is a trespass-offering: he hath certainly ° trespassed against the LORD.

e ii. 3. 10. vii. 6.  
1 Sam. ii. 28.  
Hos. iv. 8. 1 Cor.  
ix. 13.

f 1, 2. iv. 2.

g 16. vii. 1. 6. x.  
17, 18. xxii. 1—  
16. xxiv. 5—9.  
xxvii. 9—33.  
Num. xviii. 9—  
32. Deut. xii. 5  
—12. 26. xv. 19,  
20. xxvi. 1—15.  
h 18. vi. 6. Ezra x.  
19.  
i xxvii. 2—8. 12,  
13 17, 18. 23—  
27.  
k Ex. xxx. 13.

l xxii. 14. Ex.  
xxii. 1. 3, 4. Ps.  
lxxxiv. 4. Luke xix.  
8. Acts xxvi. 20.  
m vi. 4, 5. Num.  
v. 7.

n 6, 13. Heb. ix.  
13, 14. 1 John ii.  
1, 2.

p 15 Ps. xix. 12  
Luke xii. 48  
Rom. xiv. 23.  
q See on c. 1.

r See on 15, 16

s vi. 6. 1 Tim. i.  
5, 6.  
t i. 4. iv. 20. vi. 7.

u Ezra x. 2. Ps.  
li. 4. Mal iii. 8  
2 Cor. v. 19—21

burnt on the altar, “upon the offerings made by fire unto the LORD,” (so the words may more properly be rendered,) as accepted through those oblations; and the rest was eaten by the priests.—No oil or frankincense, which were presented with the *voluntary meat-offerings*, were brought with this oblation, as it especially expressed the sorrow of the offender, and the sufferings of Christ for sin.

V. 15, 16. When any one had failed of paying the full of his tithes, first-fruits, or other oblations, and had unwittingly kept back any part of the portion which the LORD demanded, or had eaten of the holy things of which none but the priests should eat; he was required, not only to make restitution in standard-money, adding a fifth part to it; but also to offer a ram for a trespass-offering, as soon as he discovered his defraud.—The priest was to estimate the value of that, in which the offerer had trespassed: and his estimation must be taken by the offender.

V. 17—19. This case is supposed to differ from the preceding, merely in that the person concerned was not entirely certain, whether he had, or had not, committed the trespass. Upon recollection he was led to suspect, that he had eaten, or otherwise used, some portion of that which was allotted to the priests, and which God had forbidden others to partake of; but yet he could not be certain, whether this had actually been the case, or not. This construction is gathered from the variety of terms used about it—“his ignorance wherein he erred, and wist (or *knew*) *it* not.” It is therefore called the *doubtful offering*. Yet the man must consider himself as guilty, and burdened with the suspected iniquity; till he had brought his trespass-offering, and made restitution, according to the estimation of the priest, though without adding the fifth part. In this doubtful case, let the offender take the safest course, and bring his trespass-offering. This would serve to render the people more circumspect in such things.—As the offences in these latter instances were more complicated, than in those in the former part of the chapter, a more valuable trespass-offering was required.—The offences, specified in this chapter, may serve to illustrate the apostle's

meaning, when he says, “The law entered, that sin might *abound*.” (Note, Rom. v. 20, 21.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The law of God is so exceedingly broad, the occasions of sin in this wicked world so numerous, and we are so prone to evil, that we have need to fear always, and to pray continually that we may be preserved; to look before us every step in such a perilous path; and to keep a guard on all our senses, members, and faculties; especially on our tongues, which are unruly and mischievous, and the instruments of much iniquity. With a tender conscience and “the heart of flesh,” we shall seldom so transact business, form engagements, spend time in company, or even alone, or in God's ordinances, as not to find somewhat upon recollection, which will grieve and humble us: and the true Christian is daily pleading guilty before God, and seeking forgiveness through the blood of Christ, on the account of much better services, than those which others boast of as meritorious.—In infinite condescension the salvation of the gospel is so free, that the poorest penitent is not excluded; and so full, that the most burdened conscience here finds complete relief: yet is the evil of sin so displayed, as to fill pardoned sinners with abhorrence and dread of it; seeing that not the least transgression can be forgiven, but through the agonizing death of the great Emmanuel. They therefore, whose sins are indeed forgiven, will walk circumspectly, and be frequently examining their hearts and lives; and when they but suspect evil, they will have recourse to this one great atonement. They will be careful to bear no false witness, and to withhold no required information; to avoid rash oaths, and carelessness in the performance of their vows and engagements; and to render to God, to the king, and to every one, their due: and should they after all discover that they have failed, they will scrupulously make ample restitution to their utmost ability, acknowledge their fault without extenuation, and seek forgiveness both of God and of the injured party.

## CHAP. VI.

The trespass-offering for sins done wittingly, 1—7. The law for the priest respecting the burnt-offering, and the meat-offering, 8—18. The high priest's meat-offering, 19—23. The law of the sin-offering, 24—30

**AND** the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 If a soul sin, and <sup>a</sup>commit a trespass against the LORD, and <sup>b</sup>lie unto his neighbour <sup>c</sup>in that which was delivered him to keep, or <sup>d</sup>in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath <sup>e</sup>deceived his neighbour;

3 Or <sup>f</sup>have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and <sup>g</sup>swaureth falsely; in any of all these that a man doeth, sinning therein:

4 Then it shall be, <sup>h</sup>because he hath sinned and is guilty, that he shall restore that <sup>i</sup>which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found;

5 Or all that about which he hath sworn falsely, he shall even <sup>j</sup>restore it in the principal, and shall add the fifth part more thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day <sup>k</sup>of his trespass-offering.

6 And he shall bring his trespass-offering unto the LORD, <sup>l</sup>a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy esti-

mation for a trespass-offering, unto the priest.

7 And the priest shall <sup>m</sup>make an atonement for him before the LORD: and it shall be forgiven him, for any thing of all that he hath done, in trespassing therein.

8 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

9 Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of <sup>n</sup>the burnt-offering: (it is the burnt-offering, <sup>o</sup>because of <sup>p</sup>the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be burning in it.)

10 And the priest shall put on his <sup>q</sup>linen garment, and his linen breeches shall he put upon his flesh, and take up the ashes which the fire hath <sup>r</sup>consumed, with the burnt-offering on the altar, and he shall put them <sup>s</sup>beside the altar.

11 And he shall <sup>t</sup>put off his garments, and put on other garments, and carry forth the ashes <sup>u</sup>without the camp unto a clean place.

12 And <sup>v</sup>the fire upon the altar shall be burning in it, it shall not be put out: and the priest shall <sup>w</sup>burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt-offering in order upon it, and he shall burn thereon the fat of the peace-offerings.

13 The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar: it shall never go out.

## NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 2—7. These verses, as they relate to a trespass-offering, would have been more properly annexed to the preceding chapter: and they are so in the Hebrew. The various offences specified in them were directly and wilfully injurious to man; but they were also trespasses against God, both in themselves, and as in some of them a false oath had been taken. "Because he hath sinned, and is guilty;" that is, he is conscious of his sin, and willing to acknowledge it. If the offender had been convicted, he would have been exposed to punishment by the magistrate; and must, in some of the cases, have made larger restitution to the injured person: but as he voluntarily confessed his crime, which seemed to imply repentance, he was only required to add a fifth part of the value of the defraud or robbery, according to the valuation of the priest, and give it to the injured person: he must, however, also bring a trespass-offering to the Lord. This was evidently intended to shew, that disobedience to God is the great evil, even of those crimes which are injurious to man; and that repentance and works meet for repent-

ance, though needful in order to forgiveness, cannot atone for sin, which can only be expiated by the blood of Christ, and pardoned through faith in his name.—Some explain the priest's *estimation*, as relating to the value of the ram, which was to be greater or less according to the degree of the offence.

V. 8—13. In the preceding part of this book, Moses was directed to instruct the people, concerning several of the sacrifices to be brought by them: but here he was ordered to command the priests, respecting some particulars of their official services.—It is generally thought, that the stated evening burnt-offering was laid on the altar by pieces, so as to continue burning during the whole night, till the time of the morning burnt-offering; which was consumed more speedily, at least when other sacrifices were brought, in order to make room for them. This, however, is not deducible from the text; but only that the fire must be kept in during the night, as well as the day, and never be permitted to go out. As soon as the priests and the tabernacle were fully consecrated, the fire on the altar was kindled from heaven; and it must not be suffered to go out, and

<sup>a</sup> See on ii. 1, 2.—  
Num. xv. 4, 6  
9. John vi 32

14 ¶ And this is the law of <sup>a</sup>the meat-offering: the sons of Aaron shall offer it before the LORD, before the altar.

15 And he shall take of it his handful, of the flour of the meat-offering, and of the oil thereof, and all the frankincense which is upon the meat-offering, and shall burn it upon the altar, for a sweet savour, even <sup>a</sup>the memorial of it unto the LORD.

<sup>e</sup> See on ii. 2, 9

<sup>z</sup> ii. 3. 10. v. 13.  
Ex. xlv. 29.  
1 Cor. ix. 13—  
15.

<sup>v</sup> Ex. xii. 8. 1 Cor.  
v. 8.  
<sup>e</sup> 26. x. 12. 13.  
Num. xviii. 9,  
10

<sup>a</sup> ii. 11. 1 Pet. ii.  
22.

<sup>b</sup> 25. ii. 3 vii. 1.  
6. Ex. xxix. 33,  
34. 37.

<sup>c</sup> 29. xxi. 21, 22.  
Num. xviii. 10.  
<sup>d</sup> See on iii. 17.

16 And <sup>a</sup>the remainder thereof shall Aaron and his sons eat: with <sup>a</sup>unleavened bread <sup>a</sup>shall it be eaten in the holy place: in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation they shall eat it.

17 It shall not be <sup>a</sup>baken with leaven: I have given it unto them for their portion of my offerings made by fire: <sup>b</sup>it is most holy, as is the sin-offering, and as the trespass-offering.

18 <sup>a</sup>All the males among the children of Aaron shall eat of it: <sup>a</sup>it shall be a statute for ever in your generations concerning the offerings of the LORD

made by fire: <sup>a</sup>every one that toucheth them shall be holy.

<sup>e</sup> xxii. 5—7. Ex.  
xxix. 37. Hag.  
ii. 12—14. Zech.  
xiv 20, 21. 1 Pet.  
i 16. ii. 9.

19 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

20 This is <sup>a</sup>the offering of Aaron, and of his sons, which they shall offer unto the LORD, in the day when he is anointed: <sup>a</sup>the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for <sup>a</sup>a meat-offering perpetual, half of it in the morning and half thereof at night.

<sup>f</sup> Num. xviii. 26—  
32. Heb. v. 1.  
viii 3, 4.

<sup>g</sup> v. 11. Ex. xvi.  
36.

<sup>h</sup> ii. 1, &c. Ex.  
xxix. 38—42.  
Num. xxviii 3  
—10.

21 In <sup>a</sup>a pan it shall be made with oil, and when it is baken, thou shalt bring it in: and the baken pieces of the meat-offering shalt thou offer for a sweet savour unto the LORD.

<sup>i</sup> ii. 5 vii. 9. 1 Chr.  
ix. 31.

22 And the priest of his sons, that <sup>k</sup>is anointed in his stead, shall offer it: <sup>k</sup>it is a statute for ever unto the LORD, it shall be <sup>l</sup>wholly burnt.

<sup>k</sup> iv. 3. Deut. x. 6.  
Heb. vii. 23.

<sup>l</sup> viii. 21. Ex. xxix.  
22—25. 1s. liii.  
10.

23 For every meat-offering for the priest shall be wholly burnt; <sup>m</sup>it shall not be eaten.

<sup>m</sup> 16, 17. ii. 10

24 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

25 Speak unto Aaron and to his

then be replaced by ordinary fire.—From this law and some report of this custom in Israel, it is probable, that the gentiles derived their sacred perpetual fires, which were very common in different nations: but they did not understand that this fire was an intended type of the eternal avenging justice of God, and the perpetual efficacy of Christ's all-sufficient atonement.—In order to keep the fire clear and pure, directions were also given concerning the ashes of the flesh and wood consumed on the altar: and, as whatever touched it was relatively holy, the priests in their sacred garments must remove them; and then put off their priestly vestments, to carry these ashes out of the camp to a clean place in the ordinary garments of Israelites. Probably, after the Levites were set apart, and given to Aaron and his sons, they performed this as well as other menial services about the sanctuary.

V. 14—18. (Notes, ii.) Many of the oblations were intended as a provision for the families of the priests: but the meat-offerings were *most holy*, and must therefore be eaten with, or as, unleavened bread, by the priests alone, and their male children, who were priests by birth, though not yet of age to officiate.—The priests were types of Christ; and the command that they should eat these meat-offerings and sin-offerings, seems to have intimated, that they would typically bear and expiate the sins of the people, and that they should take pleasure in their work. (Marg. Ref.)—The clause, "Every one that toucheth them shall be holy," implies that the priests must not eat of these oblations, when under any ceremonial defilement; and, as some think, that all the utensils used about them must be *holy*, and not be employed in any other way.

V. 20—23. This oblation seems to have been required of the high priest alone, "on the day in which he was anointed," and from that time, every morning and evening as long as he continued in the office; and then in like manner of his successor: for, by the sons of Aaron may be understood, his descendants and successors in the high priesthood, in their generations. Perhaps the words, "anointed in his stead," may signify, not only the person who succeeded to the high priesthood, when the high priest died, but also the next in succession, as anointed to officiate in his stead, while living, should any thing incapacitate him.—The whole of this meat-offering, when duly prepared, was consumed on the altar, probably being laid upon the daily burnt-offering by the priest who officiated: and neither of this prescribed oblation, nor of the voluntary meat-offerings of the priests, must any part be eaten; but the whole must be dedicated to the Lord.—The priests typically bore and expiated the sins of the people, but they could not actually atone for them: they therefore, in respect of their own sacrifices, and some others, ate no part, but burnt the whole; which was a typical translation of the guilt from themselves and the people to Christ and his sacrifice, who actually bore and expiated them.—This meat-offering might also represent, that the best duties and services, even of the high priest himself, could be accepted only through the great Antitype: and that he and his brethren must, nevertheless, daily abound in good works and in personal religion, in the most devoted and disinterested manner.

V. 25—29. The sin-offerings for the ruler, or for individuals, were slain where the burnt-offerings were. The

n See on iv. 3, &c.  
21. 24. 33. 34.  
o i. 3. 5. 11. iv. 33.  
p 17. xx. 22.

sons, saying, This is <sup>a</sup> the law of the sin-offering: <sup>o</sup> in the place where the burnt-offering is killed, shall the sin-offering be killed before the LORD: <sup>p</sup> it is most holy.

q x. 17, 18. Num. xviii. 8, 10. Ez. xlv. 28, 29. xlv. 20. Hos. iv. 8.  
r Ex. xxvii. 9—18. xxxviii. 9—19. xl. 33. Ez. xlii. 13.  
s 18. Ex. xxix. 37. xxx. 29. Hag. ii. 12.

26 The <sup>q</sup> priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it: in the holy place shall it be eaten, <sup>r</sup> in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation.

t xi. 32. 2 Cor. vii. 1. 11.

27 Whatsoever shall <sup>s</sup> touch the flesh thereof shall be holy: and when there is sprinkled of the blood thereof upon any garment, thou shalt <sup>t</sup> wash that

whereon it was sprinkled in the holy place.

28 But <sup>u</sup> the earthen vessel wherein it is sodden shall be broken: and if it be sodden in a brazen pot, it shall be both scoured, and rinsed in water.

29 All <sup>x</sup> the males among the priests shall eat thereof: it is most holy.

30 And <sup>y</sup> no sin-offering whereof any of the blood is brought into the tabernacle of the congregation, to reconcile <sup>z</sup> *withal* in the holy place, shall be eaten: it shall be burnt in the fire.

priest who officiated had for his perquisite the whole carcase, on which he and his sons, and any other of the priests whom he invited, might feast in the court of the tabernacle, during the day on which it was sacrificed. But none might touch the flesh of it, except such as were holy persons, and free from ceremonial defilement: and, if the garment of the offerer or any other person was sprinkled with the blood, it must be washed in the court of the tabernacle: nay, when the flesh was sodden in an earthen vessel, which was porous and might retain some part of it, the vessel must be broken; and even a brazen one must be carefully scoured and washed. This shews that all the oblations were sodden or boiled; and none roasted, except the paschal lamb in the houses of the Israelites.—All these regulations were calculated to express the polluting nature of sin, and the translation of guilt from the sinner to the sacrifice; yet so that it was not actually taken away, but in some sense adhered to them: and they denoted that a more efficacious sacrifice was represented by them.—They might also intimate, that no one must pretend to any share with Christ in atoning for sin; that none but the *spiritual* priesthood, which is separated from the world and sin, and truly devoted to God, have any real benefit from the sacrifice of Christ, or truly feed upon him in their hearts; and that his atonement becomes to many an occasion of additional guilt and deeper condemnation, through their contempt or perversion of it; but that the youngest and most infirm believer is as certainly interested in this salvation, as the most mature and established, though not honoured with so much usefulness.

V. 30. (Note, iv. 12.) This is an additional law concerning the sin-offerings for the high-priest, or the whole congregation: and it was also a general rule for the stated sin-offerings. These seem to have been a more explicit type of Christ's suffering without Jerusalem, as devoted to a death pronounced *accursed* in the law, than any other of the Mosaic institutions: while the priest at the same time carrying the blood into the sanctuary, applying it to the golden altar, and sprinkling it before the veil, most aptly represented the Redeemer, rising, ascending, and appearing in the presence of God for us; and, in virtue of his atonement and by his intercession, rendering both our persons and services accepted.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—7.

It is impossible to enumerate all the various methods, in

which men, prompted by covetousness, have contrived unjustly to appropriate their neighbour's property. Human laws must indeed discriminate as to punishments, with reference to the welfare of the community: but all these methods of injustice are *alike* violations of the divine law; (not excepting the case of keeping what is found, when the owner can be ascertained;) and they are generally accompanied with lies, and frequently with perjury.—Would the offender, therefore, escape the vengeance of God, (though he be not exposed to punishment from man,) he must both make ample restitution, if in his power; and seek forgiveness, by faith in that one offering which taketh away the sin of the world.—Confession of sin makes no satisfaction to justice: our municipal laws, therefore, do not require the offender to plead guilty, or to criminate himself, nor will it avail for the mitigation of his sentence; and the case is the same in respect of the law and justice of God. But, before his mercy-seat, that man alone who ingenuously confesses his sin, and condemns himself, obtains the benefit of Christ's satisfaction, the free forgiveness of all sin, and the full comfort of it. Our God approves of that state of heart, which produces this conduct, as right and reasonable in a sinner: and no one, who is *unfeignedly* of a contrite spirit, will either depend on any thing for forgiveness, but free mercy through the blood of Christ, or wilfully continue in sin, or fail to bring forth the fruits meet for repentance.

##### V. 8—30.

The efficacy of the priesthood and mediation of Christ is perpetual, and we can never approach to God in his name, by day or by night, unseasonably: thus should the fire of our holy affections, the exercise of our faith and love, of prayer and praise, be constant and without ceasing also; and we should be watchful and unwearied in well-doing. The true ministers of Christ especially should have the fire of their zeal constantly burning, and their spiritual sacrifices ascending; being "instant in season" and "out of season," in their important work; without sloth, weariness, or dissipation; with all reverence and exactness; and not deeming the meanest service beneath them, or admitting of a careless performance.—Such ministers, though they need continual forgiveness themselves, will yet be very useful in bringing men to repent, to seek and find forgiveness, and to become "zealous of good works;" and they alone have a well-grounded claim to be maintained from the sanctuary. But they will also

## CHAP. VII.

The law for the priests, of the trespass-offering, 1—10: and of the peace-offering, 11—34. The whole summed up, 35—38.

**LIKEWISE** this *is* <sup>a</sup> the law of the trespass-offering: <sup>b</sup> it *is* most holy.

<sup>2</sup> In <sup>c</sup> the place where they kill the burnt-offering, shall they kill the trespass-offering: and <sup>d</sup> the blood thereof shall he sprinkle round about upon the altar.

<sup>3</sup> And he shall offer of it, <sup>e</sup> all the fat thereof; the rump, and the fat that covereth the inwards,

<sup>4</sup> And the two kidneys, and the fat that *is* on them, which *is* by the flanks, and the caul *that is* above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall he take away.

<sup>5</sup> And the priests shall <sup>f</sup> burn them upon the altar, <sup>g</sup> for an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it *is* a trespass-offering.

<sup>6</sup> Every <sup>h</sup> male among the priests shall eat thereof: it shall be eaten in the holy place: it *is* most holy.

<sup>7</sup> As the sin-offering *is*, so *is* <sup>i</sup> the trespass-offering: *there is* one law for them: the priest that maketh atonement therewith shall have it.

<sup>8</sup> And the priest that offereth any man's burnt-offering, *even* the priest shall have to himself <sup>j</sup> the skin of the burnt-offering which he hath offered.

<sup>9</sup> And all <sup>k</sup> the meat-offering that is baked in the oven, and all that is dressed in the frying-pan, and <sup>l</sup> in the pan, <sup>m</sup> shall be the priest's that offereth it.

<sup>10</sup> And every meat-offering mingled with oil, and dry, shall all the sons of Aaron have, <sup>n</sup> one *as much* as another.

<sup>11</sup> ¶ And this *is* the law of <sup>o</sup> the sacrifice of peace-offerings, which he shall offer unto the LORD.

<sup>12</sup> If he offer it for a <sup>p</sup> thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and <sup>q</sup> unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour, fried.

<sup>13</sup> Besides the cakes, he shall offer <sup>r</sup> for his offering <sup>s</sup> leavened bread, with the sacrifice of thanksgiving of his peace-offerings.

<sup>14</sup> And of it he shall offer one out of the whole oblation, <sup>t</sup> for <sup>u</sup> an heave-offering unto the LORD, *and* it shall be <sup>v</sup> the priest's that sprinkleth the blood of the peace-offerings.

<sup>15</sup> And the flesh of the sacrifice of

a v. vi. 1—7. xiv. 12. 13. xix. 21. 22. Num. vi. 12. Ez. xl. 39. xiv. 20. xvi. 20. b vi. 17. xxi. 22. c i. 3. 5. 11. iv. 24. 20. 33. vi. 25. d i. 5. iii. 2. 8. v. 9. Is. lli. 15. Ez. xxxvi. 25. Heb. ix. 19—22. xi. 28. xii. 24. 1 Pet. i. 2. e See on iii. 3—5. 9—11. iv. 8—10. —Ex. xxix. 13. Ps. li. 6. 17.

f i. 9. 13. ii. 2. 9. 16. in. 16. Gal. ii. 20. v. 24. 1 Pet. iv. 1, 2.

g vi. 16—18. 29. Num. xviii. 9, 10.

h vi. 25, 26. xiv. 3.

i 6. iv. 11. Gen. iii. 21. Ex. xxix. 14. Num. xix. 5. Rom. xiii. 14. Phil. iii. 9. ii. 4—7.

Or, on the flat plate, or slice. ii. 5. Marg.

ii. 3. 10. v. 13. vi. 16—18. 1 Cor. ix. 7. 13. Gal. vi. 6.

i Ex. xvi. 18. 2 Cor. viii. 14.

m See on iii—xxii. 18—21.

n xxii. 29. 2 Chr. xxxix. 31. xxxiii. 16. Neh. xii. 43. Ps. i. 13. 14. 23. ciii. 1. 2. cvii. 8. 21, 22. cxvi. 17. Jer. xxxiii. 11. Hos. xiv. 2. Luke xvi. 15. Rom. i. 21. 2 Cor. ix. 11—15. Eph. v. 20. Heb. xiii. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 5.

o ii. 4. vi. 16. Num. vi. 15.

p xxiii. 17. Am. iv. 5. Matt. xiii. 33.

1 Tim. iv. 4.

q See on Ex. xxix. 27, 28.—Num. xv. 19—21. xviii. 24—28. xxxi. 29. 41.

r vi. 26. Num. xviii. 8—11. 19. 26—32.

be the last persons to be peremptory in their demands of this nature, to be discontented with their provision, or attentive to their own interest or indulgence. Rather they will make it their study to convince the people that they “seek not *theirs*, but *them*,” that they would far rather promote their sanctification, than profit by their sins; and that they desire to be examples to the flock, in practising what they preach, in foregoing their just claims, and in seeking the glory of God and the good of souls, even when their diligence meets with no recompence, or a very ungrateful return, from man. Above all, they will teach the people, both by word and deed, to shun the defilement of sin, to treat sacred things with serious regard, to reverence the atoning blood of Christ, and in a holy manner to apply its benefits; not thence taking encouragement to sin, but deducing powerful motives for devoted obedience unto God. May the Lord send forth many such labourers into his harvest, for the honour of Jesus, the great Head of the Church!

## NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1—10. In the case of the sin-offering and the trespass-offering, the whole sacrifice was divided between the altar and the priest; and the offerer had no share in it, as he had in the peace-offerings. The former was an expression of repentance and sorrow for sin, and was therefore more properly accompanied by fasting than by feasting; but feasting was very suitable to the occasions

of the peace-offerings, which denoted communion with a reconciled God in Christ, the joy and gratitude of a pardoned sinner, and the privileges and cheerful services of a believer. The remembrance of sin is never pleasant to a true Christian; but the remembrance of the former kindnesses of God, and his answers to prayer, and the expectation of future benefits, always are so.—The priest, who offered the sacrifice, in some cases, had all that was not burnt for his own perquisite, which would encourage and recompense a constant attendance. In other cases all the priests shared alike, which might forward friendly intercourse and fellowship with each other. The skin belonged to the priest who offered the sacrifice; ‘that is,’ say the Jewish writers with considerable probability, ‘the skins of sacrifices brought by individuals; while those of the public sacrifices were sold, to defray the expenses of repairing the tabernacle.’

V. 12—14. Besides the different kinds of unleavened cakes and wafers brought with other sacrifices, leavened bread was presented with the peace-offerings for mercies received; for a thankful, cheerful meal was intended, and such bread was usual at feasts. One loaf or cake of this bread was presented to the Lord as a heave-offering, and eaten by the priest; but none was burnt on the altar. (Note, ii. 11.)

V. 15—18. In the prohibition of any part of the sacrifices being kept unto the *third day*, when it would begin

his peace-offerings for thanksgiving shall <sup>a</sup>be eaten the same day that it is offered: he shall not leave any of it until the morning.

16 But if the sacrifice of his offering <sup>a</sup>be a vow, or <sup>a</sup>a voluntary offering, it shall be eaten the same day that he offereth his sacrifice: and on the morrow <sup>a</sup>also the remainder of it shall be eaten.

17 But the remainder of the flesh of the sacrifice, <sup>a</sup>on the third day shall be <sup>a</sup>burnt with fire.

18 And if *any* of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace-offerings be eaten at all on the third day, <sup>a</sup>it shall not be accepted, neither shall it <sup>b</sup>be imputed unto him that offereth it: it shall be <sup>c</sup>an abomination, and the soul that eateth of it shall <sup>d</sup>bear his iniquity.

19 And the flesh, that <sup>e</sup>toucheth any unclean *thing*, shall not be eaten, it shall be burnt with fire: and as for the flesh, all that be clean shall eat thereof.

20 But the soul that eateth of the flesh of the sacrifice of the peace-offerings, that *pertain* unto the LORD, <sup>f</sup>having his uncleanness upon him, even that soul shall be cut off from his people.

21 Moreover, the soul that shall touch any unclean *thing*, as <sup>g</sup>the uncleanness of man, or *any* <sup>h</sup>unclean beast, or any <sup>i</sup>abominable unclean thing, and eat of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace-offerings which *pertain*

unto the LORD, even that soul shall be <sup>k</sup>cut off from his people.

22 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

23 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Ye shall eat no manner of <sup>l</sup>fat, of ox, or of sheep, or of goat.

24 And the fat of the <sup>m</sup>beast that dieth of itself, and the fat of that which is torn with beasts, may be used in any other use: but ye shall in no wise eat of it.

25 For whosoever eateth the fat of the <sup>n</sup>beast, of which men offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, even the soul that eateth it, <sup>m</sup>shall be cut off from his people.

26 Moreover, <sup>n</sup>ye shall eat no manner of blood, *whether it be* of fowl or of beast, in any of your dwellings.

27 Whatsoever soul *it be* that eateth any manner of blood, even <sup>o</sup>that soul shall be cut off from his people.

28 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

29 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, <sup>p</sup>He that offereth the sacrifice of his peace-offerings unto the LORD, shall bring his oblation unto the LORD, of the sacrifice of his peace-offerings.

30 <sup>q</sup>His own hands shall bring the offerings of the LORD made by fire; the fat with the breast, it shall he bring, that <sup>r</sup>the breast may be waved *for* a wave-offering before the LORD.

31 And the priest shall burn the fat

<sup>a</sup> xxii. 29, 30.—  
See on Ex. xii.  
10—xvi. 19. Ec.  
ix. 10. John ix.  
4. 2 Cor. vi. 2.  
Heb. iii. 13—15.

<sup>t</sup> xxii. 18—21.  
xxiii. 38. Num.  
xv. 3. Deut. xii.  
6, 11. 17. 26. Ps.  
lxxvi. 13. cxvi. 14.  
1: Nah. i. 15.  
<sup>u</sup> xxii. 23, 29.  
Deut. xii. 6. Ez.  
xlvi. 12.  
<sup>x</sup> xix. 5—8.

<sup>y</sup> Gen. xxii. 4.  
Ex. xix. 11. Hos.  
vi. 2. 1 Cor. xv.  
4.  
<sup>z</sup> vi. 22, 23. x. 16.  
Ex. xii. 10. xxix.  
14.

<sup>a</sup> x. 19. xix. 7, 8.  
xxii. 23, 25. Jer.  
xiv. 10. 12. Hos.  
viii. 13. Am. v.  
22. Mal. i. 10.  
13.

<sup>b</sup> Num. xviii. 27.  
Rom. ix. 11.

<sup>c</sup> xi. 10, 11. 41. Is.  
i. 11—14. lxxv. 4.  
lxxvi. 3. Luke  
xvi. 15.

<sup>d</sup> v. 17. x. 17. xvii.  
16. xix. 8. xx.  
17, 19. xxii. 16.  
Is. lvi. 11, 12.  
Ez. xviii. 20.  
Heb. ix. 28.

<sup>e</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 24.  
<sup>f</sup> xi. 24—39. Num.  
xix. 11—16. Luke  
xi. 41. Acts x.  
15, 16. 28. Rom.  
xiv. 14, 20. 2 Cor.  
vi. 17. Tit. i. 15.  
<sup>f</sup> xv. 2, &c.

<sup>g</sup> v. 2, 3. xii. 1—  
3. xv. 3—12. xxii.  
4. Num. xix. 11  
—16.

<sup>h</sup> xi. 24—42. Deut.  
xiv. 7, 8, 10, 12  
—20.

<sup>i</sup> xi. 10—13. 20. 41.  
42. Deut. xiv. 3.  
Ez. iv. 14.

<sup>k</sup> 20. 25. 27. xviii.  
10. 14. xviii. 29.  
Gen. cvii. 14.  
Ex. xix. 15. 19.  
xxx. 33, 38.

<sup>l</sup> iii. 16, 17. iv. 8—  
10. xvii. 6. Deut.  
xxxii. 38. 1 Sam.  
ii. 16—17. 29.  
Acts xxviii. 27.  
Rom. viii. 13.  
xiii. 13.  
<sup>m</sup> Heb. carcass.  
xvii. 15. xxii. 8.  
Ex. xxii. 31.  
Deut. xiv. 21.  
Ez. iv. 14. xlv.  
31.

<sup>n</sup> iii. 17. xvii. 13—  
14. Gen. ix. 4.  
1 Sam. xiv. 33.  
Ez. xxxiii.  
25. Acts xv. 20.  
29. Eph. i. 7.  
1 Tim. iv. 4.

<sup>o</sup> 20, 21. 25. Heb.  
x. 29.

<sup>p</sup> iii. 1. Col. i. 20.  
1 John i. 7.

<sup>q</sup> iii. 3, 4, 9, 14.  
Ps. cx. 3. John  
x. 18. 2 Cor.  
xiii. 12.

<sup>r</sup> viii. 27. ix. 21.—  
See on Ex. xxix.  
24—28.—Num.  
vi. 20.

to putrefy, there might be a reference to Christ, who rose again in about the same time, and saw no corruption. But, more evidently, the Israelites were thus cautioned against procrastination in rendering thanks, in paying vows, or in seeking spiritual blessings; against superstition; and against distrust and covetousness. And they were taught to use hospitality to their friends and to the poor, without grudging: for, if they spared, they only spared for the fire; except they would, by disobedience, prevent the acceptance of their sacrifice, and even render it an abomination.—The thank-offering must be entirely eaten on the same day on which it was sacrificed: for we should especially make haste, when recent mercies have excited our gratitude, to express it by fervent thanksgivings; and the Lord's kindness to us should peculiarly enlarge our hearts in bounty to our brethren.—If these laws were wilfully broken, the offerer would "bear his iniquity;" nor was any sacrifice appointed: but an inadvertent violation of them must be expiated by a trespass-offering.

V 20. *Cut off from his people.* We find no rule or

example, leading to suppose that this was a law, which the priest or the civil magistrate was empowered to execute, either by solemn excommunication, or by death. It seems rather to have been an awful denunciation of divine vengeance. The offenders would deserve, and might expect, to be cut off by some immediate judgment of God; and no sacrifice was appointed to expiate their guilt. (*Marg. Ref. k.*)

V. 23—27. (*Note*, iii. 17.) The prohibition of the fat, or suet, was restricted to such animals as were offered in sacrifice; but that of the blood was extended to all kinds of land animals. The former taught reverence to the altar and ordinances of God; but the latter had especial respect to the atoning blood of Christ.

V. 29—34. The offerer was required, with his own hands to bring these parts of the sacrifice to the priest, that the oblation of them might appear his own voluntary action. The breast, (which seems to have included the whole of what is at present, in cutting up slaughtered animals, divided into the two breasts,) having been solemnly

<sup>s</sup> 34. v. 13. vi. 16. upon the altar: but <sup>a</sup> the breast shall be  
 26. viii. 29. Num Aaron's and his sons'.

<sup>t</sup> viii. 25, 26. ix. 32 And <sup>a</sup> the right shoulder shall ye  
 21. x. 14. Num give unto the priest <sup>for</sup> an heave-offering,  
 vi. 20. xviii 18, of the sacrifices of your peace-  
 19. Deut. xvii. offerings.  
 8. 1 Cor. ix 13, 14.

<sup>u</sup> 3. vi 26 33 He among the sons of Aaron,  
<sup>a</sup> that offereth the blood of the peace-  
 offerings and the fat, shall have the  
 right shoulder for <sup>his</sup> part.

<sup>x</sup> See ex. 30—32 34 For <sup>a</sup> the wave-breast and the  
 heave-shoulder have I taken of the chil-  
 dren of Israel, from off the sacrifices  
 of their peace-offerings, and have given  
 them unto Aaron the priest, and unto  
 his sons, <sup>y</sup> by a statute for ever, from  
 among the children of Israel.

<sup>y</sup> See on iii. 17.—  
 Ex. xxix. 9.  
 z viii. 10—12. 30. Ex. xxix. 7. 21.  
 xl. 13—16. 1a. x. 27. 1xi. 1. John  
 iii. 34. 2 Cor. i. 21. 1 John ii 20.  
 27.

35 ¶ This is the portion <sup>z</sup> of the  
 anointing of Aaron, and of the anoint-

ing of his sons, out of the offerings of  
 the LORD made by fire, in the day <sup>when</sup>  
<sup>a</sup> he presented them, to minister unto  
 the LORD in the priest's office;

36 Which the LORD commanded to  
 be given them of the children of Israel,  
 in the day that he anointed them, <sup>by</sup> a  
 statute for ever, throughout their gene-  
 rations.

37 This is <sup>b</sup> the law of the burnt-  
 offering, <sup>c</sup> of the meat-offering, <sup>d</sup> and  
 of the sin-offering, <sup>e</sup> and of the trespass-  
 offering, and <sup>f</sup> of the consecrations, and  
<sup>g</sup> of the sacrifice of the peace-offerings;

38 Which the LORD commanded  
 Moses in mount Sinai, in the day that  
 he <sup>h</sup> commanded the children of Israel  
 to offer their oblations unto the LORD,  
 in the wilderness of Sinai.

waved to and fro, as devoted to God, was eaten by the  
 priests in general: but the right shoulder, having been  
 heaved upwards, as in like manner given to the Lord, was  
 the perquisite of the officiating priest. This might intima-  
 te, that as Christ, with his whole heart and all his power,  
 serves the interest of his Church, so ought the priests to  
 serve God and the congregation. (Note, Ex. xxix. 22—28.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

The faithful ministers of religion will indeed readily  
 forego their own interest or indulgence, for the glory of  
 God and the good of souls: yet it should be noticed, what  
 ample provision God himself of old made for them; and  
 that in proportion to their diligent attendance at his courts.  
 And we have no reason to suppose from the New Testa-  
 ment, that he would now have them doomed to indigence;  
 or that those persons do their duty, who live in plenty, and  
 permit them to continue in perplexing straits: while the  
 more willing any of them are "to suffer all things, rather  
 than hinder the gospel of Christ," the more inexcusable  
 are those, who allow them to be losers by their disinterest-  
 edness.—Every thing is beautiful in its season: there is a  
 time, when the Lord calls to weeping and fasting, and a  
 time when thankful joy admits of festivity: indeed, godly  
 sorrow for sin, and believing meditation upon the Saviour's  
 bitter sufferings, prepare for feasting upon his spiritual  
 provisions, and rejoicing in his holy comfort. The infinite  
 sufficiency which is in Christ, furnishes a plenteous feast  
 for all, even the vilest sinners, who accept of his gracious  
 invitations: the true believer therefore longs for all around  
 him, yea, for the whole world, to share with him in his  
 felicity. And the same principle, counteracting natural  
 selfishness, covetousness, and distrust, and inspiring grati-  
 tude and confidence in God, as well as good-will to man,  
 will enlarge his heart to liberality in temporal things, and  
 render him willing to communicate, and ready to distribute.  
 Nor is any one a loser by so doing: rather they are losers

indeed, who are of a contrary spirit; as they lose the bless-  
 ing of God upon their substance, and the comfortable en-  
 joyment of it; together with the acceptance and benefit  
 of their religious services. For whatever professions may  
 be made of repentance, faith, love, or holy joy; if the  
 heart be leavened with allowed covetousness or malice, or  
 absorbed in selfishness, every religious performance will  
 be deemed an abomination; and the self-deceived wretch,  
 who thus presents it, will be exposed to the awful woe of  
 "bearing his own iniquity."—Delays often cause good  
 purposes and holy affections to wear off without effect;  
 and we frequently lose the benefit of divine ordinances, by  
 improperly conducting ourselves after them.—To approach  
 the throne of grace, or the Lord's table, *unclean* through  
 unrepented sin; or in proud contempt and careless neglect  
 of the cleansing blood of Christ, and the sanctifying in-  
 fluences of his Spirit; is an awful presumption, and will  
 be terribly punished, except it be repented of: yet, on *such*  
 services do multitudes depend to atone for their sins, and  
 to merit everlasting life! But indeed any presumptuous  
 sin, unless truly repented of, must exclude a man from  
 every *well-grounded* expectation of divine favour, and ex-  
 pose him to awful vengeance. "Let us therefore have  
 grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with re-  
 verence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming  
 fire."—For the honour of God, and for an example to  
 others, we should, in some cases, be as explicit as possible  
 in our profession of faith, and in dedicating ourselves and  
 all we have to the Lord: and we ought at all times to do  
 his will, seek his glory, and serve his people, after the ex-  
 ample of Christ, with our whole heart and soul. Thus  
 performing the work that he assigns us, we may thank-  
 fully receive the portion which he allots us; and be satis-  
 fied that, whatever treatment we meet with from man, he  
 will both graciously supply our wants, and accept of our  
 endeavours; while with joyful hope we look forward to the  
 period when he will "present us faultless before the pre-  
 sence of his glory, with exceeding joy."

## CHAP. VIII.

The Lord commands Moses to consecrate Aaron and his sons, 1—5. He washes and clothes them; and anoints Aaron; and also the tabernacle and its furniture, the altar and the laver, 6—13. The sin-offering, burnt-offering, and ram of consecration sacrificed for Aaron and his sons, with the appointed rites, 14—32. The place and time of their consecration, 33—36

**AND** the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

<sup>a</sup> Ex. xxix. 1—4.  
<sup>b</sup> Ex. xxviii. 2—4. 40—43. xxxix. 1—31. 41.  
<sup>c</sup> Ex. xxx. 23—37. xl. 12—15.  
<sup>d</sup> See on Ex. xxix. 1. 2.—Heb. vii. 27.

2 Take <sup>a</sup> Aaron and his sons with him, and <sup>b</sup> the garments, and the <sup>c</sup> anointing oil, and <sup>d</sup> a bullock for the sin-offering, and two rams, and a basket of unleavened bread.

<sup>e</sup> Num. xx. 8. xxi. 16. 1 Chr. xiii. 5. xv. 3. 2 Chr. v. 2—6. xxx. 2. 13. 25. Neh. viii. 1. Ps. xlii. 25. Acts ii. 1.

3 And <sup>e</sup> gather thou all the congregation together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

<sup>f</sup> 9. 13. 17. 29. 35. Ex. xxxix. 1. 3. 7. 25. 26. 29. 31. 32. 42. 43. Deut. xii. 32. Matt. xxviii. 20. 1 Cor. xi. 23. xv. 3.

4 And Moses <sup>f</sup> did as the LORD commanded him; and the assembly was gathered together unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

<sup>g</sup> Ex. xxix. 4, &c.

5 And Moses said unto the congregation, This *is* the thing which the LORD <sup>g</sup> commanded to be done.

<sup>h</sup> Ex. xxix. 4. xl. 12. Ps. li. 2. 7. Is. i. 16. Ez. xxxvi. 25. Zech. xii. 1. John xiii. 8—10. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Eph. v. 26. Heb. ix. 10. x. 22. Rev. i. 6. vii. 14.

6 ¶ And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and <sup>h</sup> washed them with water.

<sup>i</sup> See on Ex. xxviii. 4. xxi. 5.—xxxix. 1, &c. Is. lxi. 3. 10. Rom. iii. 22. xii. 14. Gal. iii. 27.

7 And <sup>i</sup> he put upon him the coat, and girded him with the girdle, and clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod upon him, and he girded him with the curious girdle of the ephod, and bound *it* unto him therewith.

<sup>k</sup> Ex. xxviii. 15—29. xxxix. 8—21. Cant. vii. 6. Is. xli. 17. Eph. vi. 14. 1 Thes. v. 8.

8 And he put <sup>k</sup> the breast-plate upon him: also he put in the breast-plate the Urim and the Thummim.

<sup>l</sup> See on Ex. xxviii. 30. Ezra ii. 63.

9 And he put <sup>l</sup> the mitre upon his head; also upon the mitre, *even* upon his fore-front did he put the golden plate, the holy crown; as the LORD commanded Moses.

<sup>m</sup> Ex. xxx. 23—29. xl. 9—11.

10 And Moses took <sup>m</sup> the anointing

oil, and anointed the tabernacle and all that *was* therein, and sanctified them.

<sup>n</sup> iv. 6. 17. xvi. 14. 19. Is. lii. 15. Ez. xxxvi. 25. Tit. iii. 6.

11 And <sup>n</sup> he sprinkled thereof upon the altar seven times, and anointed the altar, and all his vessels, both the laver and his foot, to sanctify them.

<sup>o</sup> iv. 3. Ex. xxviii. 41. xxxix. 7. xxx. 30. P2. cxxxix. 2.

12 And <sup>o</sup> he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head; and anointed him to sanctify him.

<sup>p</sup> Ex. xxviii. 40. 41. xxxix. 8. 9. xl. 14. 15. Ps. cxxxix. 9. Is. lxi. 6. 10. 1 Pet. ii. 5. 9. Rev. i. 6 v. 10.

13 And Moses <sup>p</sup> brought Aaron's sons, and put coats upon them, and girded them with girdles, and <sup>q</sup> put bonnets upon them; as the LORD commanded Moses.

<sup>r</sup> 2. iv. 3—12. xvi. 6. Ex. xxix. 10 —14. Is. lii. 10. Ez. xliii. 19. Rom. viii. 3. 2 Cor. v. 21. Heb. vii. 26—28. 1 Pet. iii. 14. See on i. 4. iv. 4. —xvi. 21.

14 ¶ And <sup>r</sup> he brought the bullock for the sin-offering: and Aaron and his sons <sup>s</sup> laid their hands upon the head of the bullock for the sin-offering.

<sup>t</sup> i. 5. 11. iii. 2. 8. Ex. xxix. 10, 11. iv. 7. 17. 18. 30. Ex. xxxix. 12. 36. 37. Ez. xliii. 19 —27. Heb. ix. 18—23.

15 And <sup>t</sup> he slew *it*, and <sup>u</sup> Moses took the blood, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar; and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it, <sup>v</sup> to make reconciliation upon it.

<sup>v</sup> vi. 30. xvi. 20. 2 Chr. xxix. 24. Ez. xiv. 20. Dan ix. 24. Rom. v. 10. 2 Cor. v. 18—21. Eph. ii. 14 Col. i. 21. Heb. ii. 17.

16 And he took <sup>v</sup> all the fat that *was* upon the inwards, and the caul *above* the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and Moses burned *it* upon the altar.

<sup>w</sup> iv. 11. 12. 21. vi. 30. xvi. 27. Ez. xxxix. 14. Gal. iii. 13. Heb. xiii. 11—13.

17 But <sup>w</sup> the bullock and his hide, <sup>x</sup> his flesh and his dung, he burnt with fire without the camp; as the LORD commanded Moses.

<sup>y</sup> See on i. 4—13. —Ex. xxxix. 15—18.

18 ¶ And he brought <sup>y</sup> the ram for the burnt-offering: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram.

19 And he killed *it*, and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about.

20 And he cut the ram into pieces, and Moses burnt the head, and the pieces, and the fat.

## NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 2. This consecration of Aaron and his sons had been prescribed some time before, but was delayed until the tabernacle had been prepared, and the laws of the several sacrifices given. (*Notes*, Ex. xxix. 1—37.)

V. 3—5. The congregation was assembled, that they might witness the consecration of Aaron and his sons; and be impressed with the conviction that they had not intruded

themselves into this important office, but were called to it by JEHOVAH himself.

V. 6—14. *Marg. Ref.—Notes*, Ex. xxix. 1—12.

V. 15. The beginning of this verse may be rendered, “And Moses slew it, and took the blood, &c.” We find it expressly said in Exodus, that Moses slew these sacrifices: (*Ex. xxix. 11*;) yet, in general, the offerer seems to have killed his own sacrifice. (*Marg. Ref.—Note*, i. 5—9.)

V. 16—21. *Marg. Ref.—Notes*, Ex. xxix. 13—18.

21 And he washed the inwards and the legs in water; and Moses burnt the whole ram upon the altar: it *was* a burnt-sacrifice for <sup>a</sup>a sweet savour, and an offering made by fire unto the LORD; as the LORD commanded Moses.

22 ¶ And he brought the other ram, <sup>b</sup>the ram of consecration: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram.

23 And he slew *it*, and Moses <sup>c</sup>took of the blood of it, and put *it* upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot.

24 And he brought Aaron's sons, and Moses put of the blood upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumbs of their right hands, and upon the great toes of their right feet: and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about.

25 And he took <sup>d</sup>the fat, and the rump, and all the fat that *was* upon the inwards, and the caul *above* the liver, and the two kidneys, and their fat, and the right shoulder.

26 And out of the basket of unleavened bread, that *was* before the LORD, he took one unleavened cake, and a cake of oiled bread, and one wafer, and put *them* on the fat, and upon the right shoulder.

27 And he put all upon Aaron's

hands, and upon his sons' hands, <sup>e</sup>and waved them *for* a wave-offering before the LORD.

28 And Moses took them from off their hands, and burnt *them* on the altar, upon the burnt-offering: <sup>f</sup>they were consecrations for a sweet savour: it is an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

29 And Moses took <sup>g</sup>the breast, and waved it *for* a wave-offering before the LORD: *for* of the ram of consecration it was Moses's part; as the LORD commanded Moses.

30 And Moses took of <sup>h</sup>the anointing oil, and of the blood which *was* upon the altar, and sprinkled *it* upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his sons' garments with him: and sanctified Aaron and his garments; and his sons, and his sons' garments with him.

31 And Moses said unto Aaron, and to his sons, <sup>i</sup>Boil the flesh *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and there <sup>k</sup>eat it with the bread that is in the basket of consecrations, as I commanded, saying, Aaron and his sons shall eat it.

32 And that which <sup>l</sup>remaineth of the flesh and of the bread, shall ye burn with fire.

33 And ye shall not go out of the door of the tabernacle of the congre-

a 1. 17. ii. 9. Gen vii. 21. Ex. xxix. 18. Eph. v. 2.

b 2. 29. vii. 37. Ex. xxix. 19. 31. Rev. i. 5. 6

c div. 14. 17. 28 Ex. xxix. 20. Rom. vi. 13. 19. ii. 1. 1 Cor. vi. 20. Phil. i. 20. ii. 17.

d See on iii. 9. - Ex. xxix. 22-25

e See on vii. 30. 31.

f See on 22

g vii. 34. Ex. xxix. 26. 27. Is. lxi. 20. 1 Cor. x. 31.

h See on Ex. xxix. 21. xxx. 30. - Gal. v. 22-25. 1 Pet. i. 2. 1 John ii. 27.

i vi. 28. Ex. xxix. 31. 32. Ez. xiv. 20-24.

k x. 17. John vi. 51. 53-56.

l vii. 17. Ex. xii. 10. xxix. 34

V. 22—24. The *sin-offering* implied that Aaron and his sons deserved to have their blood shed; and, after death, to be made a sacrifice to the offended justice of God; instead of being able to bear and atone for the sins of the people, and being honoured as intercessors for them, and *typical* representatives of the Saviour. The *burnt-offering* denoted, that, being pardoned and accepted through the atonement of Christ, they willingly and thankfully dedicated themselves without reserve, to be consecrated unto God for this sacred ministry. The *ram of consecration* was their peace-offering; and represented that, as reconciled unto God, they had fellowship with him, and delighted in his service and in being wholly employed in it; that he would accept and honour their services and ministrations; that they were thankful for past and present benefits, and confided in him for future sufficiency and acceptance. Accordingly, the several laws prescribed in the foregoing chapters were observed by Moses, the officiating priest; with only such additions and variations, as had a peculiar reference to their entire separation to God for the work of the priesthood. (Note, Ex. xxix. 19—21.)

V. 25—32. Moses, as the priest, had the breast, and Aaron and his sons the remainder, except the right shoulder, which was laid on the altar with the fat. This, in all other peace-offerings, belonged to the officiating priest: but, as Moses was the only priest till Aaron and his sons were fully consecrated, and as the whole breast belonged to him; so it seems to have been appointed on this occasion, that the shoulder should be laid on the altar, rather than left to be burnt with the residue in some other place, according to the law of the peace-offerings. (Note, Ex. xxix. 22—28.)

V. 33—35. During seven days, Aaron and his sons abode constantly at the door of the tabernacle, not being yet allowed to enter into it. We may suppose, that such accommodations were provided for them as were necessary: but it seems that they watched, at least by turns, day and night all the while. On each of these days, a sin-offering, a burnt-offering, and a peace-offering of consecration, were sacrificed, with exactly the same ceremonies as on the first day, and they were expressly warned, that it would be at the peril of their lives, if they neglected to observe the

gation in seven days, until the days of your consecration be at an end: for <sup>m</sup> seven days shall he consecrate you.

m x. v. 8. Ex. xxix. 30. 35. Num. xix. 12. Ez. xliii. 25—27.  
n Heb. vii. 16. 27. x. 11, 12

34 As <sup>a</sup> he hath done this day, so the LORD hath commanded to do, to make an atonement for you.

o x. 1. Num. iii. 7. ix. 19. Deut. xl. 1. 1 Kings ii. 3. 1 Tim. i. 3, 4. 18. v. 21. vi. 13. 17. 20. 2 Tim. iv. 1.

35 Therefore shall ye abide at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, day and night seven days, and keep the charge of the LORD, that ye die not: for so I am commanded.

commands given them. All this was suited to shew the inefficacy of these oblations and purifications; and that they were only “shadows of good things to come.”—One sabbath must have occurred during the time of their consecration; perhaps it was on the last day of the seven: and it has been observed, that the Lord Jesus, our great High Priest, came to Jerusalem and to the temple, on the day after the sabbath, and five days before the passover, which he spent in labours and watchings, and was crucified on the sixth day; then he rested on the sabbath-day, and arose the next morning, as having fully completed his consecration.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In these types we see our great High Priest, as solemnly appointed, anointed, and invested in his sacred office; and, by his own blood, and the influences of his Holy Spirit, sanctifying the ordinances of religion to the benefit of his people; and to the honour of God, who, for his sake, accepts our worship, though we are sinners and our services polluted with sin. We may also rejoice that he, though free from sin himself, yet, “having suffered being tempted,” is “a merciful and faithful High Priest,” full of tender compassion to the feeble-minded and tempest-tossed soul; and that, having finished his consecration and sacrifices upon earth, as our *perfected* High Priest, he “for ever appears in the presence of God for us.” But when these heavenly things were shadowed forth in the persons and priesthood of men; what care was taken to shew that they were not appointed, for any worthiness of such an honour, or capacity for such a service, in themselves, when they were not admitted to appear before God, except through the shedding of the blood, and the burning of the bodies, of so many innocent and useful animals; through repeated washings, sprinklings, and anointings, with change of garments, and every observance which could mark them in themselves to be guilty and polluted in his sight, and shew that they defiled all they touched! Surely this was intended to lead the people to expect a nobler priesthood, better sacrifices, and a more effectual atonement and intercession: and we must be blind indeed, yea, willingly ignorant, if it do not teach us, that nothing can atone for sin, or render a sinner accepted of God, but the righteousness, blood, and intercession of the holy Jesus, our great High Priest; which are always accompanied with his sanctifying grace poured into every believer’s heart.—Doubtless, when Aaron offered his sin-offering, he would remember, with mixed humiliation, admiration, and grati-

36 So <sup>a</sup> Aaron and his sons did all <sup>p</sup> things which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses. p Ex. xxxix. 43.

#### CHAP. IX.

The newly consecrated priests, directed by Moses, enter on their office, 1—7; and offer sacrifices for themselves and for the people, 8—21. Moses and Aaron bless the people; and the glory of the Lord appears, 22, 23. Fire from before the Lord consumes the sacrifices, and the people worship, 24.

tude, his recent transgression in making the golden calf, and the Lord’s forgiveness of it; and would acknowledge that he deserved himself to be made a sacrifice to offended justice with those who perished, instead of being appointed to so honourable an office. This would teach him lowliness of mind, and compassion and tenderness to other poor sinners, seeing “he himself was so compassed with infirmity.” Thus was “boasting excluded;” the whole glory given to God, and a preparation made for Aaron’s properly bearing the honour of the priesthood, and performing its duties. In like manner, our God prepares his *true* ministers for their office: he teaches them the knowledge of him and of themselves; he convinces them of their guilt and sinfulness, and brings them to a simple dependence on Christ for every thing needful for their own salvation. Thus they learn to consider themselves as no better than the vilest sinners; except as the Lord hath made them to differ, by interesting them in the Redeemer’s sacrifice, washing them in his blood, arraying their souls in his righteousness, and anointing them with his grace. Whilst they feed upon his spiritual provision, and are happy in communion with him; and whilst their hearts are fraught with love to Christ, and compassion for their fellow-sinners: they are prepared and qualified for the work, and disposed to “give themselves wholly to it;” and to be constant, persevering, tender, and affectionate in it: and they are made willing to forego all personal considerations, that they may point out the Saviour to perishing sinners, and assist the spiritual sacrifices of believers, to the glory of God and to the salvation of souls.—But, indeed, all *true* Christians are consecrated to be spiritual priests: and we should seriously ask ourselves, whether we are conscious of such a consecration, as “bought with a price, to glorify God, in body and spirit which are his?” whether we are partakers of this washing, anointing, and arraying in the robes of righteousness and salvation? whether in our daily walk we study to maintain the honour of the priestly character? and whether we abound in “spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ?” If so, let us not despise, disdain, or despair of our fellow-sinners; but, remembering what we have done, and how we are saved, let us seek and pray for their salvation too. Yet at last, our whole life, after our conversion, is only a week of consecration, as God’s priests, to offer up spiritual sacrifices in his courts above, throughout an eternal sabbath. Let us then improve our present opportunity, wait with patience and perseverance, and cheerfully expect this high and everlasting honour.

**AND** it came to pass on <sup>a</sup>the eighth day, *that* Moses called Aaron and his sons, and the elders of Israel.

2 And he said unto Aaron, Take thee <sup>b</sup>a young calf for a sin-offering, and <sup>c</sup>a ram for a burnt-offering, without blemish, and offer *them* before the LORD.

3 And unto the children of Israel thou shalt speak, saying, <sup>d</sup>'Take ye a kid of the goats for a sin-offering; and <sup>e</sup>'a calf, and a lamb, <sup>f</sup>'both of the first year, without blemish, for a burnt-offering;

4 Also <sup>g</sup>'a bullock and a ram for peace-offerings, to sacrifice before the LORD; <sup>h</sup>and a meat-offering mingled with oil: for to-day the LORD will appear unto you.

5 And they brought *that* which Moses commanded, before the tabernacle of the congregation: <sup>i</sup>and all the congregation drew near, and stood before the LORD.

6 And Moses said, This *is* the thing which the LORD commanded that ye should do: and <sup>k</sup>the glory of the LORD shall appear unto you.

7 And Moses said unto Aaron, Go unto the altar, and <sup>l</sup>offer thy sin-offer-

ing, and thy burnt-offering, and make an atonement for thyself, and for the people, and <sup>m</sup>offer the offering of the people, and make an atonement for them, as the LORD commanded.

8 ¶ Aaron therefore went unto the altar, <sup>n</sup>and slew the calf of the sin-offering, which *was* for himself.

9 And the sons of Aaron brought the blood unto him: and <sup>o</sup>he dipt his finger in the blood, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar, and poured out the blood at the bottom of the altar.

10 But <sup>p</sup>the fat, and the kidneys, and the caul above the liver of the sin-offering he burnt upon the altar; <sup>q</sup>as the LORD commanded Moses.

11 And <sup>r</sup>the flesh and the hide he burnt with fire, without the camp.

12 And he slew <sup>s</sup>the burnt-offering; and Aaron's sons presented unto him the blood, which he sprinkled round about upon the altar.

13 And they presented the burnt-offering unto him, with the pieces thereof, and the head: and he burnt *them* upon the altar.

14 And he did wash the inwards and the legs, and burnt *them* upon the burnt-offering on the altar.

## NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1—7. On the eighth day, after the consecration of Aaron and his sons had begun, Aaron was directed to enter on his sacerdotal ministrations: but though so many sin-offerings had been brought, and so many solemn rites of purification had been exactly observed; his first oblation must be another sin-offering for himself! As, however, no particular offence was to be expiated, but merely the defects of his preceding services, a calf of the first year, instead of a young bullock, was appointed: yet some think that he was thus reminded of his sin, in making the golden calf.—After offering this and his own burnt-offering, the next sacrifice was a sin-offering for the people; not a young bullock, as required for any special transgression, but a kid of the goats as on the great day of atonement. After the sin-offering and burnt-offering of the people had been sacrificed, peace-offerings were added, on which they might feast before God: but, as the priests would have a part of the oblations brought by the people, they presented no peace-offering. During the preceding days, there had been no peculiar discoveries of the divine presence or glory; and the sacrifices seem to have been offered with common fire, as on former occasions: but now, in honour of Aaron's typical priesthood, and to sanction what had been done, the Lord intended to display

his presence and glory, and the people must therefore prepare to meet him.

V. 8—11. It seems evident from the narrative, that Aaron *personally*, (though assisted by his sons,) slew his own sacrifices; and also those of the people as their representative, though perhaps the elders assisted in this part of the service. The Levites were not yet set apart for their work; and the most laborious part of such offices afterwards devolved on them, or on the Nethinims. On this occasion, however, Aaron and his sons took the lead, as well in killing and preparing the sacrifices, as in burning the sin-offerings. It does not appear that the blood, either of the sin-offerings described in the preceding chapter, or of this for Aaron, was brought into the sanctuary: yet the bodies were burned without the camp. The priests ate the sin-offerings of the people, as *typically bearing their iniquity*; but they could not bear their own sin; and therefore they ate no part of any sin-offerings sacrificed for themselves, but the whole was carried forth out of the camp, as taken quite away by Christ the great Antitype.

V. 12—14. It is not certain, whether these burnt-offerings, and the fat of the other sacrifices, were consumed by common fire, as on the former days; or only laid in readiness, till the fire from the Lord fell and consumed the whole.

15 ¶ And he brought the people's offering, and took <sup>a</sup> the goat which *was* the sin-offering for the people, and slew it, and offered it for sin, as the first.

16 And he brought the burnt-offering, and offered it according to the manner.

17 And he brought <sup>a</sup> the meat-offering, and <sup>†</sup> took an handful thereof, and burnt *it* upon the altar, <sup>\*</sup> beside the burnt sacrifice of the morning.

18 He slew also the bullock and the ram, *for* <sup>†</sup> a sacrifice of peace-offerings which *was* for the people: and Aaron's sons presented unto him the blood, which he sprinkled upon the altar round about,

19 And <sup>\*</sup> the fat of the bullock, and of the ram, the rump, and that which covereth *the inwards*, and the kidneys, and the caul *above* the liver.

20 And <sup>\*</sup> they put the fat upon the breasts, and he <sup>b</sup> burnt the fat upon the altar:

21 And <sup>\*</sup> the breasts and the right shoulder Aaron waved *for* a wave-offering, before the LORD; as Moses commanded.

22 And Aaron <sup>d</sup> lifted up his hand towards the people, and blessed them: and came down from offering of the sin-offering, and the burnt-offering, and peace-offerings.

23 And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and <sup>e</sup> came out and blessed the people: and <sup>f</sup> the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people.

24 And <sup>g</sup> there came a fire out from before the LORD, and consumed upon the altar the burnt-offering, and the fat: *which* when all the people saw, <sup>h</sup> they shouted and fell on their faces.

<sup>a</sup> See on iv. 27—31.—Is. liii. 10. Heb. ii. 17.

<sup>\*</sup> Or, ordinance 1.—3—10.

<sup>†</sup> ii. 1, 2

<sup>†</sup> Heb. filled his hand out of it.

<sup>\*</sup> Ex. xxix. 38—42.

<sup>v</sup> See on iii. vii. 1—18.—Rom. v. 1, 10. Eph. ii. 4—17 Col. i. 20.

<sup>z</sup> See on 10.

<sup>a</sup> vii. 29—34.

<sup>b</sup> iii. 14—17.

<sup>c</sup> vii. 30—34. Ex. xxix. 27, 28

<sup>d</sup> Gen. xiv. 18—20. Num. vi. 23—27. Deut. x. 8. xxi. 5. 1 Kings vii. 55. 1 Chr. xxiii. 13. 2 Chr. vi. 3. Ps. lxxxi. 17. Mark x. 16. Luke xxiv. 50. Acts iii. 26. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. Heb. vi. 6, 7. 1 Pet. iii. 9.

<sup>e</sup> Luke i. 21, 22. Heb. ix. 24—28. <sup>f</sup> See on 6.—Num. xiv. 10. xvi. 19—42.

<sup>g</sup> Gen. iv. 3, 4. xv. 17. Ex. iii. 2. Judg. vi. 21. xiii. 19, 20, 28. 1 King. xviii. 38. 1 Chr. xxi. 26. 2 Chr. vii. 1—3. Ps. xx. 3. <sup>h</sup> Marg. <sup>h</sup> Gen. xvii. 8. 1 Kings xviii. 38. Ezra iii. 11.

V. 15. Aaron prepared the sin-offering of the people as he had his own; but it is not certain, whether it was then burnt without the camp, or afterwards on the altar. It ought not to have been burnt at all, but eaten by him and his sons. (Notes, x. 16—20.)

V. 17. *Beside the burnt sacrifice, &c.*] It is probable, that from the first setting up of the altar, Moses had offered on it the morning and evening-sacrifice of a lamb for a burnt-offering; and accordingly, it had been offered on the morning of this memorable day.

V. 22, 23. When Aaron had finished his sacred work at the altar, he blessed the people before he left the place: that is, he prayed for them, pronounced a blessing on them in the name of God, and encouraged their hopes of the divine acceptance in their services. This seems to have been always considered as a part of his priestly office; and orders are afterwards given about it. (Notes, Num. vi. 23—27.) He then came down; (for the altar seems to have been rather raised above the rest of the court;) and he entered into the tabernacle with Moses, who doubtless directed him how to perform the appointed services there, as he had before shewn him how to order the sacrifices at the altar. Then they both united in again blessing the people; and, while thus employed, the divine glory appeared resplendent from the cloud, resting on the tabernacle, and probably filling it; which denoted the Lord's acceptance of it for his typical dwelling-place in Israel.

V. 24. This fire came forth from the visible glory before-mentioned. Perhaps the former sacrifices had already been consumed, and the latter had been placed upon the altar, when fire from before the Lord rapidly consumed them. This fire was afterwards long preserved upon the altar. By this token the Lord signified his acceptance of the vicarious atonement; as the fire which represented his righteous vengeance consumed the sacrifice and spared the sinners. On witnessing this awful, but probably ex-

pected scene, the people shouted with exultation, and prostrated themselves in adoring worship.—Thus, our sin, having been laid upon Christ, and divine justice satisfied by his atonement, mercy is extended and grace given to every true believer. (Marg. Ref. g.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

After the example of Aaron and his sons, and of him whom Aaron typified, the ministers of Christ should consider their ordination as “filling their hands;” and without delay enter upon their important business: for he that properly desires that office, desires not honour, profit, ease, or pleasure, but “a good work;” so that, without waiting to receive even the congratulation of his friends, he should set about it; and not deem any thing, which is honourable to God, or useful to the Church, or to a single individual, too laborious, mean, or disgusting. He should also first take heed to himself; and be careful that his public ministrations do not interrupt his personal religion, and the care of his own soul. And all persons should remember, that the exercise of repentance, faith, and devotedness to God, and communion with him in his ordinances, is not merely the work of a few days, at the commencement of a religious profession, but the daily business of the believer's whole life.—Words can never express the energy, with which these multiplied sacrifices, all at once superseded by the death of Christ, mark the insufficiency of all other atonements, and the efficacy of his “one offering of himself;” and teach us that our best services need washing in his blood; and that the guilt of our best sacrifices needs expiating by one more pure and noble than they. Let us then be thankful that “we have such a High Priest over the House of God,” who hath no sin of his own to atone for, and who, by his “one oblation of himself once offered,” hath fully atoned for the sins of all his people. Having offered his sacrifice,

## CHAP. X.

Nadab and Abihu, burning incense with strange fire, are consumed by fire from the Lord, 1, 2. Moses shews the reason of this judgment, and orders their burial; while Aaron holds his peace, 3—5. Aaron and his other sons are forbidden to mourn, 6, 7; and are prohibited from drinking wine, or strong drink, when going into the sanctuary, 8—11. Moses gives directions about eating the holy things, 12—15. A mistake is discovered about the people's sin-offering; Moses reproves the priests, and Aaron excuses it, 16

• Ex. vi. 23. xxiv. 1. 9. xxvii. 1. b xvi. 12. Ex. xxvii. 3. xxxviii. 3. Num. xvi. 6. 7. 16. 17. 46. Heb. ix. 4.

AND \*Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his <sup>b</sup> censer,

and being risen from the dead, he blessed his church before he entered the holy place, to appear in the presence of God, and to make intercession for us: (*Note, Luke xxiv. 50—53*;) whence he will shortly come again; and with the full consent of prophets, apostles, saints, and angels, make good his benediction, in the everlasting felicity of every true Israelite. In the mean time, he will manifest himself, and shew the glory of the Father, to those who wait upon him, though not to the world.—Let us, however, remember with holy awe, that the same agonies of the beloved Son of God, which assure the humble penitent of exemption from the deserved fiery vengeance of divine justice, loudly proclaim the inevitable destruction of such, as proudly and impenitently neglect, or hypocritically abuse, so great salvation: for he, who in awful justice “spared not his own Son,” will not spare them. Finally, let us attend on the means of grace; and, as it were, lay the wood in order, and prepare the sacrifice, and wait and pray, till the “baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire” burn up our corrupt affections, kindle the flame of true devotion, and enable us to offer “spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

## NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1, 2. The golden calf had occasioned a lamentable delay in erecting the tabernacle; and now the sin of Nadab and Abihu caused an awful interruption in the opening of the service. Next to Moses and Aaron, none stood higher, or were more likely to be honourable in Israel, than these two young men. Perhaps they were elated with this distinction, and were influenced by pride and ostentation; it is also probable they were in some measure heated with wine. (*Note, 8—11.*) Being fully consecrated, and considering the burning of incense as the most honourable part of their office, they were impatient to enter upon it: and, at the season, when the people were prostrated in adoration of the manifested presence and glory of God, they rashly and presumptuously, *without orders*, which they should have waited for; both at once, which was never practised; and with fire taken, not from the altar of burnt-offering, but probably from under the peace-offerings; attempted to enter the tabernacle to burn incense, though it was not the hour at which this service was appointed to be done. Perhaps, they intended to place their censers on the golden altar. This conduct evidenced great irreverence, and might have been a very

and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered <sup>d</sup> strange fire before the LORD, <sup>e</sup> which he commanded them not.

2 And there went out <sup>f</sup> fire from the LORD and devoured them, and <sup>g</sup> they died before the LORD.

3 Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, <sup>h</sup> I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and <sup>i</sup> before all the people I

bad precedent to their brethren and successors; to prevent which, the Lord was pleased to make them an example to the Old Testament-church at its first formation, by causing the fire from his presence to slay them suddenly, without consuming their bodies, or their clothes; (*Note, Num. xvi. 35*;) as Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead at the first establishment of the New Testament-church. (*Note, Acts v. 1—11.*)

V. 3. The priests were especially intended by the words, “them that come nigh me;” and some of the texts referred to in the margin shew, that they had been repeatedly warned in this respect, in order that their example might edify the people. Indeed, this accords to the tenour of divine revelation in every part; and not only ministers, but all who worship God are often reminded, that if they do not honour him, he will honour himself in their punishment.—Even the way of a sinner’s acceptance, though full of encouragement, and an especial manifestation of the mercy of God, clearly reveals his awful justice and holiness; and solemnly and loudly proclaims that he will be approached with reverence, and in sincere abhorrence of all sin: but this is often overlooked. The Lord hath therefore seen good, under both dispensations, to deter men from perverting his mercy, by terrible threatenings and awful judgments; and we have reason to think, that the death of Nadab and Abihu had a very salutary and durable effect, especially upon Aaron and his sons, and their successors. But with what exquisite anguish must the heart of Aaron have been torn! and what dismay must have seized upon him, at this unlooked for and most afflicting stroke! His own sons—his eldest sons—just consecrated to so high and important an office,—concerning whom he had doubtless formed the most pleasing hopes;—cut off suddenly, in such a state of mind, by the immediate judgment of God, for presumptuous disobedience, and publicly as an example to all Israel!—Each of these reflections must have struck a dagger into his heart, and have aggravated the agony to which he was all at once reduced, from a confluence of the most delightful sensations. This must have been the effect of every reflection, but one; namely, on the justice, wisdom, and love of God; his sovereign right to dispose of him and his, as he saw good; and the important purposes, for his glory and the good of his people, which would thence result; and this thought seems to have so far quieted his mind, as to repress every hard and murmuring thought,

c Ex. xxx. 1—9. 34—36. xxxi. 11. xxxvii. 29. xl. 27. 1 Kings xii. 1, 2. 2 Chr. xxxv. 16—20. Ps. cxlii. 2. Jer. xlv. 8. 15, 19—21. Luke i. 9—11. Rev. viii. 8—5. d ix. 24. xvi. 12. Num. xvi. 18. 46. e Ex. xxx. 9. Deut. iv. 2. xii. 32. xvii. 3. Jer. vii. 31. xix. 5. xxxii. 36. f xvi. 1. Num. iii. 3. 4. xvi. 35. xxi. 61. 1 Chr. xxiv. 2. g Num. xvi. 32. h viii. 35. xxi. 6. xxii. 9. Ex. xiv. 4. xix. 22. xxix. 43, 44. Num. xx. 12. Deut. xxxii. 51. 1 Sam. vi. 20. 1 Chr. xv. 13. Ps. lxxxix. 7. cxix. 120. Is. lii. 11. Ez. xx. 41. Heb. xii. 28, 29. i 1 Sam. ii. 30. Is. xlix. 3. Ez. xxvii. 22. John xiii. 31, 32. xiv. 18. Acts v. 11—13. 2 Thes. i. 10. 1 Pet. iv. 17.

will be glorified. And <sup>k</sup> Aaron held his peace.

4 And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of <sup>l</sup> Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said unto them, Come near, <sup>m</sup> carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp.

5 So they went near, and carried them in their coats out of the camp; as Moses had said.

6 And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar his sons, <sup>n</sup> Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes; lest ye die, and lest <sup>o</sup> wrath come upon all the people: but let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled.

7 And <sup>p</sup> ye shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: for <sup>q</sup> the anointing oil of the LORD is upon you. And they did according to the word of Moses.

8 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying,

9 Do <sup>r</sup> not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die. <sup>s</sup> It shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations:

10 And that ye may <sup>t</sup> put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean:

11 And <sup>u</sup> that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses.

12 ¶ And Moses spake unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar, and unto Ithamar, his sons that were left, <sup>v</sup> Take the meat-offering that remaineth of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and eat it without leaven beside the altar: <sup>w</sup> for it is most holy.

13 And ye shall eat it in the holy place, because it is thy due and thy sons' due, of the sacrifices of the LORD made by fire: for so I am commanded.

14 And <sup>y</sup> the wave-breast and heave-shoulder shall ye eat in a clean place;

and to bow his will into reverent submission; as well as to stop his mouth, and prevent him from uttering one complaining word!—Without doubt, he would now recollect the golden calf, with deep humility and admiration of the Lord's patience towards him. Indeed, in all respects, he seems to have been peculiarly supported by divine grace, on this most trying occasion.

V. 4, 5. It is far more probable, that Nadab and Abihu were struck dead at the door of the tabernacle, than that they had actually entered: for Moses and others seem to have witnessed the catastrophe, which would not have been the case, had they been within. The sacerdotal garments, being thus polluted, were no longer fit for use, and they seem to have been buried in them.—Mishael and Elzaphan were Levites; the service allotted them was an impressive lesson; and when they carried the dead bodies through the camp, they presented to the view of the people a most affecting sight, which would be an important caution and a solemn warning to them all.

V. 6. Different opinions have been formed, concerning the prohibition contained in the words rendered, "Uncover not your heads." But, as it must denote something immediately to be done or omitted, the opinion that the priests were forbidden to put off their sacerdotal bonnets, as well as to rend their clothes, is most probable.—Aaron, however, and his surviving sons, were forbidden to express their grief by the customary tokens; that they might not seem to reflect on the divine justice and goodness; to teach them to subject their strongest passions to reason and conscience; and to remind them, that in comparison of the divine glory, even the nearest relations must be disre-

garded. And as they had so lately been anointed to their sacred and important office, with which even the safety of the nation was intimately connected; they must not, on any personal consideration, suffer their services to be interrupted. For had they also provoked the Lord to slay them, the people would have been left, without priest or sacrifice, exposed to the just wrath of God. Yet neither on this occasion, nor at any subsequent period, was another family appointed to succeed, in case that of Aaron should be extinct.—The people in general, however, were allowed to bewail this event, which doubtless they did, with the usual expressions of sorrow.

V. 8—11. As the sin of Nadab and Abihu seems, in part at least, to have been occasioned by a degree of inebriation; a law was on this account enacted, that the priests should drink no wine, nor intoxicating liquor, either before or during their ministrations in the sanctuary; in order that their judgments might be unclouded by the fumes of intemperance, especially when required to practise or interpret the law of God. This command was immediately given to Aaron, to encourage him by such a token of regard; and because the Lord would not have it appear, as if Moses had not sympathised in his affliction, or had intended to charge him with criminality in this respect.

V. 12—15. (*Marg. Ref.*) Moses at this time repeated, or explained and enforced, the laws before given; lest the interruption which had taken place should cause Aaron and his sons to forget them.—The meat-offering, as most holy, must be eaten by the priests, or the sons of the priests, in the holy place; but the portion allotted them of

thou and thy sons, and thy daughters with thee: for *they be* thy due, and thy sons' due, *which* are given out of the sacrifices of peace-offerings of the children of Israel.

15 The heave-shoulder, and the wave-breast shall they bring, with the offerings made by fire of the fat, to wave *it for* a wave-offering before the LORD, and it shall be thine and thy sons' with thee, by a statute for ever; as the LORD hath commanded.

16 ¶ And Moses diligently sought <sup>z vi. 26. 30. iz. 3. 15.</sup> the goat of the sin-offering, and behold it was burnt: and he was <sup>a Ex. xxxiii. 19—22. Num. xii. 3. Matt. v. 22. Mark iii. 5. x. 14. Eph. iv. 26.</sup> angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron *which were left alive*, saying,

17 Wherefore have ye not eaten the

sin-offering in the holy place, seeing it *is* most holy, and *God* hath given it you <sup>b xvi. 22. xxii. 16. Ex. xxviii. 38. 43. Num. xviii. 1. Is. liii. 11. Ez. iv. 4—6. xviii. 19, 20. Heb. ix. 28. 1 Pet. ii. 24. vi. 30.</sup> to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the LORD?

18 Behold, <sup>d vi. 26.</sup> the blood of it was not brought in, within the holy place: ye should indeed have eaten it in the holy place, <sup>e ix. 8. 12.</sup> as I commanded.

19 And Aaron said unto Moses, Behold, <sup>f Deut. xii. 7. xxvii. 14. 1 Sam. i. 7. 8. Hos. ix. 4. Mal. ii. 13. Phil. iv. 4. 2 Chr. xxx. 18—20. Matt. xii. 3 —7. 20.</sup> this day have they offered their sin-offering and their burnt-offering before the LORD; and such things have befallen me: and *if* I had eaten the sin-offering to-day, <sup>g</sup> should it have been accepted in the sight of the LORD?

20 And when Moses heard *that*, <sup>h</sup> he was content.

the peace-offerings might be eaten in any clean place, with their families.

V. 16—18. The sacrifice here spoken of was a sin-offering for the congregation; yet, as it was a goat, and not a young bull, (no doubt by special direction,) the blood was not carried into the sanctuary, to be put upon the altar of incense, or sprinkled before the veil; and therefore the flesh ought not to have been burnt without the camp, or upon the altar; but, when the priests had done eating, to have been consumed in the same manner as the remaining flesh of the other sacrifices. It is not evident, whether this was done by inadvertency, or because Aaron, from the state of his mind, drew a wrong conclusion. Moses, however, was angry at this deviation from the divine precept, and probably feared that further rebukes would be the consequence. He therefore expostulated with Eleazar and Ithamar; not with Aaron, lest he should add to his heavy distress.—His language is remarkable: “God hath given it to you, to bear the iniquity of the congregation, &c.” Sinners, who suffer deserved punishment, are said to “eat of the fruit of their own ways, and to be filled with their own devices.” *Prov. i. 31.* Thus the priests, by eating the sin-offering of the people were represented as *bearing* their iniquity for them: but in burning without the camp *their own* sin-offerings, and all other sacrifices, the blood of which was carried into the sanctuary, they owned that they were only types; and that both their own iniquity, and that of the people, must be finally transferred to the great Antitype, and effectually expiated by him.—“God bestowed upon the priests this reward of their service, that they might be more willing to take upon them the people’s sins, and to make an expiation carefully for them. And indeed, the very eating of the people’s sin-offering argued the sins of the people, in some sort, laid upon the priests, to be taken away by them. Which being done, they had reason to rejoice also in a feast upon this sacrifice, which God had been pleased to accept, for the taking away of the sins of the people. From whence the sacrifice of Christ may be explained, who is said to *bear our iniquity*, (as the priest is here said to do,) all our sins *being laid on him*; who took upon him to make an expiation for them

by the sacrifice of himself. For the priest here, by eating of the sin-offering, receiving the guilt upon himself, may well be thought to prefigure one, who should be both Priest and Sacrifice for sin: which was accomplished in Christ.’ *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 19, 20. Though Eleazar and Ithamar were addressed, Aaron alone replied; conscious perhaps that the sin-offering had been burnt by his directions, or that he had not been sufficiently careful that it should be rightly disposed of. He acknowledged that, in this respect, the rule had not been exactly observed: but he intimated that, in other things, his surviving sons had been very attentive to their duty, and had offered the sin-offering and burnt-offering for the people, (for so he seems to mean,) with much circumspection. Indeed, the deviation which had been made, was by no means the effect of a presumptuous disregard to the divine command; and such things had befallen him, that he could not have eaten the sacred feast with calmness and cheerfulness, though he had submitted to the will of God in the awful dispensation. And, as his mind was agitated with various conflicting passions, and depressed with a sense of his unworthiness; he could not suppose that his service would have been acceptable, if he had attempted it.—With this excuse Moses was satisfied; being sensible that Aaron had borne his affliction in a proper manner; that he could not possibly with cheerfulness have eaten the holy things; and that he intended to do right in burning them. It seems also, that the Lord approved of this determination.

*Their sin-offering, &c.* (19) The priests had, on the same day, “offered their sin-offering, and their burnt-offering,” which were burnt; and through inadvertency, they had disposed of the sin-offering of the people in the same manner. This may be the meaning; and then the sin-offering of the people was not burned *intentionally*, by Aaron’s direction, but by the mistake of his sons.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—11.

With what solemn attention should we hear these words of the great and terrible LORD God, “I will be sanctified

## CHAP. XI.

What beasts might be eaten and what might not,  
1—8 : what fishes, 9—12 : what birds, or flying crea-

“in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified!” Contemplating with holy awe his majesty, purity, and avenging justice, we may well exclaim, “My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.” Nay, even the discoveries of his boundless mercy, as revealed in the gospel, and of the way in which that mercy is exercised, are suited to form our spirits to humble reverence united with filial confidence.—Alas! when we consider from what motives, and in what manner, great numbers of those who are called the “priests of the LORD,” draw nigh to him in their sacred services; and what effects their spirit, conduct, and ministrations, are suited to produce on the people; we cannot but wonder, that examples of severity, like that before us, are not frequently made. But assuredly, unless repentance intervene, the Lord will, before the assembled world, “be glorified” in the dreadful punishment of those who have thus openly dishonoured him, and who have led others also to despise his ordinances or revile his truth.—It behoves us however to beware, not only of profaneness, or gross irreverence in this sacred work, but likewise of *strange fire*. Great earnestness and fervency may be shewn, when we are actuated by no better motives, than an eager desire of distinguishing ourselves, of acquiring honour or advantage, or of promoting the credit and success of the party to which we are attached. Our zeal may result from enthusiasm and unscriptural confidence; it may be exercised with bitterness and malevolence; it may excite us to call for fire from heaven on our opponents, or to kindle the flames of persecution on earth; and in various ways it may be no other than the heat and vehemence of selfish passions. This is *strange fire*, not kindled at the altar of burnt-offering, not the fruit of the Spirit of Christ, not a heavenly fervour of love to God and man, inducing humble, earnest, affectionate, and patient endeavours, by warranted means alone, to promote the cause of religion in the world, and especially among those with whom we are immediately connected. But not ministers alone are concerned: all, who profess to worship God, “draw nigh to him;” and if their lives do not honour him, he will at length glorify himself in their awful destruction.—We need not, however, go further than ourselves: for when we duly consider the holiness of our heart-searching Judge, and the adorations of the heavenly host, and then reflect on our prayers and praises; we must be ready to say, “Woe is me, I am undone! because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of Hosts!” *Is. vi. 5.* And nothing, but the sense of pardoning love through the atonement of Christ, his gracious promises, and the consolations of the Holy Spirit, can embolden us in attempting to serve and worship our holy God. Yet, even thus encouraged, we should look diligently to ourselves and to our rule, that we may approach him in the appointed manner, and in a recollected, humble spirit; fearing the rebukes with which he chastens his own people, even though delivered from the dread of the everlasting punishment reserved for

tures, 13—23. How ritual uncleanness would be contracted, by touching the carcases of unclean animals; and how it must be cleansed, 24—40. Reptiles not to be eaten, 41—43. The reason of these laws, 44—47.

his enemies.—Honours and distinctions are dangerous, because they tend to excite and invigorate the pride and ambition of our hearts; we should therefore be peculiarly watchful over ourselves, and earnest in prayer to be kept humble, when the Lord is pleased to employ us in any useful and reputable service, or in any way to advance us above our brethren. And as all, who would serve God, must “take heed, that their hearts be not overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness;” so the ministers of religion especially should keep at the greatest distance from this hateful vice. Above all other men they need clear heads and sound judgments, as well as upright hearts; not only that “they themselves die not,” but that they may “put a difference between holy and unholy,” “and teach the people all that the LORD hath spoken.” They are peculiarly required to watch and be sober, that they may rise superior even to their natural affections; that they may be able to govern every passion, and be examples to others of that supreme love of God, which subordinates all other regards: for the important work of their ministry must not be interrupted, lest wrath come upon the people also. Indeed, we all should learn to mourn and rejoice, as though we mourned and rejoiced not; for we may be assured, that all our comforts must be counterbalanced with trials, and all our honours with “some thorn in the flesh, lest we should be exalted above measure.” But the remembrance of former sins may well stop our mouths, and produce silent submission under our bitterest sorrows: “for it is of the LORD’s mercy we are not consumed;” and we have still many unmerited comforts remaining, and encouraging prospects before us. However great our inward anguish may be, we should learn to suppress the rising murmur, to “keep our mouth as with a bridle,” and be careful that we do not reflect upon God. If we thus profit by these examples of his severity, we shall have “a witness in ourselves” of the wisdom and goodness of God, in this part of his dealings with mankind.

## V. 12—20.

Though our *improper* attendance on religious ordinances may expose us to wrath, yet we must not neglect them. Some indeed, by unworthily receiving the Lord’s supper, ‘have provoked the Lord to plague them with divers diseases, and with sundry kinds of death;’ yet others should not, on that account, ‘neglect this bounden duty and service;’ on the contrary, “let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.” Nor need a humble communicant, who comes, ‘not trusting in his own righteousness, but in the Lord’s mercy,’ be discouraged; for he knows how to distinguish between presumptuous rashness or contemptuous disobedience, and the involuntary infirmities or unallowed mistakes of the conscientious. After the example of Christ also, his ministers, while taking heed that all is done in the prescribed manner, noticing whatever is amiss, and on some occasions expressing a holy indignation, and rebuking with all authority; must be cautious not to confound inadvertencies with intended disobedience, or to grieve those whom

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, and to Aaron, saying unto them,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, "These *are* the beasts which ye shall eat, among all the beasts that *are* on the earth.

3 Whatsoever <sup>b</sup>parteth the hoof, and is cloven-footed, *and* <sup>c</sup>cheweth the cud among the beasts, that shall ye eat.

4 Nevertheless, these shall ye not eat, of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the hoof: *as* the camel, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof; he *is* unclean unto you.

5 And <sup>d</sup>the coney, because he chew-

eth the cud, <sup>e</sup>but divideth not the hoof: he *is* unclean unto you.

6 And the <sup>f</sup>hare, because he cheweth the cud, but divideth not the hoof: he *is* unclean unto you.

7 And the <sup>g</sup>swine, though he divideth the hoof, and be cloven-footed; yet he cheweth not the cud: he *is* unclean to you.

8 Of their flesh ye shall not eat, and their carcase ye shall not touch: <sup>h</sup>they *are* unclean to you.

9 ¶ These shall ye eat, of all that *are* in the waters: <sup>i</sup>whatsoever hath fins and scales in the waters, in the seas, and in the rivers, them shall ye eat.

<sup>a</sup> Deut. xiv. 3-8  
Ex. iv. 14. Dan.  
i. 8. Matt. xv.  
11. Mark vii. 15  
—19. Rom. xiv.  
2. 3. 14. 15.  
1 Tim. iv. 4-6  
Heb. xiii. 9  
<sup>b</sup> Ps. i. 1. Prov.  
ix. 6. 2 Cor. vi.  
17.  
<sup>c</sup> Deut. vi. 6, 7.  
Ps. i. 2. Prov. ii.  
1. 2. 10. Acts  
xvii. 11. 1 Tim.  
iv. 15.  
<sup>d</sup> Ps. civ. 18. Prov.  
xxx. 26.

<sup>e</sup> Job xxxvi. 14  
Matt. vii. 26.  
Rom. ii. 18-24.  
Phil. iii. 18, 19.  
2 Tim. iii. 5.  
Tit. i. 10.  
Rev. xxi. 8.

<sup>g</sup> Is. lxxv. 4. lxxvi.  
3. 17. Matt. vii.  
6. Luke viii. 33.  
xv. 15. 2 Pet. ii.  
18-22.

<sup>h</sup> v. 2. Is. iii. 11.  
Hos. ix. 3. Mark  
vii. 2. 15. 18.  
Acts x. 11-15.  
28. xv. 29. Rom.  
xiv. 14-17. 21.  
1 Cor. viii. 8.  
2 Cor. vi. 17.  
Col. ii. 16. 21-  
23. Heb. ix. 10.  
<sup>i</sup> Deut. xiv. 9, 10.

the Lord has wounded: they must rather make allowances, and accept of excuses; and "restore those, who have been overtaken in a fault, in the spirit of meekness, "considering themselves lest they also be tempted."

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1. Aaron was at this time fully established in the high priesthood, and these laws related to such things, as fell especially under the cognizance of him and his sons; he was therefore addressed along with Moses on this occasion.

V. 2. The Creator pronounced all his works separately *good*, and altogether when finished *very good*: (Note, Gen. i. 31 :) yet the distinction between clean and unclean animals was known even before the flood; though probably it only related to sacrifices. But at this time, very particular laws were enacted respecting the people's diet, and the ceremonial uncleanness contracted by touching the carcases of unclean animals. These laws seem to have been enacted, in the first place, as a test of obedience, like the prohibition to Adam of "the tree of knowledge;" and to teach the Israelites habits of self-denial, and the government of their appetites. Secondly, to keep them distinct from other nations, both by throwing hindrances in the way of their social intercourse with them, and by establishing the distinction between clean and unclean, which was applicable to persons as well as things: when therefore this distinction was no longer to be observed, Peter was instructed by a vision, which had relation to the distinction of meats, "not to call any man common or unclean." (Note, Acts x. 9-16.) Many also of these forbidden animals were occasions of superstition and idolatry to the Heathen. Thirdly, to teach them to make distinctions between holy and unholy, in the choice of companions, and in forming intimate connexions. And fourthly, the propensities of these animals taught them what manner of persons they ought to be: for if the pure, useful, gentle, patient nature of the animals appointed for sacrifice, was emblematical of the Saviour's character; it is obvious to conclude, that the exclusive prescription of some animals for the diet of the Lord's people was also significant. Some have even thought that the allowance of the slaughter

of *innocent animals*, for the food of *sinful man*, forms a continued type of the purchase and application of the salvation of Christ, and of our transformation into his image, while we spiritually "eat his flesh and drink his blood."

V. 3-8. "Parting the hoof" may denote separation from sin and the world, and distinguishing between truth and error, good and evil; while "chewing the cud" aptly represents serious, pleasant, habitual meditation upon the truths and precepts of the word of God, in order to a holy conversation. These are united in the experience and character of the true Christian; but hypocrites show that they do neither in sincerity, by evidently attempting to separate between profession and practice; and therefore they are as unclean as the avowed infidel or profligate.—The fox, the dog, the lion, the wolf, and indeed animals in general which are carnivorous, neither chew the cud nor divide the hoof; other animals do only the one, and were therefore unclean. The former are apt emblems of the crafty, the covetous, the cruel, and the fierce; many of the latter, of the lewd, the sensual, and the carnally minded; whilst the sheep and ox, and other animals which unite the two, aptly teach us what we ought to be, and with whom we should associate. The foot of the camel is divided on the upper part of it, but it is strongly joined beneath; so that he does not "part the hoof." It is doubted whether the words, rendered *coney* and *hare*, be properly translated; because it is not known that these animals chew the cud. They were, however, unclean. The swine is the emblem of filthiness; but it is marked as unclean on the same ground as the other animals. It is probable, that the peculiar aversion of the Jews to the swine, arose from those animals being commonly sacrificed in the worship of idolaters. Some think that the flesh of the unclean animals was prohibited as unwholesome; yet the flesh of hares and rabbits seems to be as wholesome as that of sheep and goats.—The Israelites were not only forbidden to eat the flesh of the unclean beasts, but they must not touch their dead bodies: and consequently the use of their skins, and even of their fat, was interdicted.

V. 9-12. Frogs, amphibious creatures, sea-monsters, eels, and several species of fishes, were thus prohibited as

10 And all that have not fins nor scales in the seas, and in the rivers, of all that move in the waters, and of any living thing, which *is* in the waters; they *shall be* an abomination unto you.

11 They shall be even an abomination unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, but ye shall have their carcases in abomination.

12 Whatsoever hath no fins nor scales in the waters, that *shall be* an abomination unto you.

13 ¶ And these *are they which* ye shall have in abomination among the fowls, they shall not be eaten; they *are* an abomination: <sup>a</sup> the eagle, and the ossifrage, and the ospray,

14 And the vulture, and the kite, after his kind:

15 Every <sup>1</sup> raven after his kind:

16 And <sup>a</sup> the owl, and the night-hawk, and the cuckow, and the hawk, after his kind,

17 And the little owl, and the corn-morant, and the great owl,

18 And the swan, and the pelican, and the gier-eagle,

19 And the stork, the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat.

20 All fowls that <sup>a</sup> creep, going upon all four, *shall be* an abomination unto you.

21 Yet these may ye eat of every flying creeping thing that goeth upon all four, which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth:

22 *Even* these of them ye may eat: <sup>a</sup> the locust after his kind, and the bald

locust after his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind.

23 But all *other* flying creeping things, which have four feet, *shall be* an abomination unto you.

24 And for these ye shall be unclean: whosoever <sup>1</sup> toucheth the carcase of them shall be unclean until the even.

25 And whosoever beareth *ought* of the carcase of them shall <sup>1</sup> wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.

26 *The carcases* of every beast which divideth the hoof, and *is* not cloven-footed, nor cheweth the cud, *are* unclean unto you: every one that toucheth them shall be unclean.

27 And whatsoever goeth upon his paws, among all manner of beasts, that go on *all* four, those *are* unclean unto you: whoso toucheth their carcase shall be unclean until the even.

28 And he that beareth the carcase of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: they *are* unclean unto you.

29 ¶ These also *shall be* unclean unto you among the <sup>1</sup> creeping things that creep upon the earth; the weasel, and <sup>a</sup> the mouse, and the tortoise after his kind,

30 And the ferret, and the chameleon, and the lizard, and the snail, and the mole.

31 These *are* unclean to you among all that creep: whosoever doth touch them, when they be dead, shall be unclean until the even.

j vii. 18. Deut. xiv. 3. Ps. cxlvi. 21, 22. Prov. xiii. 20. xxix. 27. Rev. xxi. 8.

k Deut. xiv. 12—20. Job xxxix. 27—30. Jer. iv. 13. xlviii. 40. Lam. iv. 19. Hab. i. 8. Matt. xxiv. 28. Rom. iii. 13—17.

l Gen. viii. 7. 1 Kings xvii. 4. 6. Prov. xxx. 17. Luke xii. 24.

m Ps. cii. 6. Is. xlii. 21. 22. xxxiv. 11—15. John iii. 19—21. Eph. iv. 18, 19. v. 7—11. 1 Thes. v. 5—7. Rev. xviii. 2.

n Matt. vi. 24. Phil. iii. 18, 19. 1 John ii. 15—17. Jude 10, 19.

c Matt. iii. 4. Mark i. 6.

p 27. 31. 1 Cor. xv. 33. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. ii. 1—3. v. 11. Heb. ix. 28.

q 28. 40. xiv. 9. xv. 5. xvi. 28. Ex. xix. 10, 14. Num. xix. 8, 10, 19, 21. xxxi. 24. Zech. xiii. 1. John xiii. 6. Acts xxii. 16. Heb. ix. 10. Rev. vii. 14.

r Ps. x. 3. xvii. 14. Hab. ii. 6. Luke xii. 15. xvi. 14. Col. iii. 5. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Is. lxvi. 17.

an abomination; but the emblem is very obscure: some of them may represent such persons, as attempt to reconcile in their conduct the service of God and mammon.

V. 13—20. Here the critics find abundance of work; and if this law were now in force, it would be necessary to decide upon the meaning of the original words, many of which are used in no other part of Scripture, except in the parallel passage in Deuteronomy. (Deut. xiv. 11—20.) Many of the unclean birds are fierce and ravenous; others feed very grossly; several instinctively love darkness and desolate places; and few of them are generally eaten at present. The harmless, loving dove, and such as were of a cleanly nature, were allowed for food; and the emblem is easily applied.

V. 21, 22. The several species of *locusts*, here excepted from the general prohibition, (for the words rendered *beetle* and *grasshopper*, are supposed to mean different kinds of

locusts,) have, besides four feet on which to walk or crawl on the earth, *two* longer legs on which they leap. Locusts have been eaten by many nations, and are at this day.—“After his kind,” means *all of this kind*.

V. 26, 27. Not only those beasts, which have single hoofs, as horses and asses, were unclean; but such likewise as divided the feet into paws, or more than two parts, as lions, tigers, and many other beasts.

V. 31—33. *When they be dead*. (31) The unclean animals did not render a person unclean, who touched them when alive; for many of them were beasts of burden, as the horse, ass, and camel. Yet, even with this limitation, the law would be to us extremely burdensome: for instance, a dead mouse, cat, weasel, or squirrel, falling upon earthen vessels, ovens, or ranges, would render it necessary to destroy them: and even when vermin or reptiles were killed, the removal of their carcases, or those of any

32 And upon whatsoever *any* of them; when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean; whether *it be* any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever vessel *it be*, wherein *any* work is done, <sup>1</sup>it must be put into water, and it shall be unclean until the even; so it shall be cleansed.

33 And every earthen vessel whereinto *any* of them falleth, whatsoever *is* in it shall be unclean; and <sup>2</sup>ye shall break it.

34 Of all meat which may be eaten, *that* on which *such* water cometh, shall be unclean: and all drink that may be drunk in every *such* vessel, shall be unclean.

35 And every *thing* whereupon *any* part of their carcase falleth, shall be unclean; *whether it be* oven, or ranges for pots, they shall be broken down: for they *are* unclean, and shall be unclean unto you.

36 Nevertheless, a fountain or pit, <sup>3</sup>*wherein there is* plenty of water, shall be clean: but that which toucheth their carcase shall be unclean.

37 And if *any* part of their carcase fall upon any <sup>4</sup>sowing-seed which is to be sown; it *shall be* clean.

38 But if *any* water be put upon the seed, and *any* part of their carcase fall thereon; it *shall be* unclean unto you.

39 And if any beast, of which ye may eat, die; he that <sup>5</sup>toucheth the carcase thereof shall be unclean until the even.

40 And he that <sup>6</sup>eateth of the carcase of it, shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: he also that beareth the carcase of it shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.

41 ¶ And every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth *shall be* an abomination: it shall not be eaten.

42 Whatsoever <sup>7</sup>goeth upon the belly, and whatsoever goeth upon *all* four, or whatsoever <sup>8</sup>hath more feet among all creeping things that creep upon the earth; them ye shall not eat, for they *are* an abomination.

43 Ye <sup>9</sup>shall not make <sup>10</sup>yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creepeth, neither shall ye make yourselves unclean with them, that ye should be defiled thereby.

44 For <sup>11</sup>*I am* the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves and <sup>12</sup>ye shall be holy; for *I am* holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

45 For *I am* the LORD <sup>13</sup>that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore <sup>14</sup>be holy; for *I am* holy.

<sup>1</sup> vi. 28. xv. 12. Tit. ii. 14. iii. 5. 1 John i. 7.

<sup>2</sup> xiv. 45. 2 Cor. v. 1—8. Phil. iii. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. a gathering together of waters.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 37.

<sup>5</sup> xv. 5. 7. Num. xix. 11.

<sup>6</sup> See on 25.—xvii. 15. xxi. 9. Deut. xiv. 21. 14. i. 16. Ex. iv. 14. xxxvi. 25. xlv. 31. Zech. xiii. 1. 1 Cor. vi. 11. 1 John i. 7.

<sup>7</sup> Gen. iii. 14, 15. Is. lxxv. 25. Mic. vii. 17. Matt. iii. 7. xiii. 33. John viii. 44. 2 Cor. xi. 3. 13. Tit. i. 12. <sup>8</sup> Heb. doth multiply feet.

<sup>9</sup> 41, 42. xx. 25. <sup>10</sup> Heb. your souls.

<sup>11</sup> See on Ex. xx. 2.

<sup>12</sup> e x. 3. xix. 2. xx. 7. 26. Ex. xix. 6. Deut. xiv. 2. 1 Sam. vi. 20. Ps. xcix. 5. 9. Is. vi. 3—5. Am. ii. 8. Matt. v. 38. 1 Pet. i. 15, 16. ii. 9. <sup>13</sup> Ps. cv. 43—45.

<sup>14</sup> See on 44.—1 Thes. iv. 7.

animal that died of itself, would occasion pollution. (32—35.) This indeed was only ceremonial; yet, it would often exclude persons from publick ordinances and society; and much circumspection, in properly purifying themselves and their furniture, would be requisite, and a constant circumspection to avoid contracting defilement. This evidently represented the necessity of the “sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience;” the daily pursuit of true holiness, in the exercise of “repentance towards God, and “faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ;” and habitual watchfulness and self-examination.

V. 34—38. If water, from any vessel thus rendered unclean, fell on such food as was before clean, this must not afterwards be eaten; nor must water be drunk from such a vessel. But water in a well or pit, into which any carcase had fallen, was not unclean; but, when afterwards brought or drawn from it, might be used.—This exception seemed necessary, in order that water for the various ablutions might be procured.—Corn for food, if the carcase of any creature fell into it, must not be used till washed and cleansed: but this was not needful in seed-corn, ex-

cept it was steeped in water; and then it must be washed in other water.

V. 39, 40. The carcases of unclean animals, in whatever way they died or were killed, rendered those unclean who touched them; but the carcases of the clean animals did not pollute, except when they died in any way, by which the blood was not separated from them. In this case, if any one inadvertently ate of them, he contracted uncleanness, and needed the appointed cleansing.

V. 41—45. The serpent, by which the devil tempted Eve, was condemned to move on his belly, and to eat dust: and deceivers, liars, slanderers, and murderers, of every description, with all who hate God and diffuse the poison of impiety among men, are in Scripture called the seed of the serpent, and the children of the devil. (Note, Gen. iii. 14, 15.) Other reptiles aptly represent the earthly minded and sensual; and probably this was the implied instruction of the prohibition. The word *abomination*, denotes an union of hatred and terror. The frequent use of this word concerning these animals, would have a great tendency to render the Israelites peculiarly circumspect in

b vii. 57. xiv. 54.  
xv. 32. Ex. xliii.  
12

46 This is <sup>b</sup> the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth:

1 x. 10. Ez. xlv  
23 Mal. iii. 18.  
Rom. xiv. 2, 3  
15—23.

47 To <sup>c</sup> make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten.

### CHAP. XII.

The law of a woman's uncleanness by child-birth, 1—5.  
Her subsequent purification, 6—8.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

a Gen. i. 28. iii. 16.  
Job xiv. 4. xv. 14.  
Ps. li. 8. Rom.  
v. 12—13.

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, <sup>a</sup> If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man-child: then she

keeping aloof from them; and shews how we should abhor and dread the contagion of wicked companions, and the poison of false doctrines.—The argument deduced from the holiness of JEHOVAH, who redeemed Israel from Egypt, and separated them from other nations, to enforce their diligent attention to these rules concerning external purity, proves much more conclusively, that his redeemed worshippers should be “holy in all manner of conversation.” (Note, 1 Pet. i. 13—16.)

### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Whilst we enjoy our Christian liberty, as exempted from burdensome observances, and are allowed the use of so many kinds of wholesome and palatable food, from which Israel was restricted; let us not forget to be thankful, and to serve God with joyfulness of heart, that we are indulged in this abundance of all things: and let us be careful not to use our “liberty as an occasion to the flesh.” Even at this day, “to the unbelieving all things are unclean;” yea, to all, except those who receive them with thanksgiving, and to whom they are sanctified by the word of God and prayer: and such will not be slaves to their appetites; but both in the quality and quantity of what they eat and drink, will consider what fits them for God's service; and what suits their circumstances, and consists with temperance, justice, and charity, that they may do all to his glory.—The Lord hath redeemed and called his people, that they may be holy even as he is holy: we should therefore come out, and be separate, from the world; we must renounce the company of the ungodly, and all intimate and needless connexions with those who are dead in sin; we should be “a peculiar people zealous of good works;” “followers of God as dear children;” devoted to him, conformed to the image of his Son, and associating with his people: and, if we would not commit wickedness, we must watch and pray against temptation.—Let us also remember, that in this sinful world we are contracting, not ceremonial, but moral pollution every day; and except we are continually washing “in the Fountain opened for sin” and for uncleanness, we can have no fellowship with a

shall be unclean seven days; <sup>b</sup> according to the days of the separation for her infirmity she shall be unclean.

3 And in the <sup>c</sup> eighth day, the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.

4 And she shall then continue <sup>d</sup> in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days: she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled.

5 But if she bear a <sup>e</sup> maid-child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her separation; and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days.

6 ¶ And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son or for a daughter: she shall bring <sup>f</sup> a lamb <sup>g</sup> of

c Gen. xvii. 12  
Luke i. 59. ii  
21. John vii. 22.  
23. Rom. iv. 11.  
12. Gal. iii. 17  
Phil. iii. 5. Col  
ii. 11.  
d xv. 25—28.

e Gen. iii. a  
1 Tim. ii. 14, 15.

f i. 10. v. 6—10  
John i. 29  
1 Pet. i. 18, 19.  
g Heb. a son of  
his year.

holy God on earth, or admission into a holy heaven: and that this will be the case till the evening of death, when all, who have been thus washed shall be clean for ever; but they that are found “filthy shall be filthy still,” even to eternity. We should therefore spare no pains, nor grudge any expense or self-denial, which we may be called to in the pursuit of holiness; we should walk very circumspectly, frequently employ ourselves in self-examination, and be far more careful to discover, and to avoid or wash away, the pollution of sin, than the Israelite would be about his ceremonial uncleanness; waiting with glad expectation our dismissal from this sinful world. For though death, being the wages of sin, is in itself pollution and issues in corruption: yet to the believer its sting is not only removed, but its uncleanness is destroyed; and, as a desirable messenger, it conveys him home to his Father's holy and blissful habitation.

### NOTES

CHAP. XII. V. 2—5. For one week the mother of a male child, and for a fortnight the mother of a female, was ceremonially unclean herself, and rendered all who touched her unclean: during the remainder of the terms here prescribed, the mother was secluded from sacred ordinances, but communicated no pollution to others.—The time appointed for the female child was double; for by that sex sin first entered: but in Christ this stigma is removed. When the seven days were expired, and the touch of the mother no longer caused pollution, the male child was to be circumcised. This was enjoined to Abraham, as the seal of the covenant made with him; (Notes, Gen. xvii. Rom. iv. 9—17;) and it was also incorporated with the law, as distinguishing the worshippers of JEHOVAH from idolaters.

V. 6, 7. The sacrifices, appointed on this occasion, were not peace-offerings, as expressing gratitude and joy, which might have been expected; but a burnt-offering, implying a solemn dedication of both mother and infant unto God; and a sin-offering to make atonement, and to bring sin to remembrance, that it might be repented of and expiated.

the first year for a burnt-offering, and a young pigeon or a turtle-dove for a sin-offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation unto the priest;

7 Who shall offer it before the LORD, and <sup>g</sup>make an atonement for her, and she shall <sup>h</sup>be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This is the law for her that hath born <sup>i</sup>a male or a female.

8 And if <sup>\*</sup>she be not <sup>\*</sup>able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons: the one for the burnt-offering, and the other for a sin-offering: and the priest shall <sup>1</sup>make

an atonement for her, and she shall be clean.

### CHAP. XIII.

Rules for distinguishing the plague of leprosy, 1—44. The conduct prescribed to lepers, 45, 46. The leprosy in garments, 47—59.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying,

2 When a man shall have in the skin of his flesh, a <sup>\*</sup>rising, <sup>\*</sup>a scab, or bright spot, and it be in the skin of his flesh *like* <sup>b</sup>the plague of leprosy; then <sup>c</sup>he shall be brought unto Aaron the priest, or unto one of his sons the priests.

\* Or, swelling  
a xiv. 56. Deut  
xxviii. 27. Is. iii  
17.  
b xiv. 8, 35. Ex  
iv. 4, 7. Num.  
xii. 10. 12  
2 Sam. iii. 23.  
2 Kings v. 1. 27.  
2 Chr. xxvi. 19  
—21. Is. i. 6.  
c Deut. xvii. 8, 9  
xxiv. 8. Matt.  
viii. 4. Mark i.  
44. Luke v. 14.  
xvii. 14.

<sup>g</sup> See on i. 4. iv.  
20, 26, 31. Job  
i. 5  
<sup>h</sup> xv. 28—30

i Gal. iii. 28

\* Heb. her hand  
find not suffici-  
ency of a lamb.  
k v. 7. Luke ii.  
22. 24. 2 Cor.  
viii. 9

l iv. 26.

V. 8. Here again the case of the poor is specially provided for. (Notes, Luke ii. 21—24.)

### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

What could the infinitely wise God intend by all these institutions, but to bring a charge of guilt and pollution against the whole species, as born of Adam's fallen race? Doubtless, this charge is well grounded: and the Lord, knowing how prone men are to deny or forget their real character and situation, thus purposed to hold up the memorial of them continually before their eyes; and "by line upon line, and precept upon precept," to teach them this salutary lesson; that man, from his conception in the womb to his grave, is an unclean creature; that he contracts guilt, through this defilement, even in the most lawful and necessary actions; and that he propagates the same depraved nature to his offspring: insomuch that, except as the atonement of Christ and the sanctification of the Spirit prevent, the original blessing, "increase and multiply," is become to the fallen race a dire curse, and the communication of sin and misery: for "who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." This should teach us habitual humiliation before God, and to rejoice in our domestick comforts with trembling; to walk watchfully; to search out the evil that cleaves to our ordinary actions; and to give diligence that we may secure the salvation of the gospel.—As we are so unworthy of every good, we have the greater reason to be thankful for all our mercies, and to unite the exercise of repentance and faith, with all our sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving.—When those women, who profess godliness, have been preserved in child-birth; though exempted from these burdensome ceremonies, they should deem themselves doubly bound to take the earliest opportunity of rendering publick unfeigned thanks to God for such a mercy: they should acknowledge the justice of God in all the pains and perils, which through sin have come upon the sex: and join all with penitent confessions of guilt, renewed application to the blood of Christ for forgiveness, and dedication of themselves unto God through him. And whilst these sacrifices of praise, for mercies in some sense common to both parents, are offered with united hearts by both; conscious that their infant-offspring hath from them derived a de-

praved nature, and is come into an evil world, how proper it is that with harmonious consent they devote their child unto the Lord; and take comfort from the assurance, that the "covenant is made with them, for their good, and the good of their children after them!" for "in Christ Jesus there is neither male, nor female." Finally, let us bless God, that the Saviour "was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons;" and also that "for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich." (Notes, Gal. iv. 4—7. 1 Tim. ii. 15.)

### NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1, 2. As the law contained in the preceding chapter, was easily understood and applied, it was addressed to Moses only; but as that, contained in this chapter and the next, involved many difficulties, of which the priests were the appointed judges, it was given to Aaron likewise.—Whatever diseases, in some respects like that here described, had been known in other nations; it is evident from the very language used, that this disease was in great measure peculiar to Israel.—It is called "the plague of leprosy," which implies that it was generally if not always, inflicted by the immediate judgment of God. Indeed, this must be evident from a careful consideration of the Scriptures referred to in the margin. No remedy is any where mentioned: nay, it is implied in the answer of the king of Israel respecting the leprosy of Naaman, that it could not be cured but by the immediate power of God. (2 Kings v. 7.) When any one supposed that he was visited with this disorder, or it was suspected by those about him; he was not directed to consult a physician, but to apply to the priests: great care was required, and many particular rules given, in order to distinguish it from other maladies; and when it was removed, the diseased person is more frequently said to be *cleansed*, than *healed*.—It does not appear to have been infectious, as many suppose; but, as ceremonial pollution was communicated to all who touched the leper, he was excluded from the society of the people, as well as from the courts of the Lord: and when the leprosy was cleansed, he was not re-admitted, till after divers sacrifices and purifications.—All this seems

d 2. x. 10. Es.  
xlv. 23. Hag. ii.  
11. Mal. ii. 7.

e 2 Tim. ii. 16, 17.  
iii. 13.

f Matt. xvi. 19.  
xviii. 17, 18.  
John xx. 23.  
1 Cor. v. 4-6.  
2 Thes. iii. 14.  
15. 1 Tim. i. 20.

g Deut. xiii. 14.  
1 Tim. v. 24.

h Is. xi. 3, 4. xlii.  
3 Rom. xiv. 1.  
Jude 22, 23.  
i 2. Deut. xxviii.  
5. Jam. iii. 2.  
k xi. 25, 28, 49.  
xiv. 8. Ps. xix.  
12. Prov. xx. 9.  
John xiii. 8-10.  
2 Cor. vii. 1.  
Heb. ix. 10. x.  
22. 1 John i. 7-9.  
9.  
27, 35, 36. Ps.  
xxxviii. 3. Is. i.  
5, 6. Rom. vi.  
22-14. 2 Tim.  
ii. 16, 17.

m See on 3.—Matt.  
xv. 7, 8. Acts  
viii. 21. Phil. iii.  
18, 19. 2 Pet. ii.  
19.

3 And the priest <sup>a</sup> shall look on the plague in the skin of the flesh: and *when* the hair in the plague is turned white, and the plague in sight *be* <sup>a</sup> deeper than the skin of his flesh; it is a plague of leprosy: and the priest shall look on him and <sup>a</sup> pronounce him unclean.

4 If the bright spot *be* white in the skin of his flesh, and in sight *be* not deeper than the skin, and the hair thereof *be* not turned white; then the priest shall <sup>a</sup> shut up *him that hath* the plague, seven days.

5 And the priest shall look on him the seventh day: and, behold, *if* the plague in his sight *be* at a stay, *and* the plague spread not in the skin; then the priest shall shut him up seven days more.

6 And the priest shall look on him again the seventh day: and, behold, *if* the plague *be* somewhat dark, *and* the plague spread not in the skin; the priest shall <sup>b</sup> pronounce him clean: it is *but* <sup>a</sup> a scab; and he shall <sup>k</sup> wash his clothes, and *be* clean.

7 But if <sup>l</sup> the scab spread much abroad in the skin, after that he hath been seen of the priest for his cleansing; he shall be seen of the priest again.

8 And *if* the priest see, that, behold, the scab spreadeth in the skin; then the priest shall <sup>m</sup> pronounce him unclean; it is a leprosy.

9 ¶ When the plague of leprosy is in a man, then he shall be brought unto the priest:

10 And the priest <sup>n</sup> shall see *him*: and, behold, *if* the rising *be* white in the skin, and it have turned the hair white, and *there be* <sup>a</sup> quick raw flesh in the rising;

11 It is an old leprosy in the skin of his flesh, and the priest shall pronounce him unclean, and shall not shut him up: for he is unclean.

12 And if a leprosy break out abroad in the skin, and the leprosy <sup>a</sup> cover all the skin of *him that hath* the plague, from his head even to his foot, whosoever the priest looketh;

13 Then the priest shall consider: and, behold, *if* the leprosy have covered all his flesh, he shall pronounce *him* clean *that hath* the plague: it is all turned white: he is clean.

14 But when <sup>p</sup> raw flesh appeareth <sup>p</sup> 10. in him, he shall be unclean.

15 And the priest shall see the raw flesh, and pronounce him to be unclean: *for* the raw flesh is unclean: it is a leprosy.

16 Or if the raw flesh <sup>q</sup> turn again, and *be* changed unto white; he shall come unto the priest:

17 And the priest shall see him; and, behold, *if* the plague *be* turned into white; then the priest shall pronounce *him* clean *that hath* the plague: he is clean.

n 3, 4. Num. xii.  
10-12. 2 Kings  
v. 27. 2 Chr  
xxvi. 20.

o Heb. the quick-  
ening of living  
flesh. 14, 15. 24.  
Prov. xii. 1. Am.  
v. 10. John iii  
19, 20. vii. 7.

p 1 Kings viii. 33.  
Job xl. 4. xlii.  
6. Is. lxi. 6.  
John xvi. 8, 9.  
Rom. vii. 14.  
1 John i. 8-10.

q Rom. vii. 14-  
24. Gal. i. 14-  
16. Phil. iii. 6-  
8. 1 Tim. i. 13  
-15.

to represent the state of a sinner, whose heart is entirely unsanctified, and in whom sin has dominion: whatever his profession may be, he has yet no benefit from the great sacrifice for sin, nor is he meet for communion with God, or his people on earth, much less in heaven, unless he be cleansed: and as we proceed, we shall perceive many other things admitting of an apt accommodation.—A few hints, however, must suffice on this intricate, and to us not very interesting subject. Yet we must suppose that the all-wise Legislator had some important meaning in these institutions: and therefore we should not blame the sober attempts of those, who modestly point out what seems to them to have been intended. Indeed, the Scriptures referred to in the margin, generally give the best intimations on the subject.

V. 3—8. The hair turned *white*, in the diseased part, may denote the case of those who grow hoary in sin, and yet go on in it; and the plague apparently deeper than the skin, as opposed to a superficial, cutaneous disorder, may mark those evil courses, which result from the habitually

corrupt state of the heart, as distinguished from sins fallen into through sudden temptation.—If the case were doubtful, the priest must shut up the person for a week or two, if needful; which implies the care ministers should take, in discriminating between cases which at first view appear alike.—If then the disease appeared to be stopped, and no peculiar symptoms of leprosy were seen, it was concluded to be some other disorder, and the priest pronounced him clean; yet, having been considered as a leper, he must wash his clothes, before he went into society, or to the courts of the Lord.—On the other hand, the spreading of the disease was a proof that it was a leprosy; as it is evident that a man, who grows worse and worse, after convictions and reproofs, is under the dominion of sin.

V. 9—17. The principal symptoms, to be noted in these verses, are “the quick raw flesh in the tumour,” indicating a sharp, corrosive humour, breaking through the skin in a particular part. It was thus distinguished from a disorder, called indeed the leprosy, but of another nature, which freely broke out in a white scurf all over the body,

18 ¶ The flesh also, in which, *even* in the skin thereof, was 'a boil and is healed,

<sup>r</sup> Ex. x. 9. xv. 26. 2 Kings xx. 7. Job ii. 7. Ps. xxxviii. 8—7. Ps. xxxviii. 21.

19 And in the place of the boil there be a white rising, or a bright spot white, and somewhat reddish, and it be shewed to the priest:

20 And if, when the priest seeth it, behold, it *be* 'in sight lower than the skin, and the hair thereof be turned white; the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a plague of leprosy broken out of the boil.

<sup>s</sup> See on 3.—Matt. xii. 45. John v. 14. 2 Pet. ii. 20.

21 But if the priest look on it, and, behold, *there be* no white hairs therein, and *if* it *be* not lower than the skin, but *be* somewhat dark; then the priest shall shut him up seven days.

22 And if it spread much abroad in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean; it is a plague.

<sup>t</sup> Gen. xxxviii. 26. 2 Sam. xii. 13. 2 Chr. xix. 2. 3. Job xxxiv. 31. 32. xl. 4. 5. Prov. xxviii. 13. Matt. xxvi. 75. 2 Cor. ii. 7. Gal. vi. 1. 1 Pet. iv. 2, 3.

23 But if the bright spot 'stay in his place, and spread not, it is a burning boil; and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

<sup>u</sup> Heb. a burning of fire. 1a. iii. 24.

24 ¶ Or if there be *any* flesh, in the skin whereof *there is* 'a hot burning, and the quick *flesh* that burneth have a white bright spot, somewhat reddish or white;

<sup>v</sup> 4. 18—20

25 Then the priest shall look upon it: and, behold, *if* the hair in the bright spot be 'turned white, and it *be* in sight deeper than the skin; it is a leprosy broken out of the burning: wherefore the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is the plague of leprosy.

26 But if the priest look on it, and, behold, *there be* no white hair in the bright spot, and it *be* no lower than the

*other* skin, but *be* somewhat dark;

'then the priest shall shut him up <sup>x 4, 5</sup> seven days.

27 And the priest shall look upon him the seventh day; and if it be spread much abroad in the skin, then the priest shall pronounce him unclean:

<sup>y</sup> it is the plague of leprosy. <sup>See on 2.</sup>

28 And if the bright spot stay in his place, and spread not in the skin, but it *be* somewhat dark; it is a rising of the burning, and the priest shall pronounce him clean; for it is an inflammation of the burning.

29 ¶ If a man or woman hath a plague 'upon the head or the beard;

<sup>z</sup> 1 Kings xii. 28. Ps. liii. 4. 1a. i. 5. v. 20. ix. 15. Mic. iii. 11. Matt. vi. 23. xiii. 14, 15. John xvi. 2, 3. Acts xxii. 3, 4. xxvi. 9, 10. 2 Cor. iv. 8, 4. 2 Thes. ii. 11, 12.

30 'Then the priest shall see the plague: and, behold, if it *be* in sight deeper than the skin, and *there be* in it a yellow thin hair; then the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a dry 'scall, *even* a leprosy upon the head or beard.

<sup>a</sup> 34—37 xiv. 64.

31 And if the priest look on the plague of the scall, and, behold, it *be* not in sight deeper than the skin; and *that there is* no black hair in it: then the priest shall shut up *him that hath* the plague of the scall, seven days.

32 And in the seventh day the priest shall look on the plague: and, behold, *if* the scall spread not, and there be in it no 'yellow hair, and the scall *be* not in sight deeper than the skin;

<sup>b</sup> 30. Matt. xxiii. 5. Luke xviii. 9. —12. Rom. ii. 23.

33 He shall be shaven, but the scall shall he not shave: and the priest shall shut up *him that hath* the scall seven days more.

34 And in 'the seventh day the priest shall look on the scall: and behold, *if* the scall 'be not spread in the

<sup>c</sup> 1 John iv. 1. Jude 22. Rev. ii. 2.

<sup>d</sup> 28.

but without the raw flesh. The former indicated an inveterate leprosy, and whenever it appeared rendered the person unclean; but the latter did not. As these are thus contrasted, the latter aptly represents that consciousness of sin, which produces unreserved ingenuous confessions, and patience of reproof; and the former may perhaps denote the disposition of unhumiliated sinners to resist conviction, and, amidst the clearest evidence of criminality, to be angry with the mildest faithful reprover.

V. 18—23. These verses direct the priests how to distinguish between any ordinary malady, which might follow an old ulcer after it had been healed, and the leprosy breaking out in the spot.—The word rendered "reddish" probably signifies *very shining*, and seems distinguished

from a *dusky white*, as a symptom of leprosy.—The "leprosy broken out of the boil," may represent the return of a professed believer to the habitual practice of sin, when "his last state becomes worse than the first."

V. 24—28. This passage is supposed to state the case of such, as had been hurt by fire; for the introductory words may be rendered, "Or the flesh, when there shall be in the skin a *burning of fire*," &c. This would leave a scar; and a leprosy might appear in the spot, and must be distinguished from the scar by the rules here given.—It may be discovered on careful investigation, whether sin or grace rules in the heart, from the effects produced by various external events on a man's spirit and conduct.

V. 29—37. The priests were here taught to distinguish

skin, nor *be* in sight deeper than the skin; then the priest shall pronounce him clean: \*and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean.

e See on 6.

f 7. 27. 2 Tim ii. 16, 17. iii. 13

35 But if the scall 'spread much in the skin after his cleansing;

36 Then the priest shall look on him: and, behold, if the scall be spread in the skin, the priest shall not seek for yellow hair; he *is* unclean.

37 But if the scall be in his sight at a stay, and *that* there is black hair grown up therein; the scall is healed, he *is* clean: and the priest shall pronounce him clean.

38 ¶ If a man also, or a woman, have in the skin of their flesh bright spots, *even* white bright spots;

g Ec vii. 20. Rom vii. 22—23. Jam. iii. 2

39 Then the priest shall look: and, behold, \**if* the bright spots in the skin of their flesh *be* darkish white; it *is* a freckled spot *that* groweth in the skin; he *is* clean.

h Heb head is pulled

40 ¶ And the man whose \*hair is fallen off his head, he *is* bald: *yet* is he clean.

41 And he that hath his hair fallen off from the part of his head toward his face, he *is* forehead-bald: *yet* is he clean.

42 And if there be in the bald head, or bald forehead, a white reddish sore; it *is* a leprosy sprung up in his bald head, or his bald forehead.

43 Then the priest shall look upon it: and, behold, *if* the rising of the sore *be* white reddish in his bald head, or in his bald forehead, as the leprosy appeareth in the skin of the flesh;

44 He *is* a leprous man, he *is* unclean: the priest shall pronounce him \*utterly unclean; his plague *is* in his head.

h Job xxxvi. 14. Matt. vi. 23. 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2. 2 John 8—10.

45 ¶ And the leper in whom the plague *is*, 'his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall \*put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, 'Unclean, unclean.

i Gen. xxxvii. 29. Job i. 20. Jer iii. 25. Joel ii. 13.

46 All the days wherein the plague *shall be* in him, he shall be defiled; he *is* unclean: he shall dwell alone, <sup>m</sup> without the camp *shall* his habitation *be*.

k Ex. xxiv. 17. 22. Mic. iii. 7. Job xlii. 6. Is. vi. 6. iii. 11. lxiv. 6. Lam iv. 15. Luke v. 8. vii. 6, 7. xvii. 12.

47 ¶ The \*garment also that the plague of leprosy is in, *whether it be* a woollen garment, or a linen garment,

m Num. v. 2. xii. 14, 15. 2 Kings vii. 8. xv. 5. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 21. Lam. i. 8. 1 Cor. v. 9—13. 2 Thes. iii. 6. 14. 1 Tim. vi. 5. Heb. xii. 15, 16. Rev. xxi. 27. xii. 15.

48 Whether *it be* in the warp, or woof, of linen or of woollen, whether in a skin, or in any \*thing made of skin:

n Is. iii. 16—24. lx. 6. lxiv. 6. Ex. xvi. 16. Rom. xiii. 12. Eph. iv. 22. Col. iii. 3. Jude 23.

† Heb work of.

49 And if the plague be greenish or reddish in the garment, or in the skin, either in the warp or in the woof, or in any \*thing of skin; \*it *is* a plague of leprosy, and shall be shewed unto the priest.

o Heb. vessel, or instrument. See on 2.

50 And the priest shall look upon the plague, and shut up *it that hath* the plague seven days.

the leprosy among the hair, on the head or beard, from other disorders which might resemble it. The yellow thin hair, instead of the white, was here the symptom of leprosy, in connexion with the marks before laid down, and the black hair of the contrary. If therefore neither of these appeared, after the person had been shut up seven days; the case still remained doubtful, and he must be shut up other seven days.—Yet, at last, *if* the disorder spread much, after the priest had pronounced him clean, he was to be deemed leprous, even though no yellow hairs appeared.

V. 38, 39. Such spots as are called *freckles* are here distinguished from leprosy.—May not the *white, very shining, yellow, gold colour*, which in all cases distinguished the leprosy from other disorders, and which are opposed to *black, or darkish white*, be emblematic of the pride, self-complacency, and ostentation, or of the boasting and glorying in things either evil or worthless, which mark the servant of sin, as contrasted with the modesty and humility of the true penitent?—Even “the bright spots,” in this case, are said to be *darkish white*.

V. 40—44. The leprosy in the bald head is here dis-

tinguished from mere baldness.—The word rendered “*red-dish*,” here also means *very shining*.—It is observable, that he that was leprous in the head was pronounced “*utterly unclean*.” This may represent the dangerous case of those, who are emboldened in wickedness by infidel or heretical principles.

V. 45, 46. The leprosy was a disgrace to a man's character; it incapacitated him for business, secluded him from the society even of his nearest friends, and that of all persons except lepers like himself; and even shut him out from the sanctuary of God: yet he must abide by the decision of the priest, and humble himself under the divine rebuke; proclaim his own shame, and shew peculiar indications of self-abasement, and of submission to the righteousness of God.

V. 47—50. The leprosy in garments was evidently supernatural, and peculiar to the Israelites. The word, rendered “*greenish*,” means the *most vivid green*.—The different kinds of garments mentioned are put for every sort which they should use.—This extraordinary case might denote the malignity and defiling nature of sin, and the necessity there is of parting with all occasions of transgression,

51 And he shall look on the plague on the seventh day: if the plague be spread in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in a skin, or in any work that is made of skin; the plague is a fretting leprosy; it is unclean.

xi. 35. Deut. vii.  
25, 26. 1s. xxx.  
22. Acts xix. 19,  
20.

q xiv. 44, 45

52 He shall therefore burn that garment, whether warp or woof, in woollen or in linen, or any thing of skin, wherein the plague is: for it is a fretting leprosy; it shall be burnt in the fire.

53 And if the priest shall look, and, behold, the plague be not spread in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any thing of skin;

54 Then the priest shall command that they wash the thing wherein the plague is, and he shall shut it up seven days more.

r Ez. xxiv. 13.  
Heb. vi. 4-7.  
2 Pet. i. 9. ii. 20  
—22.

55 And the priest shall look on the plague after that it is washed: and, behold, if the plague have not changed his colour, and the plague be not

spread; it is unclean, thou shalt burn it in the fire; it is fret inward, whether it be bare within or without.

\* Heb. it be bald in the head thereof, or in the forehead thereof

56 And if the priest look, and, behold, the plague be somewhat dark after the washing of it: then he shall rend it out of the garment, or out of the skin, or out of the warp, or out of the woof.

57 And if it appear still in the garment, either in the warp, or in the woof, or in any thing of skin; it is a spreading plague: thou shalt burn that wherein the plague is, with fire.

1s. xxxiii. 14.  
Matt. xxii. 7.  
xxv. 41. Rev.  
xxi. 8. 27.

58 And the garment, either warp or woof, or whatsoever thing of skin it be, which thou shalt wash, if the plague be departed from them, then it shall be washed the second time, and shall be clean.

59 This is the law of the plague of leprosy in a garment of woollen or linen, either in the warp or woof, or any thing of skins, to pronounce it clean, or to pronounce it unclean.

2 Kings v. 10. 14.  
Ps. li. 2. 2 Cor.  
vii. 1. xii. 8.  
Heb. ix. 10.  
Rev. i. 5. vii.  
14.

“hating even the garment spotted with the flesh.” Such spotted garments are those, however rich and beautiful, which are the incentives to pride and lust.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is a question of the utmost importance, whether sin possess dominion in our hearts, or not. For if it do, we have no interest in Christ, no fellowship with Christians, no real communion with God in his ordinances, no inheritance in his kingdom, no meetness for that holy habitation: but, if sin be dethroned, though it dwell within, and cause much conflict and disquietude, and even produce defilements in our conduct and in our best services, which require us to humble ourselves before God; yet we are his children, accepted in the Beloved, and have the seal of his Spirit in our hearts. We should therefore be willing to give this important matter a fair trial, according to the sacred oracles, using the assistance of ministers and experienced Christians; but, above all, opening the case to our heart-searching, compassionate High Priest above. Though we ought to be jealous of ourselves, and ready to suspect the worst; we should not deem every infirmity, or occasional misconduct, an evidence of hypocrisy or unconversion: but should judge impartially; duly considering, on the one hand, the imperfect state of Christians in this world, and on the other, adverting to the numbers “who think themselves something when they are nothing.”—The ministers of Christ peculiarly need exact knowledge of the Scriptures, and experimental acquaintance with the nature and effects of divine grace, as well as much caution, attention, and tenderness, when they are called upon to deal thus with men’s consciences in doubtful cases; that

they may neither deceive some, nor distress others: and they must be sure to do nothing rashly, or without mature examination.—They, who desire to ascertain the state of their own souls, should not decide hastily; but should wait upon the Lord, and on the ministry of the word, week after week: and if on such occasions they separate themselves more than usual from the world, that they may in secret search the Scriptures, and pour out their hearts more frequently and fully in prayer, it will greatly conduce to a satisfactory solution. But even if this question is resolved, and we are humbly satisfied that we are real Christians, we must remember that “in many things we offend all;” and that we have occasion for continual washing in the blood of Christ.—On the other hand, when it is plain, on scriptural grounds, that a man is unconverted and unclean; it is right that he should know it, and that others should be warned to withdraw from his polluting society. And how dreadful is the case of those, whom the decisions of faithful ministers, the conduct of true believers, and the express testimonies of God’s word, concur in declaring unmeet to partake of sacred ordinances; and consequently inadmissible into the kingdom of heaven, if they live and die in this state! Even on earth all their possessions, comforts, and performances, are defiled; if they do not also contaminate the principles and conduct of others. Yet still there is hope in this case; for by the gospel that leprosy is cleansed, which the law could but discover. It is therefore the only wisdom of him, who discovers this to be his case, to condemn himself, to submit to God, and to seek the mercy and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; to watch against the self-deceptions, to which the human heart is prone; to beware of self-preference, on account

## CHAP. XIV.

The ceremonies and sacrifices appointed, when a leper had been healed, 1—32. The leprosy in a house, and the cleansing of it, 33—53. The subject closed, 54—57

**AND** the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 This shall be <sup>a</sup> the law of the leper, <sup>b</sup> in the day of his cleansing: <sup>c</sup> he shall be brought unto the priest:

3 And the priest shall go forth <sup>d</sup> out of the camp: and the priest shall look, and, behold, *if* the plague of leprosy <sup>e</sup> be healed in the leper;

4 Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed, <sup>f</sup> two <sup>g</sup> birds alive *and* clean, and <sup>h</sup> cedar-wood, and <sup>i</sup> scarlet, and <sup>j</sup> hyssop.

5 And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an <sup>k</sup> earthen vessel over running water:

6 As for <sup>l</sup> the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar-wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall <sup>m</sup> dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird *that was* killed over the running water.

7 And he shall <sup>n</sup> sprinkle upon him, that is to be cleansed from the leprosy, <sup>o</sup> seven times, and shall <sup>p</sup> pronounce him clean, and shall <sup>q</sup> let the living bird loose <sup>r</sup> into the open field.

8 And he that is to be cleansed shall <sup>s</sup> wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and <sup>t</sup> wash himself in water, that he may be clean; and after that he shall come into the camp, and shall tarry abroad out of his tent <sup>u</sup> seven days.

9 But it shall be on the seventh day, that he shall <sup>v</sup> shave all his hair off his head, and his beard, and his eye-brows, even all his hair he shall shave off:

a 54—57. xiii. 59.

b Num. vi. 9.

c Matt. viii. 2—4.

Mark i. 40—44.

Luke v. 12—14.

xviii. 14.

d xiii. 46.

e Ex. xy. 26. 2 Kings

v. 8. 7. 8. 14. Job

v. 18. Matt. x.

8. xi. 5. Luke iv.

27. vii. 22. xviii.

15—19. 1 Cor. vi.

9—11.

f i. 14. v. 7. xiii. 8.

g Or, sparrows.

h 6. 40—42. Num.

xix. 6.

i Heb. ix. 19.

j Ex. xii. 22. Num.

xix. 18. Ps. li. 7.

k Num. v. 17.

2 Cor. iv. 7. v. 1.

xiii. 4. Heb. ii.

14.

of those splendid distinctions which men admire, but which are often abominations in the sight of God; and to apply to the Saviour, as he of old, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." But would they hear him say, "I will, be thou clean;" they must renounce every other plea, be willing to part with every sin, and every occasion of sin, submit to his rebukes, attend upon his directions, and give him all the praise for their deliverance from so dreadful a malady. Finally, if we have in some measure experienced his cleansing power, we shall gradually become willing to put off this leprous garment of the body, and leave it to be refined in the grave, that we may be forever with the Lord.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1—3. No means are here appointed for healing the leper; the *cleansing* mentioned being no other than his *ceremonial purification*, previously to his re-admission to sacred ordinances and to society, when the Lord had been pleased to remove the plague: and the rules given very aptly represent many of the duties of repenting sinners, as well as those of ministers respecting them.—It seems the priests might visit the lepers, and even touch them, without contracting uncleanness: and the seasonable instruction which they might give them, as well as the assistance that they would be able to afford them in their devotions, might often render this a great mercy and comfort to them under their affliction.

V. 4—7. The "two birds," one slain over springing water in an earthen vessel, and the other set at liberty, having been dipped in this mixture of blood and water; may signify Christ shedding his blood for sinners, and then rising and ascending into heaven, there to appear in the presence of God for us: or the bird that was slain may represent the Saviour dying for our sins; and the

living bird, the sinner preserved and liberated, by being washed in his atoning blood, and the purifying grace of his Spirit; and being set free from sin and Satan, "seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." The "cedar-wood," a supposed emblem of the soundness of the cleansed leper's flesh, may denote the sincerity of the true convert's heart, and the incorruptible nature of true grace: the "scarlet," as distinguished from the glistening whiteness of the leprosy, might imply that the man was recovered to his former ruddy complexion, and represent the true penitent as come to himself and to his right mind: the "hyssop," a shrub commonly used in the legal sprinklings, might signify faith, of small estimation among men, but of great efficacy in applying the salvation of Christ to the soul; or it might shew that mean instruments may be useful in directing sinners to Christ. These were to be dipped in the blood and water: for all our sincerity, repentance, and faith are derived from the Holy Spirit, and are accepted only through the blood of the Saviour.

V. 8, 9. The healed leper, who was about to cleanse himself from ceremonial pollution, was required to wash his clothes, and, after "shaving off all his hair," to wash his body also. Then he was admitted into the camp; but it is supposed he was obliged there to lodge in some hut, apart from his family and all society, during seven days: and then, having again shaved, and washed his clothes and his body, he was restored, as clean, to his family and the congregation of God.—Thus the penitent, having in private conference with the ministers of Christ, and in the secret exercises of faith and prayer, got some comfortable hope of acceptance, proceeds to put away all the remainder of his sins: and seriously to prepare himself for a more solemn profession of his faith, in the public ordinances of the gospel, and in communion with the Lord's people.



THE HIGH PRIEST ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT,  
AND A LEVITE.

LEVITICUS xvi. 4.



and he shall wash his clothes, also he shall wash his flesh in water, and he shall be clean.

<sup>x</sup> 23. ix. 1. xv. 13, 14.  
<sup>y</sup> Matt. viii. 4.  
Mark i. 44. Luke v. 14.  
<sup>z</sup> i. 10. John i. 29.  
1 Pet. i. 19.  
<sup>a</sup> iv. 32. Num. vi. 14.  
<sup>†</sup> Heb. the daughter of her year.  
<sup>b</sup> xxiii. 13. Ex. xxix. 40. Num. xv. 9. xxviii. 20.  
<sup>c</sup> ii. 1. Num. xv. 4—15. John vi. 43. 51.  
<sup>d</sup> 12. 15. 21. 24.  
<sup>e</sup> viii. 3. Ex. xxix. 1—4. Num. viii. 9—11. 21.

10 And on the <sup>e</sup> eighth day he shall take two <sup>a</sup> he-lambs without blemish, and one <sup>a</sup> ewe-lamb <sup>a</sup> of the first year without blemish, and <sup>a</sup> three tenth-deals of fine flour <sup>a</sup> for <sup>a</sup> a meat-offering mingled with oil, and one <sup>d</sup> log of oil.

11 And the priest that maketh him clean, shall <sup>a</sup> present the man that is to be made clean, and those things, before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation:

<sup>f</sup> v. 2, 3. 6, 7. 18.  
19. vi. 6. 1a. 111.  
10.  
<sup>g</sup> vii. 30. viii. 27—29. Ex. xxix. 24.

12 And the priest shall take one he-lamb, and offer him for <sup>a</sup> a trespass-offering, and the log of oil, and <sup>a</sup> wave them <sup>a</sup> for a wave-offering, before the LORD.

<sup>h</sup> i. 5. 11. iv. 4.  
24.  
<sup>i</sup> vii. 7. x. 17.

13 And he shall slay the lamb <sup>h</sup> in the place where he shall kill the sin-offering and the burnt-offering, in the holy place: for <sup>a</sup> as the sin-offering is the priest's, so is the trespass-offering: <sup>k</sup> it is most holy.

<sup>k</sup> ii. 3. vii. 6. xxi. 22.

14 And the priest shall take <sup>a</sup> some of the blood of the trespass-offering, and the priest shall put <sup>a</sup> it <sup>a</sup> upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot.

<sup>j</sup> viii. 23. 24. Ex. xxix. 20. 1a. 1. 5. Rom. vi. 13. 19. xii. 1. 1 Cor. vi. 20. 2 Cor. vii. 1. Phil. i. 20. 1 Pet. i. 14. 15. ii. 5. 9. 10. Rev. i. 5. 6.

15 And the priest shall take <sup>a</sup> some of the log of <sup>a</sup> oil, and pour <sup>a</sup> it into the palm of his own left hand: <sup>m</sup> Ps. xlv. 7. John ii. 34. 1 John ii. 20.

16 And the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger, seven times <sup>a</sup> before the LORD. <sup>n</sup> iv. 6. 17. Luke xvii. 18. 1 Cor. x. 31.

17 And of the rest of the oil that is in his hand, shall the priest put upon <sup>a</sup> the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the blood of the trespass-offering. <sup>o</sup> viii. 30. Ex. xxix. 20, 21. Ez. xxxvi. 27. John i. 16. Tit. iii. 3—6. 1 Pet. i. 2.

18 And <sup>a</sup> the remnant of the oil that is in the priest's hand, he shall pour upon the head of him that is to be cleansed: and the priest shall make <sup>a</sup> an atonement for him before the LORD. <sup>p</sup> viii. 12. Ex. xxix. 7. 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. Eph. i. 17, 18.

19 And the priest shall offer <sup>a</sup> the sin-offering, and make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed from his uncleanness, and afterward he shall kill the burnt-offering. <sup>q</sup> iv. 26. 31. v. 16.

20 And the priest shall <sup>a</sup> offer the burnt-offering, and the meat-offering, upon the altar: and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and he shall be clean. <sup>r</sup> 12. xii. 6—8. Rom. viii. 3. 2 Cor. v. 21.

21 ¶ And if he <sup>a</sup> be <sup>a</sup> poor, and <sup>a</sup> cannot get so much; then he shall take <sup>s</sup> 10. Eph. v. 2.

on the right ear, the thumb, and the great toe of the leper, and also poured on his head; whereas, the *holy anointing* oil was sprinkled with the blood on the garments of the priests, and poured only on the head of the high priest. But, in the former case, the blood was that of a *sin-offering*, taking away the guilt of crimes, in which the members of the body had been instruments, and thus, typically preparing them *in general* for the Lord's service; in the latter, it was the blood of "the ram of consecration," by which the priests were set apart to their *special* service. This similarity was very instructive. For every true penitent is, through Christ, a spiritual priest; and no priest, except the Saviour himself, was ever any better than a cleansed leper.—According to the emblem here given, the Christian's dedication of himself to the Lord, at his table, should be the counterpart of what has secretly passed between God and his soul; and the exercise of repentance and faith should always be followed by this public profession; in preparing for which, the counsel and approbation of pious and experienced ministers may be very useful.

V. 21—32. The condescension of the Lord to the case of the poor, in these institutions, is very instructive. Yet not one ceremony was omitted in the poor man's cleansing,

V. 10—20. To shew that the leprosy was to be considered, both as a judgment immediately inflicted by the Lord, and also as an emblem of a transgressor under the condemnation and dominion of sin; these multiplied sacrifices and purifications were required, before the healed leper was fully restored to the privileges of an Israelite. A trespass-offering, a sin-offering, and a burnt-offering, must be presented by him; perhaps the trespass-offering for the deviations from the prescribed rules, which might have been fallen into during his leprosy; the sin-offering for the offence which exposed him to this plague; and the burnt-offering as a renewed dedication of himself to the Lord. *Peace-offerings* might indeed afterwards be accepted as voluntary oblations, but they did not suit a leper's condition, till fully restored to communion with the people of God. Meat-offerings for each of these sacrifices were also required, and a small quantity of oil, the emblem of the sanctifying Spirit. A log was about three quarters of a pint.—The priest presented the man and his oblations, but the man himself seems to have killed the sacrifices.—The ceremonies, observed on this occasion, are exceedingly similar to those used in consecrating the priests. The principal difference was, that *common* oil was sprinkled seven times before the Lord, and put over the blood

<sup>u</sup> See on 10.  
<sup>•</sup> Heb. *for waving.*

<sup>a</sup> one lamb *for* a trespass-offering <sup>a</sup> to be waved, to make an atonement for him, and one tenth-deal of fine flour mingled with oil for a meat-offering, and a log of oil;

22 And two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, such as he is able to get; and the one shall be a sin-offering, and the other a burnt-offering.

23 And he shall bring them on the eighth day, for his cleansing, unto the priest, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the LORD.

<sup>x</sup> See on 10—13

24 And <sup>x</sup> the priest shall take the lamb of the trespass-offering, and the log of oil, and the priest shall wave them *for* a wave-offering before the LORD.

<sup>v</sup> See on 14—20.—  
 Ps xl 5. Ec. v. 1.

25 And he shall kill the lamb of the trespass-offering, and the priest shall take *some* of the blood of <sup>v</sup> the trespass-offering, and put *it* upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot.

26 And the priest shall pour of the oil into the palm of his own left hand.

27 And the priest shall sprinkle with his right finger *some* of the oil that is in his left hand, seven times before the LORD.

28 And the priest shall put of the oil that is in his hand, upon the tip of the right ear of him that is to be cleansed, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot, upon the place of the blood of the trespass-offering.

29 And the rest of the oil that is in the priest's hand, he shall put upon the head of him that is to be cleansed,

though the sacrifices were cheaper. Even in this case, one lamb was absolutely necessary; which might intimate, that no sinner could ever have been saved, had it not been for "the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God with his blood."—It is remarkable, that the priest in putting the oil upon the head of him that was to be cleansed, is said to "make an atonement for him;" which may imply, that the work of the Spirit seals our interest in the great atonement, as well as enables us to apply it.

V. 34—53. This extraordinary plague is expressly spoken of, as immediately inflicted by the hand of God; and it is very probable it was one method, in which he rebuked the idolatry or iniquity which men committed

<sup>a</sup> to make an atonement for him before the LORD.

18. 20. Ex xxx. 15, 16 John xvii. 18. 1 John ii. 1, 2. v. 6.  
 22. xii. 8. xv. 14. 15. Luke ii. 24. Rom. vii. 3

30 And he shall offer the <sup>a</sup> one of the turtle-doves, or of the young pigeons, such as he can get;

31 *Even* such as he is able to get, the one *for* a sin-offering, and the other *for* a burnt-offering, with the meat-offering. And the priest shall make an atonement for him that is to be cleansed, before the LORD.

32 This *is* <sup>b</sup> the law of *him* in whom <sup>b</sup> is the plague of leprosy, <sup>c</sup> whose hand is not able to get *that which pertaineth* to his cleansing.

2. 54—57. xiii. 50.  
 See on 10. 21.—  
 Ps. lxxii. 12—14. cxxxvi. 23. 1 Cor. i. 27, 28.

33 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, and unto Aaron, saying,

34 When <sup>d</sup> ye be come into the land of Canaan, <sup>e</sup> which I give to you for a possession, and <sup>e</sup> I put the plague of leprosy in a house of the land of your possession;

xiii. 10. xxv. 2. Num. xxxv. 10. Deut. xii. 1. 8. xix. 1. xxvi. 1. xxvii. 3.  
 Gen. xli. 7. xiii. 17. xvii. 8. Num. xxxii. 32. Deut. xii. 9, 10. xxxii. 49. Josh. xii. 1. Ex. xv. 26. Deut. vii. 15. 1 Sam. ii. 6. Is. xlv. 7. Am. iii. 6. Mic. vi. 9.

35 And he that owneth the house shall come and tell the priest, saying, It seemeth to me *there is* as it were <sup>f</sup> a plague in the house:

g Deut. vii. 26. Josh. vii. 21. 1 Sam. iii. 12—14. 1 Kings xiii. 84. Ps. xci. 10. Prov. iii. 33. Zech. v. 4.

36 Then the priest shall command that they <sup>h</sup> empty the house, before the priest go *into it* to see the plague, that all that *is* in the house <sup>h</sup> be not made unclean: and afterward the priest shall go in to see the house.

† Or, *prepare.*  
 h 1 Cor. xv. 33. 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18. Heb. xii. 15. Rev. xviii. 4

37 And he shall look on the plague, and, behold, *if* the plague *be* in the walls of the house, <sup>i</sup> with hollow strakes, greenish or reddish, which in sight *are* lower than the wall;

i xiii. 3. 19, 20. 49.

38 Then the priest shall go out of the house to the door of the house, and shut up the house seven days.

39 And the priest shall come again the seventh day, and shall look: and,

in their houses, and the dishonest or sacrilegious gain which they brought into them, when the magistrate did not detect and punish them. Indeed, the plague of leprosy in general may well be considered, as one of the punishments in those cases, where it is said, "that man shall bear his iniquity:" and yet the criminal escaped the sword of the magistrate.—Many expositors endeavour to account in part for this singular disorder from natural causes, and likewise consider many of these rules and restrictions, as *cautions against infection*: but there is not the most remote intimation in these laws, or any where in Scripture, that the disorder was at all infectious.—The methods to be taken, in respect of the leprosy in houses, are very similar

<sup>k</sup> xiii 7, 8. 22. 27. behold, *if* the plague be <sup>\*</sup>spread in the walls of the house;

40 Then the priest shall command that they <sup>1</sup>take away the stones, in which the plague <sup>is</sup>, and they shall cast them into an unclean place without the city.

41 And he shall cause the house to be scraped within round about, and they shall pour out the dust that they scrape off, without the city, <sup>m</sup>into an unclean place.

42 And <sup>n</sup>they shall take other stones, and put *them* in the place of those stones: and he shall take other mortar, and shall plaister the house.

43 And if <sup>o</sup>the plague come again, and break out in the house, after that he hath taken away the stones, and after he hath scraped the house, and after it is plaistered;

44 Then the priest shall come and look, and, behold, *if* the plague be spread in the house, it <sup>p</sup>is <sup>a</sup>a fretting leprosy in the house: it *is* unclean.

45 And he shall <sup>q</sup>break down the house, the stones of it, and the timber thereof, and all the mortar of the house: and he shall carry *them* forth out of the city <sup>r</sup>into an unclean place.

46 Moreover he that goeth into the house, all the while that it is shut up, <sup>s</sup>shall be unclean until the even.

47 And he that lieth in the house, shall wash his clothes: and he that eateth in the house, shall <sup>t</sup>wash his clothes.

48 And if the priest <sup>\*</sup>shall come in, <sup>\*</sup>and look *upon it*, and, behold, the plague hath not spread in the house, after the house was plaistered: then the priest shall pronounce the house clean, <sup>u</sup>because the plague is healed.

49 And he shall take <sup>v</sup>to cleanse the house two birds, and cedar-wood, and scarlet, and hyssop.

50 And he shall kill the one of the birds in an earthen vessel, over running water.

51 And he shall take the cedar-wood, and the hyssop, and the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird, and in the running water, and sprinkle the house seven times.

52 And he shall cleanse the house with the blood of the bird, and with the running water, and with the living bird, and with the cedar-wood, and with the hyssop, and with the scarlet.

53 But he shall let go the living bird out of the city into the open fields, and make an atonement for the house: and it shall be clean.

54 ¶ This <sup>y</sup>is <sup>z</sup>the law for all manner of plague, of leprosy, and <sup>z</sup>scall,

55 And for <sup>a</sup>the leprosy of a garment, and of an house,

56 And <sup>b</sup>for a rising, and for a scab, and for a bright spot:

57 To <sup>c</sup>teach <sup>d</sup>when *it is* unclean, and when *it is* clean: <sup>d</sup>this *is* the law of leprosy.

<sup>\*</sup> Heb. in coming in shall come in, &c.

<sup>u</sup> 3. Job v. 18. Hos. vi. 1. Mark v. 29. 34. Luke vii. 21.

<sup>x</sup> See on 4-7.

<sup>y</sup> 2. 32. vi. 9. 14. 25. vii. 1. 87. x3. 46. xv. 82. Num. v. 29. vi. 13. xix. 14.

<sup>z</sup> xiii. 30, 31.

<sup>a</sup> xlii. 47-59

<sup>b</sup> xiii. 2.

<sup>c</sup> x. 10. Jer. xv. 19. Ez. xlii. 23.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. in the day of the unclean, and in the day of the clean.

<sup>d</sup> Deut. xxiv. 8.

to those prescribed in the other cases; and also the ceremonies of purification, when the plague was removed; only no sacrifices were in this case brought to the altar.—It might represent the prevalence of sin in families, churches, and nations; and it very aptly described the state of Israel, when idolatry had so infected the whole nation, that it must, as unclean, be demolished, and carried captive to Babylon, the unclean metropolis of idolatry.—The rules prescribed seem to imply the care, with which they who fear God, should protest against prevailing iniquities, and separate from them; and the attention and pains, which magistrates, ministers, and masters of families should employ, in checking, restraining, censuring, and punishing sin, in preventing its progress, and in promoting reformation. They may also be emblems of the methods, which the Lord takes with nations and churches, before he proceeds to extremities; and of the certain, shameful, and miserable destruction, which awaits them, when these

methods prove unsuccessful: and they likewise intimate that the Lord frequently gives men up to that filthiness, in which they have delighted.—Thus also sin is so interwoven with the fabric of the human body, that it must be taken down by death: but if previously the leprosy be cleansed, and sin be dethroned and mortified, the soul will be received into the holy mansions of the blessed, and the body also will be raised incorruptible; otherwise both soul and body must at last be carried forth out of the city of God, to that unclean place “prepared for the devil and his “angels.”—Yea, the earth itself must be destroyed by fire, as the unclean, leprous habitation of the polluted sons of men.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When “God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love, “wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in “sins, quickens us” by his Spirit, we soon evidence the change, by sincerely repenting, and forsaking all our evil

## CHAP. XV.

Laws respecting the running issues of men, 1—18;  
and of women, 19—33.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, and  
a xi. l. xiii. l. 'to Aaron, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel,  
b xxii. 4. Num. v. and say unto them, ' When any man  
2. 28am. iii. 29. hath a 'running issue out of his flesh,  
Mark vii. 26—28.  
\* Or, running of the veins. because of his issue he is unclean.

3 And this shall be his uncleanness  
in his issue: whether his flesh run with  
his issue, or his flesh be stopped from  
his issue, it is his uncleanness.

4 Every bed, whereon he lieth that  
hath the issue, is unclean: and every  
† thing whereon he sitteth shall be † un-  
clean.

5 And whosoever toucheth his bed,  
shall † wash his clothes, and bathe him-  
self in water, and be unclean until the  
even.

6 And he that sitteth on any thing,  
whereon he sat that hath the issue,

shall wash his clothes, and bathe him-  
self in water, and be unclean until the  
even.

7 And he that toucheth the flesh of  
him that hath the issue, shall wash his  
clothes, and bathe himself in water,  
and be unclean until the even.

8 And if he that hath the issue spit  
upon him that is clean; then he shall  
† wash his clothes, and bathe himself e 1s. l. ic. Jam.  
iv. 8. in water, and be unclean until the  
even.

9 And what saddle soever he rideth  
upon that hath the issue, shall be un-  
clean.

10 And whosoever toucheth any  
thing that was under him, shall be un-  
clean until the even: and he that bear-  
eth any of those things, shall wash his  
clothes, and bathe himself in water,  
and be unclean until the even.

11 And whomsoever he toucheth  
that hath the issue, (and hath not rinsed  
his hands in water,) he shall wash his

ways; we discover a right judgment, and disposition of heart, and become the servants of the Lord; but especially we are led, by the ministry of the word, to see the suitableness and preciousness of the atoning blood, and the sanctifying grace of Jesus Christ; and gladly washing in "this fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness," we in heart and affection ascend, whither the risen Saviour is gone before. They, who are thus delivered from the prevailing power of sin, endeavour continually to "cleanse themselves" more and more "from all" remaining "filthiness of flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God:" and they should deem it their duty and privilege, without needless delay, yet with previous examination and serious preparation, to seek admission to the communion of the saints; that with them, they may publicly profess their faith, and their grateful love to the Saviour, in the ordinance of his appointment. Considering themselves as bought with a price, they now desire to do all in the name of Christ, and through him "to glorify God with body and spirit, which are his."—This is the true cleansing of a leper, and his subsequent admission into the courts of the Lord's house; or the consecration of an unclean sinner to the spiritual priesthood.—Have we then the inward consciousness of such a change? and have we thus joined ourselves to the Lord and to his people? If so, let us give him the praise; let us humbly remember what we were; let us abound in spiritual sacrifices according to our ability and opportunity; let us follow after holiness; and let us compassionate other poor lepers, and seek and pray for their cleansing also.—All these ancient institutions should remind us of the odious nature and the desert of sin, and the absolute necessity of the blood of Christ, to render our repentance, and the best of our "fruits meet for repentance," acceptable be-

fore a holy God; and that all, who are interested in the blood of the Redeemer, partake of his Spirit, and are devoted to his service. They likewise call on us to watch and pray; and to look well to our hearts, to our households, and to the Church of God: that in our places we may search and purge out our iniquity, and so prevent its prevalence to the destruction of those with whom we are connected. For the readiness of God to pardon the true believer is not more manifest, than his determination to destroy impenitent sinners.—Let us all then take warning, and cry earnestly to him to cleanse our souls before we die, that we may never enter the place where unclean spirits are tormented; but that, "when this earthly house of our tabernacle shall be dissolved, we may have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

## NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 2. It is not needful for us particularly to consider the laws contained in this chapter: they are not binding on us; and the emblematical instruction may be sufficiently understood from the Practical Observations. In some cases, the disease mentioned was contracted by licentiousness; in others it might be the result of shameful secret practices; and even the diseases and infirmities, which were only an affliction, and had no immediate connexion with personal and actual sin, were all originally the consequence of the sinful state of human nature: nay, the cases, in which neither positive disease nor actual sin was implied, might be thus marked, to shew how a fallen nature pollutes every thing we do.

V. 11. If the diseased person rinsed his hands in water, just before he touched any one, he did not communicate pollution; otherwise he did.

clothes, and bathe *himself* in water, and be unclean until the even.

<sup>f</sup> vi. 28. xi. 32, 33. 2 Cor. v. 1. Phil. iii. 21. 12 And <sup>t</sup>the vessel of earth, that he toucheth which hath the issue, shall be broken: and every vessel of wood shall be rinsed in water.

<sup>g</sup> 28. viii. 33. ix. 1. xiv. 8. Num. xii. 14. xix. 11, 12. <sup>h</sup> Jer. xxxiii. 8. Ez. xxxvi. 25—29. 2 Cor. vii. 1. 13 And when he that hath an issue is cleansed of his issue; then he shall number to himself <sup>s</sup>seven days for his cleansing, <sup>h</sup>and wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in running water, and shall be clean.

<sup>i</sup> 29. 30. xii. 6. 8. xiv. 22, 23. 14 And on the eighth day he shall take to him <sup>t</sup>two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, and come before the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and give them unto the priest.

<sup>k</sup> v. 7—10. xiv. 19, 20, 30, 31. 15 And the priest shall offer them, <sup>k</sup>the one *for* a sin-offering, and the other *for* a burnt-offering; and the priest shall make <sup>t</sup>an atonement for him before the LORD, for his issue.

<sup>l</sup> See on iv. 20.—xii. 7. Num. xv. 25. xxv. 13. <sup>m</sup> xxiii. 4. Deut. xxiii. 10, 11. 16 And <sup>n</sup>if any man's seed of copulation go out from him, then he shall wash all his flesh in water, and be unclean until the even.

17 And every garment, and every skin whereon is the seed of copulation, shall be washed with water, and be unclean until the even.

18 The woman also with whom man shall lie *with* seed of copulation, they shall *both* bathe *themselves* in water, and be <sup>a</sup>unclean until the even.

<sup>n</sup> Ex. xix. 15. 1 Sam. xxi. 4. 5. Ps. li. 5. 1 Cor. vi. 12. 1 Thes. iv. 4, 5. Heb. xiii. 4. <sup>o</sup> xii. 2. Lam. i. 6. 9. 17. Ez. xxxvi. 17. <sup>p</sup> Heb. in her separation. 19 ¶ And if a woman have an issue, and <sup>o</sup>her issue in her flesh be blood, she shall be <sup>t</sup>put apart seven days: and whosoever toucheth her, shall be unclean until the even.

<sup>p</sup> See on 4—9. 20 And <sup>p</sup>every thing that she lieth upon in her separation, shall be un-

clean: every thing also that she sitteth upon, shall be unclean.

21 And whosoever toucheth her bed, shall wash his clothes, and bathe *himself* in water, and be unclean until the even.

22 And whosoever toucheth any thing that she sat upon, shall wash his clothes, and bathe *himself* in water, and be unclean until the even.

23 And if it *be* on *her* bed, or on any thing whereon she sitteth, when he toucheth it; he shall be unclean until the even.

24 And if <sup>q</sup>any man lie with her at all, and her flowers be upon him, he shall be unclean seven days: and all the bed whereon he lieth shall be unclean. <sup>q</sup> 33. xx. 18. Ez. xviii. 6. xxii. 10.

25 And if a woman have an issue of her blood <sup>t</sup>many days out of the time of her separation, or if it run beyond the time of her separation; all the days of the issue of her uncleanness shall be as the days of her separation; she *shall be* unclean. <sup>r</sup> Matt. ix. 20. Mark v. 25. Luke viii. 43.

26 Every bed whereon she lieth all the days of her issue, shall be unto her as the bed of her separation: and whatsoever she sitteth upon shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her separation.

27 And whosoever toucheth those things shall be unclean, and <sup>t</sup>shall wash his clothes, and bathe *himself* in water, and be unclean until the even. <sup>s</sup> 5—8. 13. 21. xvii. 15, 16. Zech. xiii. 1.

28 But if she be cleansed of her issue, then she shall <sup>t</sup>number to herself seven days, and after that she shall be clean. <sup>t</sup> See on 13—15.

29 And on the eighth day she shall take unto her two turtles, or two young

V. 13—15. The purification and sacrifices, when this disorder was removed, were not very dissimilar to some of those, which were appointed at the cleansing of a leper; but the sacrifices were less expensive, and only a sin-offering and a burnt-offering were required.

V. 16—18. In these cases, as well as that of one who contracted pollution by touching an unclean person, nothing but ablution was required. This part of the law the Jews might observe at present; but it is said they do not think themselves bound by it, now they have no temple, and live in other lands; as it had reference to the sanctuary of God and the holy land (31).

V. 24. When this was done in presumption, it was to be punished with death if detected; and if not, the offenders might expect to be cut off by the judgment of God: (xx. 18:) but when inadvertently, this purification was to be observed. This restriction must not be considered as merely ceremonial; for the nature of the case, and the punishment denounced against wilful transgressors, combine to prove it to be of perpetual moral obligation.

V. 28. It is not said, that the woman must "wash her clothes, and bathe her flesh in running water," as it had been of the man (13). The reason of this difference does not appear.

pigeons, and bring them unto the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

30 And the priest shall offer the one *for* a sin-offering, and the other *for* a burnt-offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for her before the LORD, for the issue of her uncleanness.

31 ¶ Thus <sup>a</sup> shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness, <sup>x</sup> that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile my tabernacle that *is* among them.

32 This *is* <sup>7</sup> the law of him that hath an issue, and *of* him whose seed goeth from him, and is defiled therewith:

33 And <sup>a</sup> of her that is sick of her flowers, and of him that hath an issue, of the man, and of the woman, <sup>a</sup> and of him that lieth with her which is unclean.

V. 31. This shews, that these laws were principally intended to impress the minds of the Israelites with reverence for the sanctuary: and on the one hand, to shew them what need they had of circumspection and purity of heart and life, in order to worship the holy God with acceptance; and on the other hand, that being sinners in a world full of temptations and defilements, they would continually need forgiveness, through the great atonement typified by all the sacrifices, and the sanctification of the Spirit shadowed forth by all the purifications. While they were encamped in the desert, it would not be very burdensome to bring the prescribed oblations; but after they were settled in Canaan, many of them at a great distance from the tabernacle, this would become much more difficult.—We may however observe, that many of the cases stated only required such washings as might any where be performed; and that those respecting which sacrifices were appointed, would more rarely occur. We may also suppose, that provided these were brought, when the person who had been unclean first came to the sanctuary, it would suffice; though distance or other hindrances prevented its being done immediately, at the expiration of the seven days.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We have great cause for thankfulness, that we need fear no defilement but that of sin; and have no occasion for any of these ceremonial and burdensome purifications: yet, when we consider how nearly we are beset with occasions of moral uncleanness, by day and by night, alone and in company, nay, sleeping as well as awake, we may well say with David, "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults."—And these laws may remind us that God sees all those things, which are totally concealed from human eyes, and escape the censure of mortal men. Being unholy creatures, and having to do with so holy a God, we must for ever have been banished from his presence, had he not said, "From all their

#### CHAP. XVI.

The high priest must not enter the most holy place at all times: but, on a day of atonement yearly observed, having slain a sin-offering for himself, and another for the people, he must enter with the sprinkling of blood, and burning of incense, 1—17. The altar of incense, purified with blood, 18, 19. The scape-goat sent away, and burnt-offerings sacrificed, and the sin-offerings burnt without the camp, 20—28. The day of this solemnity instituted, 29—34.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, after <sup>a</sup> the death of the two sons of Aaron, when they offered before the LORD, and died:

2 And the LORD said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that <sup>b</sup> he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil, before the mercy-seat, which *is* upon the ark; <sup>c</sup> that he die not: for I will appear <sup>d</sup> in the cloud upon <sup>e</sup> the mercy-seat.

"filthiness will I cleanse them;" and both provided the Fountain for our purification, and appointed the means. In the daily exercise of self-examination, repentance, and faith in the one sin-offering of Christ, and by daily prayer for his sanctifying grace, we seek and find this purification, and this purity of heart, with which we shall be admitted "to see God."—While we observe the rule of God's word, and aim at his glory through Jesus Christ, all things become pure to us: but every thing is an occasion of increasing and communicating defilement to the impenitent and unbelieving. With serious recollection and humble reverence, we should approach our holy, heart-searching God in his ordinances: and in our daily walk be careful to "possess our vessels in sanctification and honour;" consulting expediency and avoiding excess in things most lawful, and being careful not to be "brought under the power of any."—Many of our diseases may remind us of our personal transgressions; all our infirmities evince that we are sinners: thence we should learn patience, and take occasion to humble ourselves before God; more earnestly to seek forgiveness; and to wait with cheerful expectation for the coming of him, "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working, whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself." (Note, Phil. iii. 20, 21.)

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1. The appointment of the annual day of atonement tended to encourage Aaron, by the assurance that he would be continued and accepted in the priesthood; and to instruct him and his sons how to avoid the sin and punishment of Nadab and Abihu: for they would be perfectly safe whilst they adhered to the rule, and that example would render them attentive to it.

V. 2. The ordinary priests went into the sanctuary, where the golden candlestick and the table of shew-bread were placed; and there, *without* "the veil, before the

f Heb ix 7 12. 24, 25  
g iv. 3. ciii 14. Num xxix 7-11.  
h i 3. 10 viii 18. ix. 3.

3 Thus shall <sup>a</sup> Aaron come into the holy place: with <sup>a</sup> a young bullock for a sin-offering, and <sup>b</sup> a ram for a burnt-offering.

i vi. 10. Ez. xxviii. 2. 40-43. xxxix. 27-29. 1a iiii 2. Ez. xiv. 17, 18. Luke i 85 Phil. ii. 7. Heb ii 14. vii. 26.

k viii. 6. Ez. xxix. 4. xxx. 20. xl. 12. 31, 32 Rev i 5, 6.

4 He shall put on the <sup>1</sup> holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with the linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these *are* holy garments; <sup>k</sup> therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on.

i iv. 14. viii. 2. 14. ix. 8-16. Num. xxix. 11. 2 Chr. xxix. 21. Ezra vi. 17. Ez. xiv. 22, 23. Rom. viii. 3. Heb. vii. 27, 28. x. 5-14. m viii. 14-17. Heb. ix. 7.

5 And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel, <sup>1</sup> two kids of the goats for a sin-offering, and one ram for a burnt-offering.

n ix. 7. Ezra x. 18. 19. Job i. 5. Ez. xliii. 19-27.

6 And Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin-offering, <sup>m</sup> which is for himself, and make <sup>n</sup> an atonement for himself, and for his house.

7 And he shall take the two goats, and <sup>o</sup> present them before the LORD, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

8 And Aaron shall <sup>p</sup> cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the <sup>q</sup> scape-goat.

9 And Aaron shall bring the goat <sup>r</sup> upon which the LORD's lot <sup>s</sup> fell, and offer him <sup>t</sup> for a sin-offering.

10 But the goat on which the lot fell to be <sup>u</sup> the scape-goat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, <sup>v</sup> to make an atonement with him, and to <sup>w</sup> let him go for a scape-goat into the wilderness.

11 ¶ And Aaron shall bring <sup>x</sup> the bullock of the sin-offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall

"mercy-seat," they burnt incense upon the golden altar, one at a time: but they went no further. (Notes, Ex. xxx. 7, 8. Luke i. 8-10. Heb. ix. 6, 7.) The high priest alone went within the veil into the holy of holies, where the ark of the covenant was; and that only on one day in the year: and it was at the peril of his life, if at any other time, or in any other manner on ordinary occasions, he ventured into the presence of the Lord, of which the cloud of glory above the mercy-seat was the symbol; for the visible glory seems to have shone from the midst of a cloud.—When the tabernacle was to be removed, and on some other occasions, deviations from this strict rule became indispensable. (Notes, Num. iv. 5. 2 Chr. xxix. 12-19.)—The worship appointed by the law was intimately connected with sensible objects, which are less revered when rendered familiar: but that of the New Testament, being more simple, is maintained entirely by faith; and the objects of it are admired and adored, in proportion to the frequency and intenseness with which we meditate upon them: the Israelites therefore were commanded to keep their distance, but we are invited to draw near.

V. 3. The daily sacrifice doubtless preceded the solemnities appointed in this chapter.

V. 4. The repeated washings of the high priest might typify Christ's perfect purity; but they more evidently reminded him of his own sinfulness.—He performed the appropriate services of this day, in the mean garments of the ordinary priests, not in his own rich robes: for Christ made atonement for us in his holy human nature, having laid aside his robes of majesty when he assumed "the form of a servant;" and as Man, he even now intercedes for us. (1 Tim. ii. 5-7.)

V. 6. The word "offer" seems in this verse to mean no more than to present the bullock before the Lord, with confession of sins, and earnest prayer that it might be accepted as an expiatory sacrifice (11).

V. 8-10. The word rendered "the scape-goat," (comp. of *she-goat*, and *to go away*) signifies

"the goat which went away." But the Jews say, that the place, to which the goat was led, is intended, and not the goat itself. Probably, however, our translation is as expressive of the meaning of the type, as any other for which it could be changed. The other goat was allotted to the Lord to be sacrificed to him; and this was sent away into a *separate place*, at a distance from the tents and dwellings of Israel. (22. marg.)—The dying goat represented Christ suffering for our sins; "the scape-goat," Christ rising to carry into effect the purposes of his death, in the actual forgiveness and justification of his believing people. A goat was *clean* by the law, yet not *cleanly* as the sheep in the opinion of man; nay, goats are the emblem of the wicked in the representation of the day of judgment. (Matt. xxv. 32, 33.) Thus Christ *seemed* to men a sinner, but was absolutely sinless; and when "numbered among transgressors," he died by the sentence of man as a malefactor, but in the purpose of God as a Sacrifice.—Two kids of the goats having been provided as a sin-offering, it was decided by lot, which should be slain and which should escape. A lot is a solemn appeal to God in a doubtful matter, relative to practice, as an oath is in testimonies and engagements: and each of them ought to be the last resource, when other methods of decision fail, and to be used as a solemn act of religion, or not at all. It is therefore an unanswerable objection to all lotteries and games of chance, that they are a profanation of a *religious ordinance*; for so it is every where spoken of in Scripture. "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposal of it is of the LORD:" they are therefore an appeal to God to decide in a matter of covetousness, or of diversion; and so form a species of "taking his name in vain," not much unlike rash and profane swearing in trifling conversation, or when men are striking bargains.

V. 11-14. After the high priest had slain the sin-offering for himself and his family, he seems to have left the other priests to prepare the blood, the fat, and the flesh of the sacrifice; and to have taken a censer full of

kill the bullock of the sin-offering, which *is* for himself.

12 And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire <sup>v</sup>from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of <sup>x</sup>sweet incense beaten small, and bring *it* within the veil.

13 And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that <sup>y</sup>the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat that *is* upon the testimony, that he die not.

14 And he shall take of <sup>z</sup>the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle *it* with his finger upon the mercy-seat eastward: and before the mercy-seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.

15 ¶ Then <sup>a</sup>shall he kill the goat of the sin-offering that *is* for the people, and <sup>b</sup>bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood *as* he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle *it* upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat.

16 And he shall make <sup>c</sup>an atone-

ment for the holy *place*, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation that <sup>d</sup>remaineth among them, in the midst of their uncleanness.

17 And there shall be <sup>e</sup>'no man in the tabernacle of the congregation, when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy *place*, until he come out, <sup>f</sup>and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.

18 And he shall <sup>g</sup>'go out unto the altar that *is* before the LORD, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar round about.

19 And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and <sup>h</sup>hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

burning coals from off the altar, and as much incense as both his hands would hold, which doubtless was put into a cup or plate for that purpose. With these he entered within the veil, immediately putting the incense on the coals and causing the smoke to ascend before the mercy-seat; without which he must not have gone thither on pain of death. He then seems to have fetched the blood of his own sin-offering, and to have sprinkled it as prescribed: then to have gone forth again, and to have killed the people's sin-offerings, and with the blood of them, to have entered the *third* time; and to have left the censer, till he had applied the blood to the altar of incense, and then to have entered the *fourth* time to fetch it away.—All that the Jewish writers have very copiously advanced on the manner, in which the services of this day were performed, can only shew how they understood the Scriptures, which relate to the subject: and in some cases what variations, and additions to the divine appointments, they made, which contribute little to our edification: for it should be kept in mind, that what learned men extract from them on these subjects, was written long after the temple was finally destroyed by the Romans, and the Mosaic ceremonial thus actually abolished; and many of their assertions are directly contrary to the words of the law.—As the mercy-seat was placed at the *west end* of the tabernacle, the word *eastward* must either mean, that the high priest stood eastward of the mercy-seat when he sprinkled the blood; or that it was sprinkled on that part of the mercy-seat which faced the east.

V. 15, 16. The uncleanness of the people, and all their manifold transgressions, contaminated even the taber-

nacle that was among them, and all its furniture; yea, the holy of holies; even if none either of the priests or people had entered, during the whole preceding year. 'See,' says Ainsworth, 'the horrid filthiness of sin!'—Thus the depravity of the human heart renders the best services of man defiled, so that he needs the atonement of the blood of Christ to render them acceptable.

V. 17. The high priest was the grand type of Christ, under the Mosaic dispensation, and this solemnity more especially represented his sufferings for us on earth, and his intercession for us in heaven: the express prohibition therefore of any man, even of the priests, to enter into the tabernacle while the high priest performed this typical service, emphatically shewed, that no sacrifice, no intercession, must so much as in appearance be joined with those of Christ, in his mediatorial work.—It is said, that the high priest spent a considerable part of the day in prayer for himself, his family, and the congregation; and without doubt this would be the case, with those high priests who fully entered into the design of the sacred service.

V. 18, 19. The altar of incense is generally supposed to be here intended; for this ceremony had been appointed for that altar, but not for the altar of burnt-offering, at the foot of which all the residue of the blood was poured out. (Note, Ex. xxx. 9, 10.) The typical meaning also requires this interpretation: for every thing within the sanctuary was purged with the blood shed without, at the altar of burnt-offering; as the efficacy of our Lord's intercession in heaven is derived from his sacrifice here on earth.—Aaron came out of the *most holy* place, into the *holy* place, for this part of the service.

20 ¶ And when he hath made an end of <sup>b</sup>reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the <sup>c</sup>live goat:

21 And Aaron shall <sup>k</sup>lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and <sup>l</sup>confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, <sup>m</sup>putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send <sup>n</sup>him away by the hand of <sup>o</sup>a fit man into the wilderness.

22 And the goat shall <sup>p</sup>bear upon him all their iniquities, unto a land not inhabited; and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

V. 20—22. The word, rendered “reconciling,” is the same as that before translated “make atonement,” and it signifies to *cover*, or *hide*.—When the high priest had sprinkled the blood of the two sin-offerings separately, in the most holy place, upon the mercy-seat, and afterwards seven times each in the holy place *before* the mercy-seat, and applied it to the altar of incense; he then came out of the tabernacle, and laying both his hands on the head of the live goat, he confessed over it all the sins of Israel of every kind, with their various aggravations. Thus the guilt was typically transferred to it, in respect of the temporal punishment: for such sacrifices “could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;” much less could they actually remove the guilt of every individual in Israel, whether penitent or impenitent. But by this annual confession and atonement, the judgments of God were averted from the nation. The Lord still condescended to dwell among them, as his worshippers, notwithstanding their past transgressions; and they continued to enjoy the benefit of his ordinances and oracles.—In the latter days of the Jewish church the high priest had a *form of confession*: but God prescribed none. An attentive observance of the divine law, and of the people’s conduct, with suitable previous consideration, would enable him to do it much more profitably without one.—When the sins of Israel had thus been “put upon the head of the goat,” a proper person was sent to lead him away into the wilderness, to a place sufficiently distant from the habitations of men; and there to let him go at liberty, bearing upon him their sins, never more to be heard of.—Christ “bare our sins in his own body on the tree;” they were imputed to him, and he bare the punishment due to them: this was typified by the goat which was slain and burnt. He then ascended into heaven, and by his intercession grounded on his atonement, renders our persons and services accepted: this was typified by the high priest entering with the blood and incense into the most holy place. In consequence of this, the sins of all believers are entirely forgiven; and they are dealt with, as if they had never committed them: this was shadowed by the scape-goat sent away into the wilderness.

V. 23—25. When the scape-goat had been sent away,

23 And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there.

24 And he shall <sup>p</sup>wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on <sup>q</sup>his garments and come forth, and offer <sup>r</sup>his burnt-offering, and the burnt-offering of the people, <sup>s</sup>and make an atonement for himself, and for the people.

25 And <sup>t</sup>the fat of the sin-offering shall he burn upon the altar.

26 And <sup>u</sup>he that let go the goat for the scape-goat, shall <sup>v</sup>wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward come into the camp.

“bearing on him all the iniquities of Israel,” the high priest, going into the tabernacle, put off his linen garments, and left them there; (the Jews say, never to be worn again;) and then, having “washed his flesh with water in the holy place,” he put on the rich garments which were peculiar to his office: for the more humiliating, sorrowful, and penitential part of the solemn service was now ended, and way was made for joy and exultation.—The word, here rendered *wash*, is very frequently translated *bathe*; (26. 28;) but it is obvious, that it cannot exclusively mean the covering of the whole body with water; for there was no provision made for this, either in the holy place, or in the court of the tabernacle, which probably induced the translators to render it *wash* in this connexion: but whether the hands and feet alone were washed, or some of the other parts of the body, or every part of it, seems to have depended on circumstances. (xv. 6, 7. 13. 16.) The high priest, having touched the scape-goat, seemed to have contracted a degree of ritual uncleanness, which his washing might refer to.—He then offered his own burnt-offering: and also that of the people, which probably means one prescribed in a subsequent law: (Num. xxix. 8:) though some suppose this to have been offered in the morning, and that the burnt-offering here mentioned was the evening sacrifice; all the intervening time having been taken up in the solemn services of the day. By these oblations, Aaron made a further atonement for himself and the people, at the altar of burnt-offering; and thus the expiation was completed, in respect of all things pertaining to the instituted worship of Israel.—As the bodies of the sin-offerings were reserved till the other solemnities were finished, before they were carried out of the camp to be burned; so the fat of them was likewise kept to be laid on the altar upon the burnt-offerings: for we have no reason to suppose, that this also was mentioned out of its proper order.

V. 26—28. To shew still further the defiling nature of sin, and the insufficiency of these typical expiations; both he who led away the scape-goat, and he who burnt the sin-offering, contracted defilement and needed purification. (Note, vi. 30.)—Jerusalem in later ages answered to the camp in the wilderness. (Note, Heb. xiii. 9—14.)

y iv. 11, 12, 21, vi  
30, viii. 17

27 And the bullock *for* <sup>a</sup> the sin-offering, and the goat *for* the sin-offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy *place*, and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung.

a Matt. xxvii. 9  
—33. Heb. xiii  
1—14.

28 And he that burneth them, <sup>a</sup> shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp.

a See on 26

29 ¶ And *this* shall be a statute for ever unto you: *that* <sup>b</sup> in the seventh month, on the tenth *day* of the month, ye <sup>c</sup> shall afflict your souls, and <sup>d</sup> do no work at all, *whether it be* one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you.

b xxiii. 27—32. Ex.  
xxx. 10. Num.  
xxxix. 7. 1 Kings  
viii. 2. Ezra iii.  
1.

c Ps. xxxv. 13.  
xxx. 10. Is. lviii.  
5. 5. Dan. x. 3.  
12. 1 Cor. xi. 31.  
2 Cor. vi. 10, 11.  
d xxiii. 3. 7. 8. 21.  
28. 30. 36. Ex.  
xii. 16. xx. 10.  
Is. lviii. 13. Heb.  
iv. 10.

e Ps. li. 2. 7. 10.  
Jer. xxxiii. 8.  
Ez. xxxv. 25—  
27. Eph. v. 26.  
Tit. ii. 14. Heb.  
ix. 13, 14. x. 1.  
2. 1 John i. 7—  
9.

30 For on that day shall *the priest* make an atonement for you, <sup>e</sup> to cleanse you, *that* ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.

31 It *shall be* <sup>f</sup> a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls by a statute for ever.

xxiii. 32. xxv. 4.  
Ex. xxxi. 15.  
xxxv. 2

32 And <sup>g</sup> the priest whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall <sup>h</sup> consecrate <sup>i</sup> to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall <sup>j</sup> put on the linen clothes, *even* the holy garments.

iv. 3. 5. 16.

f Heb. *gill* *And*  
band. Ez. xxix.  
9. Marg.  
h Ez. xxix. 29, 30  
Num. xx. 26—  
28.

i See on 4.

33 And he shall make <sup>k</sup> an atonement for the holy sanctuary: and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar: and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation.

k See on 16 18  
19. 24

34 And this shall be <sup>l</sup> an everlasting statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel, for all their sins, <sup>m</sup> once a year. And he did as the LORD commanded Moses.

xxiii. 31. Num.  
xxxix. 7.

m Ex. xxx. 10  
Heb. ix. 7. 28  
x. 3. 14.

V. 29—31. The Israelites, all over the camp at this time, and all over the land afterward in Canaan, were required to spend this day in solemn humiliation before God for their sins; in godly sorrow, penitent confessions, and devotional exercises, either in secret, or in their families and assemblies: and for this purpose all other business was laid aside. Fasting is not expressly mentioned; but it is generally supposed to be implied, with several other expressions of contrition, and instances of self-denial. The day must also be observed as a most solemn sabbath, on which no work might be done, either by an Israelite or a stranger; for "afflicting their souls" for sin would be sufficient employment. (*Marg. Ref. c. Note, Acts xxvii. 9.*)—Various reasons are assigned, why the tenth day of the seventh month was particularly appointed: but there seems no certainty in any of them.

V. 32—34. None except the high priest was allowed to perform the solemn service of this day; and "he could not continue by reason of death:" it was therefore appointed, that he, among Aaron's descendants, who was anointed to the high priesthood, through succeeding generations, should thus make atonement for the sanctuary, the priests, and the people, once every year.—Moses anointed and consecrated Aaron, and probably Eleazar; but it is not expressly said by whom the high priests in succession should be anointed. It is generally thought, that the eldest son of the high priest, (if a proper person,) or the next in succession, was previously anointed and consecrated, that he might officiate, if any thing occurred to prevent the high priest, as sickness or ceremonial uncleanness: and then he entered on that office when his predecessor died. It is probable, in this case, that the high priest himself anointed his successor: if this had not been done we may suppose that the chief of the priests, in age or authority, anointed the eldest of the sons of the deceased high priest, who had no defect or impediment: or perhaps, a subse-

quent anointing also was used after the high priest's death; as David, after having been anointed by Samuel to succeed Saul, was repeatedly anointed after Saul's death, when he entered on his regal office. (1 Sam. xvi. 12, 13. *Notes, 2 Sam. ii. 4. v. 3.*)—The words rendered, "whom he shall anoint," seem only to mean, *who shall be anointed*; and may be rendered, "whom one shall anoint."—Many learned men imagine, that these atonements expiated nothing, but the guilt contracted by transgressing the ceremonial law; and they seem to think it actually prevailed for the full and final pardon of these offences, to all for whom they were offered: but the varied expressions used on this occasion, shew that all kinds of sins were alike atoned for: (16. 21 :) and the apostle's argument (*Heb. ix. 8—10*) proves that no sin was thus actually pardoned, as to the conscience. All true believers, using these as means of grace, were pardoned and accepted for the sake of the great Antitype and his atonement: the temporal punishment, for sins of every kind, was averted by the offering in that case instituted; but there were many crimes for which no sacrifice was appointed. The annual expiation of national guilt, however, prevented the forfeiture of the national covenant: but in idolatrous times it was either utterly neglected, or very carelessly attended to; and when the Substance came, all these shadows lost their use and efficacy: for the words rendered "everlasting," and "for ever," in this connexion mean *perpetual* during that typical dispensation. (*Note, Gen. xvii. 7, 8.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—14.

These varied shadows of good things to come lead us into almost unavoidable repetitions: for it must surely be inexcusable to shut our eyes that we may not see, or seeing to refrain from noting, though repeatedly, these manifold remembrances of sin, as chargeable upon the best of men

## CHAP. XVII.

The blood of beasts slaughtered for food, must be offered to the Lord, that no sacrifices may be offered to devils, 1—9. No blood must be eaten, nor that which died of itself, 10—16.

**AND** the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto Aaron, and unto his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, This *is* the thing which the LORD hath commanded, saying,

3 What man soever *there be* <sup>a</sup> of the house of Israel, <sup>b</sup> that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat in the camp, or that killeth *it out* of the camp,

4 And <sup>c</sup> bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD; <sup>d</sup> blood

shall be imputed unto that man: <sup>e</sup> he hath shed blood; and that man shall <sup>f</sup> be cut off from among his people:

5 To the end that the children of Israel may bring their sacrifices, which they offer <sup>g</sup> in the open field, even that they may bring them unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation unto the priest, <sup>h</sup> and offer them *for* peace-offerings unto the LORD.

6 And the priest shall <sup>i</sup> sprinkle the blood upon the altar of the LORD, *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and <sup>j</sup> burn the fat for a sweet savour unto the LORD.

7 And they shall no more offer their sacrifices <sup>k</sup> unto devils, after whom they have <sup>l</sup> gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations.

<sup>a</sup> 6, 12, 13, 15.

<sup>b</sup> Deut. xii. 5—7.  
11—15. 20—22.  
26, 27.

<sup>c</sup> 1. 2. Ex. xx. 40.  
John x. 7. 9.  
xiv. 6.

<sup>d</sup> vii. 18. Ps. xxxiii.  
2. Rom. iv. 6. v.  
13, 20. Philemon  
18, 19.

<sup>f</sup> 10, 14. xviii. 29.  
xx. 3. 16. 18.  
Gen. xvii. 14.  
Ex. xii. 15. 19.  
Num. xv. 30, 31.

<sup>g</sup> Gen. xxi. 33.  
xxii. 2. 13. xxxi.  
54. Deut. xii. 2.  
1 Kings xiv. 23.  
2 Kings xvi. 4.  
xvii. 10. 2 Chr.  
xxviii. 4. Ez. xx.  
28 xxii. 9.  
<sup>h</sup> iii. vii. 11—21.  
Ex. xxiv. 5.

<sup>i</sup> iii. 2. 8. 13.

<sup>j</sup> iii. 5. 11. 16. iv.  
31. Ex. xxix. 13.  
Num. xviii. 17.

<sup>k</sup> Deut. xxxii. 17.  
2 Chr. xi. 15.  
Ps. cvi. 37. John  
xii. 81. xiv. 20.  
1 Cor. x. 20.  
2 Cor. iv. 4.  
Eph. ii. 2. Rev.  
ix. 20.

<sup>l</sup> xx. 5. Ex. xxxiv.  
15. Deut. xxxi.  
16. Jer. iii. 1.  
Ez. xxxiii. 8. Rev.  
xvii. 1—6.

in their most holy actions; as polluting all things that the sinner touches; yet atoned for by nothing except blood, and nobler blood than that of bulls and goats. Doubtless these are so many demonstrations, that we rightly understand what the New Testament teaches of Christ, when we consider him as the Substance of all these shadows; and his Church the building, for which all these scaffoldings were prepared. Here, in a type, we view our great High Priest, our Sacrifice, our Advocate, our Saviour from sin. Thus he veiled his glory. "Because the children were *"partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise *"took part of the same,"* and appeared in human nature, yet free from sin; though he had richer robes of glory and beauty, when angels saw and adored him *"in the form of *"God,"* as their Creator and Lord. By the one sacrifice of himself he made an actual atonement for sin on earth; and with the same human nature, and with his own blood, he ascended into heaven, to appear before the Father's mercy-seat, to present the incense of his prevailing intercession for his people; in which service none, even of the spiritual priesthood, must presume to unite with him. Thence with his spiritual presence he meets his assembled disciples, and renders his ordinances sanctifying to them, and acceptable to God; and at the end of the world he *"will come in his own glory, and in the glory of his *"Father,"* to complete the grand design.***

## V. 15—34.

Here also in another glass, we see the Saviour in the sin-offering of the goat. In the likeness of sinful flesh, he suffered without the camp, by the hands of wicked men, but according to the purpose of God; while in the *scape-goat* we see him rising, and bearing the sins of all true believers into the land of forgetfulness. But in how many things do these shadows fail of truly representing the substance! It was very evident *"that the way into the holiest was not *"made manifest,"* when the high priest himself must enter*

so seldom, and so circumspectly, on pain of death. Jesus needed not to offer sacrifice for his own sin; for he was without sin. Though *"the LORD caused to meet on him *"the iniquities of us all,"* yet he thence contracted no pollution, nor needed any purification, having perfectly expiated the whole. And feebly indeed do *"the holy places *"made with hands"* shadow forth the heaven of heavens; or the smoke of the fragrant gums, for a few hours in a year, his continued and meritorious advocacy.—Nor are the benefits which Israel as a nation derived from this annual atonement, or the external privileges thus continued to them, at all comparable to *"the access with boldness to *"the throne of grace,"* the mercy, the peace, the spiritual and everlasting blessings and consolations, which true believers in all ages enjoy through the atonement of the Son of God!—Yet let it be remembered that none but humbled souls, who *"repent and bring forth fruits meet for repent-*"ance,"* can derive true comfort from these privileges. The proud, the carnal, the impenitent and unbelieving, have but the shadow still; a shadow often of their own devising, not of God's appointing. It was not requisite that Christ should suffer more than once; but we need constantly to look to him: and, besides our daily exercise of repentance, seasons set apart from time to time to afflict our souls, to humble ourselves before God, and to mortify our sinful desires, are very profitable, and have in all ages met with the approbation of God, and been sanctioned by the example of holy men. Nor will this mar our holy joy: it will rather purify it; it will endear the Saviour, and greatly assist us, in so looking unto him, that we may not be weary or faint in our minds, either in doing his will or suffering for his sake.****

## NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 3—7. The language of this passage evidently means, that the Israelites, while in the wilderness, must not kill any of those animals which were appointed

8 And thou shalt say unto them, Whatsoever man *there be* of the house of Israel, or of the strangers which sojourn among you, <sup>m</sup> that offereth a burnt-offering or sacrifice,

9 And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer it unto the LORD; even that man shall be cut off from among his people.

10 ¶ And whatsoever man *there be* of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you,

that eateth any manner of blood; <sup>n</sup> I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.

11 For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood, and <sup>p</sup> I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

12 Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, <sup>q</sup> neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood.

to be sacrificed, even for food, elsewhere, either in the camp, or without: but must bring them all, as peace-offerings, to the door of the tabernacle; that the blood might be sprinkled, the fat burnt on the altar, and the due portion allotted to the priest, according to the laws before given.—It may be supposed, that few animals, in proportion to the multitudes of Israel, would at this time be slain; the manna being their principal sustenance: and when they came into Canaan, and many of them lived far from the sanctuary, they might kill cattle for food in any place. “Even as the roe-buck, and as the hart, so shalt thou eat them.” (*Deut. xii. 15. 22.*) These animals, therefore, or any other clean animal, not appointed for sacrifice, if caught in the wilderness, might be eaten, without being brought to the door of the tabernacle. In the mean while, the transgression of this law would be imputed to any Israelite, as a capital crime; even as if he had committed murder: and, if the magistrate did not punish him, God himself would “cut him off from among his people.”—This law was intended to honour the divine institutions, and to put an end to the custom of offering sacrifices “in the open field,” or in any place indiscriminately, by habituating the people to bring all their oblations to the tabernacle; nay, to present the animals slain for food as a sacrifice to God.—It was also meant as a preservative from idolatry, which was even at that time secretly practised, in direct violation of the national covenant. For idolatry is evidently intended; when it is said, that the people “sacrificed to devils, after whom they had gone a whoring,” the common term for idolatry in the Scriptures. The word (עֲרִיצִים) translated “devils,” is taken from the roughness of a goat, and indeed signifies goats: and many translate it *satyrs*, which are fabled to have appeared in the form of goats in the woods to their votaries; and it is certain, that several imaginary deities of the Gentiles were often worshipped by images, formed nearly in the shape of goats.—Our translation, however, is not improper: for all idolatry in fact deifies devils, by rendering worship to those ambitious spirits, even as all wickedness is serving them; and by both Satan aspires to be honoured as the god and prince of this world. (*Note, 1 Cor. x. 18—22.*)—The prohibition of offering sacrifices elsewhere than at the sanctuary, was of perpetual obligation; though the people were afterwards allowed to kill animals for food in any place. (*Notes, Deut. xii. 5—7. 22.*)—The whole kingdom of Israel, from the days of Jeroboam, habitually violated this law: and through the reigns of most of David’s successors, the kingdom of

Judah was in great measure guilty of the same, whilst “the people sacrificed upon the high places.” In some cases the Lord dispensed with the letter of it, by accepting sacrifices from his prophets on particular occasions, which were offered elsewhere: for the typical import formed the grand intention of the ceremonial law.—The worship of God at the tabernacle represented the sinner’s approach to God in Christ, and through his mediation: but sacrifices, offered elsewhere, generally evinced a proud, contemptuous neglect of that great salvation.

V. 8, 9. A mixed multitude accompanied Israel out of Egypt, many of whom probably had before this returned: but some might still continue, and strangers from other parts might come on different occasions. None of these however were permitted, in the camp of Israel, while sojourning in the wilderness, or afterwards residing among them in the land of Canaan, to offer sacrifices of any kind to their idols, or any sacrifice even to JEHOVAH, except at the sanctuary: and if any one resolutely violated this law, he, as well as the rebellious Israelite, would be cut off from among his people. It is certain, that in after ages many uncircumcised persons brought sacrifices to the temple, which were offered by the priests in their behalf, though they themselves might not enter into the inner court; and it does not appear, that this was a violation of the law. Many learned men, however, understand all these passages, in which strangers are mentioned, of *proselytes*, or *circumcised Gentiles*, and the Septuagint is thought to favour this interpretation. But the proselytes of this description, in ordinary cases, seem to have been incorporated with the Israelites: and the rules, here and elsewhere given, may relate to the case of such persons, from other countries, as were not fully proselyted to the religion of Israel, whether they ever resided among the Israelites or not.

V. 10—16. This prohibition has repeatedly been considered. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, iii. 17. Gen. ix. 3, 4. Acts xv. 19—21.*) The expression, “I will set my face against that man,” implies the highest degree of indignation and avenging justice; and is seldom used, except for idolatry, or some very aggravated wickedness. (*Note, xx. 2—5.*)—The reason of the prohibition is several times repeated; namely, because the life of the animal is in the blood, and it was appointed at the altar to make atonement for the *lives* of the people; as a type of him, who gave himself a sacrifice for our sins, to save our *souls* from eternal death.—This law extended even to clean animals taken in hunt-

13 And whatsoever man *there be* of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten, he shall even 'pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust.

\* Heb. hunteth any hunting.

† Deut. xii. 16. xv. 23. 1 Sam. xiv. 32—34. Job xvi. 18. Ez. xxiv. 7.

‡ 11. Gen. ix. 4. Deut. xii. 23.

14 For *it is* 'the life of all flesh, the blood of it *is* for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh *is* the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.

§ xxii. 8. Ez. xxiii. 9). Deut. xiv. 21. Ez. iv. 14. xlii. 31.

† Heb. a carcass.

15 And 'every soul that eateth 'that which died *of itself*, or that which was torn *with beasts*, (whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger,) he shall 'both wash his clothes, and bathe *himself* in water, and be unclean until the even: then shall he be clean.

¶ xl. 25. xv. 5. 10. 21. Num. xix. 8. 19. 21. Rev. vii. 14.

16 But if he wash *them* not, nor

ing, or wild fowl, as well as all tame land-animals; and the covering of the blood with dust taught the people, that some great mystery was implied in the atonement of blood, and tended to create a reverence of it: for the same reason they were forbidden to eat the animals which died of themselves; for the blood was in them also.—Yet this is not forbidden in such energetick language, as the eating of blood in other cases; and a ceremonial purification was appointed, in case of failure, which is generally understood of inadvertent transgressions. The *stranger* was included in this statute also; and yet the Israelites might give that which died of itself, to the "strangers within their gates," or sell it to aliens. (Note, Deut. xiv. 21.) This seems to establish a distinction among strangers, according as they had in some degree embraced the religion of Israel, or the contrary. It also marked a distinction between directly eating the blood, either as actually separated from the flesh, or as wilfully retained in it; and eating it with the flesh when it was unavoidably combined with it. The former was expressly forbidden to all the sons of Noah, the latter only to Israel: but after the use of blood in sacrifice ceased, the reason of the restriction in both cases was taken entirely away.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We should greatly reverence all the Lord's appointments, and it is at their peril if men condemn or change them: but the greatest danger lies in neglecting the salvation, which is in Jesus Christ. "In him dwelleth all the fulness "of the Godhead bodily." "He that honoureth not the "Son, honoureth not the Father that sent him." "And "he that gathereth not with him scattereth." If then his human nature be the true temple, in which God dwells and will be worshipped;—"if his name be Emmanuel;"—"if this be the true God, and eternal Life;"—may we

bathe his flesh; then 'he shall bear his iniquity.

x v. 1. vii. 18. xix. 8. xx. 17. 19. 20. Num. xix. 20. Is. liii. 11. John xiii. 8. Heb. ix. 28. 1 Pet. ii. 24.

#### CHAP. XVIII.

The customs of Egypt and Canaan to be avoided, and God's commands obeyed, 1—5. Laws restricting marriage among relations, 6—18: and against base lusts and idolatries, enforced by the judgments about to be executed on the Canaanites, 19—30.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I 'am the LORD your God.

a xl. 44. xix. 3. 4. 10. 34. xx. 7. Gen. xvii. 7. Ex. vi. 7. xx. 2. Ps. xxxiii. 12. Ez. xx. 5. 7. 19. 20.

3 After 'the doings of the land of Egypt wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and 'after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances.

b Ez. xx. 7. 8. xxxiii. 8. Eph. v. 7—11. 1 Pet. iv. 2—4.

4 Ye shall 'do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LORD your God.

c xx. 23. Ez. xxxiii. 24. Deut. xii. 4. 30. 31. Jer. x. 2. 8. Rom. xii. 2. d 28. xix. 37. xx. 22. Deut. iv. 1. 2. vi. 1. Ps. cv. 45. cxix. 4. Ez. xx. 19. xxxvi. 27. xxxvii. 24. Luke i. 6. John xv. 14.

not add, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols?" (Note, 1 John v. 20, 21.) Surely all, who value their own souls, should look to themselves in an age and nation, where men, *called Christians*, spend their lives in degrading him, whom prophets and apostles shed their blood to glorify, and "whom all the angels of God worship." For though we may offer our spiritual sacrifices in every place, yet unless we come by Christ as our Way, trust in him as our all-sufficient Atonement and almighty Saviour, and worship God in him; our services will be found an abomination, and our hope a delusion. From such temptations of the enemy we should keep at the utmost distance, by adhering to the word of God, constantly attending on his ordinances, and depending on his grace alone; and he will in that case preserve us from the snares of our crafty and malicious enemy: while faith in Christ, and love to him and our brethren, will sanctify even our ordinary meals, and convert them into spiritual sacrifices.—Though the prohibitions we have been reading are no longer in force, we may learn from them to adore the mystery of atoning blood with deep veneration; to use our liberty without cruelty or sensuality; and to exercise habitual self-denial and circumspection, while we seek to "purify "ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting "holiness in the fear of God." But let presumptuous, careless sinners tremble; for if God "set his face against "them," he will at length cut them off with terrible vengeance.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 2—4. Many of the laws, enacted in this and the following chapters, were extremely different from the maxims and customs of other surrounding nations; and this introduction, though applicable to the general conduct of Israel, seems particularly to have related to these laws. The great Lawgiver, therefore, again

5 Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments: <sup>e</sup> which if a man do, he shall live in them: *I am the LORD.*

6 ¶ None of you shall approach to any that is <sup>e</sup> near of kin to him, <sup>f</sup> to uncover *their* nakedness: *I am the LORD.*

7 The nakedness of thy father, or the nakedness of thy mother, shalt thou not uncover: *she is thy mother*, thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.

8 The nakedness <sup>h</sup> of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: *it is thy father's nakedness.*

9 The nakedness of <sup>i</sup> thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, *whether she be born at home, or born abroad, even their nakedness* thou shalt not uncover.

10 The nakedness of thy son's daughter, or of thy daughter's daughter, *even their nakedness* thou shalt not uncover: for *their's is thine own nakedness.*

11 The nakedness of thy father's wife's daughter, begotten of thy father,

*she is thy sister*, thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.

12 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy <sup>j</sup> father's sister: *she is thy father's near kinswoman.*

13 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy mother's sister: for *she is thy mother's near kinswoman.*

14 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy <sup>k</sup> father's brother, thou shalt not approach to his wife: *she is thine aunt.*

15 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy <sup>l</sup> daughter-in-law: *she is thy son's wife*, thou shalt not uncover her nakedness.

16 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy <sup>m</sup> brother's wife: *it is thy brother's nakedness.*

17 Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of <sup>n</sup> a woman and her daughter, neither shalt thou take her son's daughter, or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness; *for they are her near kinswomen; ° it is wickedness.*

and again confirms his statutes by adding, "I am JEHOVAH *"your God;"* intimating that he would be obeyed in all his requirements.—The people were especially warned against the customs of Egypt and Canaan, because most in danger from those nations; but others doubtless were also meant.

V. 5. *Which if a man do, &c.*] By an upright obedience to the moral precepts, and a believing attendance on the appointed ordinances of the law, not only temporal advantages, but the favour of God and eternal life might be expected; though not as a *merited* recompence. But probably the Lord intended thus to warn the Israelites of the danger, not only of incurring condemnation by neglecting these commandments, but of resting in their imperfect obedience, instead of looking through them to "Christ, as the end of the law for righteousness to every *"one that believeth,"* as he alone perfectly fulfilled its demands. (Note, Ex. xx. 11.) St. Paul repeatedly quotes this text as descriptive of the righteousness of the law, in distinction from the righteousness of faith: and this also shews, that the words relate to something more important, than temporal prosperity. (Marg. Ref. e.)

V. 6—17. As these laws forbade marriage betwixt near relations, they certainly prohibited unchastity between them, and every approach to it: and this may account in part, for the singular manner in which they are expressed.—The marriage of parents and children, or grand-children, &c. in all the variations here spoken of, has something in it at first glance unnatural; and would be destructive of all authority and subordination, which are of the greatest importance to society. In the marriages of nephews with

aunts, somewhat of the same kind may be perceived: and it is observable that the marriage of uncles with their nieces is not prohibited, though, from the supposed parity of the case, it is included in our laws. The only collateral relations, which are forbidden to marry, are brothers and sisters, by whole or half blood, or by affinity, legitimate or illegitimate. The first marriages indeed of Adam's posterity must have been of brothers and sisters; and therefore we cannot pronounce them *immoral* in themselves. But, as human nature *now* is, it is very expedient that those, who are so much together in youth, should by such a restriction, be taught to look upon all intercourse as prohibited and incestuous; which must assist in keeping out temptations to evil. It is moreover desirable, that by intermarriages relationship, and its endearments and benevolence, should be diffused, and an unsocial separation of families prevented; and this is the tendency of these laws. They are therefore to be considered, either as moral in themselves, or so nearly connected with other moral obligations, as to be proper to be observed by all mankind; and in general the wiser heathens have deemed such marriages unlawful, and abstained from them. It is elsewhere enjoined, that if a man died without issue, his surviving brother should marry his widow. (Note, Deut. xxv. 5—10.) But, as this appointment respected special purposes under the Mosaic dispensation, the prohibition of marrying a brother's wife is absolute to us; and, by parity of reason, that of a woman marrying the husband of her deceased sister.—Some laws on this subject seem essentially necessary, and have always been judged to be so by legislators, heathen as well as Christian. Yet if these laws are

\* Or, one wife to another. Gen. iv. 19 xxix. 23.  
 p Gen. xxx. 15.  
 1 Sam. i. 6-8.  
 Mal. ii. 15.  
 q xv. 19. 24. xx. 18. Ez. xxviii. 6. xxii. 10.  
 r xx. 10. Ez. xxi. 14.  
 Deut. v. 18. xxii. 22. 25. 2 Sam. xi. 3. 4. 27. Prov. vi. 29-32. Mal. iii. 5. Matt. v. 27. 28. Rom. ii. 22. 1 Cor. vi. 9. Gal. v. 19. Heb. xiii. 4.

18 Neither shalt thou take \* a wife to her sister, \* to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, besides the other in her life-time.

19 ¶ Also thou shalt not approach unto a woman to uncover her nakedness, \* as long as she is put apart for her uncleanness.

20 Moreover \* thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbour's wife, to defile thyself with her.

21 And thou shalt not let any of thy seed \* pass through the fire \* to Molech, neither shalt thou \* profane the name of thy God: I am the Lord.

22 Thou shalt not lie with \* mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.

23 Neither shalt thou lie with any \* beast to defile thyself therewith: nei-

7. 1 Tim. i. 10. Jude 7. x xx. 15, 16. Ez. xxii. 19.

ther shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is \* confusion.

24 \* Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: \* for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you.

25 And \* the land is defiled: \* therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself \* vomiteth out her inhabitants.

26 Ye shall therefore \* keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, \* nor any stranger that sojourneth among you;

27 (For all these \* abominations have the men of the land done, which were before you, and the land is defiled;)

band: and perhaps it would be found on trial, that those who before had lived together in the intimate equality of this near relationship, would be more apt to rival each other, if married to the same man, than strangers would be; at least their jealousies and bickerings would be more unseemly and distressing. As a woman might not in ordinary cases marry the brother of her deceased husband; it can hardly be supposed, that it was allowable for a man to marry the sister of his wife, even after her decease; though this verse seems not to contain a prohibition of it.—These are all the restrictions on marriage, which are contained in the divine law; and such as pride, covetousness, or human policy have superadded, do not seem to have proved beneficial to mankind.

V. 21. *Molech* is nearly the same, as the word always rendered *king*, and is of similar meaning with *Baal*, which signifies *lord*, or *governor*. It is generally supposed, that the sun was worshipped under the name of *Molech*. Children on some occasions were consecrated to him, by passing through the fire; but at other times, one of the family was sacrificed to him, in a most cruel manner, in order to secure his favour and protection to the rest. (Note, xx. 2-5.) The former practice is supposed to be here meant.—The several abominations, afterwards mentioned, certainly were practised by the heathens, even in their religious worship; as it might be proved by the remaining unexceptionable testimonies of pagan writers themselves.

V. 24-30. The word *abomination*, repeatedly used in these verses, seems especially to refer to the vile and unnatural practices above spoken of. Incestuous marriages indeed of the gross kind always were an abomination; but some of those above prohibited had in certain circumstances been necessarily allowed, nay, virtually enjoined, by the Creator himself; and though in other circumstances they are highly inexpedient and wisely prohibited, yet they must not be classed with the unnatural practices here reprobated with such decided abhorrence.—The observance

not obligatory under the Christian dispensation, there is no law of God in force regulating marriages, nor any, restricting the intermarriages of the nearest relations.—Did the Lord then intend to leave his church under the New Testament, wholly without law in this most important concern? or hath he confirmed his own pre-existing law, as of moral obligation? St. Paul's language concerning the incestuous Corinthian,—“Such fornication as is not named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife,” (1 Cor. v. 1);—implies that Christians had a rule in this respect, and a stricter rule than the Gentiles: yet that rule can be found only in this chapter. The restrictions here imposed are all of moral tendency, and highly beneficial: as missionaries and others, who attempt to propagate Christianity among the heathen, know and feel more than other Christians; because others live among those, who are habitually restricted by them. I therefore must consider these laws, as in equal force at this day among Christians, as they were formerly in Israel: those implied by parity of reason, as well as those more expressly mentioned, according to the regulation of our ecclesiastical law; perhaps with the single exception of an uncle being prohibited to marry his niece. Yet even this exception may be doubtful, and is not to be insisted on.

V. 18. Some think, that this verse contains an express prohibition of polygamy; supposing the word *sister* merely to signify a wife, which the person spoken of had already married. But though the Mosaic law contains no explicit allowance of polygamy; yet there is no other passage which favours the interpretation of this text as a direct law against it, and many things in the whole subsequent history imply a connivance at it. The context also seems to suggest a more literal interpretation; namely, the marrying of two sisters together. This conduct in Jacob proved a source of vexation both to Leah and Rachel; who were more jealous of each other, than of the handmaidens whom they willingly gave to their hus-

<sup>h</sup> 25. Jer. ix. 19. <sup>h</sup> 28 That the land <sup>h</sup> spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that *were* before you.

<sup>i</sup> xvii. 10. xx. 6. <sup>i</sup> 29 For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit *them* shall be <sup>i</sup> cut off from among their people.

<sup>k</sup> See on 27.—<sup>k</sup> 30 Therefore shall ye keep mine ordinance, that ye commit not *any one* of these <sup>k</sup> abominable customs, which were committed before you, and that ye defile not yourselves therein: <sup>i</sup> I am the LORD your God.

of the divine laws respecting marriage, would be a strong barrier to Israel, to keep them at a great distance from the abominations of the heathen: the example of the Canaanites, on whom they were commissioned to execute the vengeance of God, would be a salutary but awful warning: and at length, when they nevertheless copied the example of the devoted nations, and were driven out of the promised land, the denunciation, here implied, was proved to be a prediction of what would take place in remote ages.—Nothing can exceed the energy of the strong figure here used, of a land *loathing and vomiting out* its inhabitants.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

If we would obey the divine commands, we must break off bad customs, and also renounce conformity to the world: for wherever we go, we shall find its maxims and observances, in many things, directly opposite to the law of God; yet enforced with an authority which rivals his, and which is disobeyed with great difficulty, and at the expense of much contempt and reproach. But the broad, smooth, frequented paths of the world lead to destruction; the ways of God to life eternal: every one of his commandments is also good in itself, and conducive to the peace, comfort, and true honour of the human species; and he is as kind in what he prohibits, as in what he allows. He formed mankind for social life, created them male and female, instituted marriage, and blessed it; he hath formed the regulations of it in wisdom and love, for the good of individuals, of families, and of society,—of the present and of succeeding generations. Where his laws are observed, the most important advantages follow: where they are disregarded, disgrace, disease, and numberless most destructive evils ensue.—But what a sink of iniquity is the human heart, that it should be necessary to prohibit such detestable, filthy, and cruel practices, as are here mentioned! That ever it should enter into the minds of rational creatures to serve the devil and their own lusts, with degradation far beneath the brutes themselves! From this polluted fountain the earth hath been filled with abominable crimes in all ages, and the very creation groans under the burden of man's iniquity: and though one land after another vomiteth out its inhabitants, as unable any longer to endure their wickedness; and though one generation is swept away after another into the grave; yet still the earth is

#### CHAP. XIX.

Miscellaneous laws, moral and ceremonial, being in general repetitions, or explanations, of precepts before given, 1—37.

**AND** the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

<sup>2</sup> Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, <sup>a</sup> Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God *am* holy.

<sup>3</sup> Ye shall <sup>b</sup> fear every man his mother and his father, and <sup>c</sup> keep my sabbaths: I *am* the LORD your God.

<sup>a</sup> xl. 44, 45. xx. 7. 26. xxi. 8. Ex. xix. 6. Is. vi. 3. 4. Am. iii. 8. Matt. v. 49. 2 Cor. vi. 14—16. vii. 1. 1 Pet. i. 15, 16. <sup>b</sup> Ex. xx. 12. xxi. 15, 17. Deut. xxi. 18—21. xxvii. 16. Prov. i. 8. vi. 20. 21. xxiii. 22. xxx. 11. 17. Ez. xxii. 7. Mal. i. 6. Matt. xv. 4—6. Eph. vi. 1—3. Heb. xii. 9. <sup>c</sup> xxxvi. 2. Ex. xvi. 29. xx. 8. xxxi. 13—17. Is. lvi. 4. —6. lviii. 13. Ez. xx. 12. 20. xxii. 8.

filled with sin. Ere long it shall be burnt up with all its works: and “new heavens and a new earth, in which “dwelleth righteousness,” shall succeed. But unless we be previously cleansed in the fountain of the Redeemer's blood, and have a “new heart given us, and a new spirit “put within us,” we shall not find admission there. Let us then profit by the awful examples of vengeance recorded, and fear the threatenings denounced, in the sacred oracles: let us mortify the deeds of the body, and learn self-denial: and above all, aware of the deceitfulness and wickedness of the human heart, let us walk watchfully, and humbly dependent upon the grace of God sought in earnest prayer. Then we shall escape the condemnation of the wicked, and the Lord himself will be our God and our Portion for ever.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 2. Holiness consists in separation from sin, devotedness to God, and conformity to his moral excellences, which are also transcribed in his holy law. Without holiness we cannot walk with God, or have fellowship with him: and though an *external*, or *ceremonial*, purity was called being “holy to the LORD;” yet it was only as an *emblem* of that purity of heart which was especially intended. (Note, 1 Pet. i. 13—16.) This injunction is repeated on different occasions, to enforce the several prohibitions to which it is annexed. (Marg. Ref.) Should the worshippers of a holy God copy the vile practices of abominable idolaters?

V. 3. In order to understand most of these precepts, an attentive mind and an obedient heart, in the reader, are more requisite, than the labour of the expositor.—“Every “man,” whatever his age, wisdom, or wealth may be, is commanded “to fear his mother,” (here placed first,) “and his father.” That is, to treat them with respect and tenderness, fearing to grieve or offend them, and reverencing their authority and commands. Children are apt to feel most love for their mother, and fear of the father: and when arrived at maturity they are apt to treat the *authority* of their mothers with neglect, though they may be kind to them. To obviate this propensity, the precept seems intentionally to be thus worded; and thus connected, as equally indispensable with keeping the sabbaths of God.

d xxvi. 1. See on Ex. xx. 3-5.—  
1 Cor. x. 14.  
e Ex. xx. 21. xxxii. 4. xxxiv. 17. Deut. xxvii. 15. Hab. ii. 18.

4 Turn ye <sup>d</sup> not unto idols, nor make to yourselves <sup>e</sup> molten gods: I *am* the LORD your God.

f iii. xxii. 21. Ex. xxiv. 5. 2 Chr. xxii. 2. Ez. xlv. 15-17. xlvii. 2. 12. Eph. ii. 13, 14.

5 And if ye offer <sup>f</sup> a sacrifice of peace-offerings unto the LORD, <sup>g</sup> ye shall offer it at your own will.

g i. 3. xxii. 19. 28. 29.

6 It <sup>h</sup> shall be eaten the same day ye offer it, and on the morrow: and if ought remain until the third day, it shall be burnt in the fire.

h vii. 11-17.

7 And if it be eaten at all on the third day, it is <sup>i</sup> abominable; <sup>k</sup> it shall not be accepted.

i Is. i. 13. lxx. 4. lxxvi. 3. Jer. xvi. 18.

k See on vii. 18-21.—xxii. 28. 26.

8 Therefore *every one* that eateth it shall bear his iniquity, because he hath profaned the hallowed thing of the LORD: and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

l xxiii. 22. Deut. xxiv. 19-21. Ruth ii. 2. 15. 16.

m Judg. viii. 2. Is. xxvii. 6. xxviii. 13. Jer. xlix. 9. Ob. 5. Mic. vi. 1.

n xxv. 6.

o vi. 2. Ex. xx. 15. 17. xxii. 1. 7. 10.—12. Deut. v. 19. Jer. vi. 13. vii. 9.—11. Zech. v. 3. 4. viii. 16. 17.

p 1 Cor. vi. 8-10. Eph. iv. 28.

q 1 Kings xiii. 18. Ps. ci. 7. cxvi. 11. Jer. ix. 3-6. Acts v. 9. 4. Rom. iii. 4.

r Eph. iv. 26. Col. iii. 9. 1 Tim. i. 10. Rev. xxi. 8.

9 And when <sup>r</sup> ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.

10 And thou shalt not <sup>s</sup> glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather *every* grape of thy vineyard; <sup>t</sup> thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I *am* the LORD your God.

11 ¶ Ye <sup>u</sup> shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither <sup>v</sup> lie one to another.

12 And <sup>w</sup> ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou <sup>x</sup> profane the name of thy God: I *am* the LORD.

13 Thou shalt not <sup>y</sup> defraud thy neighbour, neither rob <sup>z</sup> him; <sup>a</sup> the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.

14 Thou shalt not <sup>b</sup> curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind, but shalt <sup>c</sup> fear thy God: I *am* the LORD.

15 Ye shall do <sup>d</sup> no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: *but* in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.

16 Thou shalt not go up and down <sup>e</sup> as a tale-bearer among thy people: neither shalt thou <sup>f</sup> stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I *am* the LORD.

17 Thou shalt not <sup>g</sup> hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise <sup>h</sup> rebuke thy neighbour, <sup>i</sup> and not suffer sin upon him.

17. Lake xvii. 3. Gal. ii. 11-14. vi. 1. Eph. v. 11. 1 Tim. v. 20. \* Or, that thou bear not sin for him. Rom. i. 32. 1 Cor. v. 2. 1 Tim. v. 22. 2 John 10, 11.

vi. 3. Ex. xx. 7. Deut. v. 11. Ps. xv. 4. Jer. iv. 2. vii. 9. Zech. v. 4. Mal. iii. 5. Matt. v. 33, 34. James v. 12.

r xviii. 21. xxiv. 11, 15, 16.

s Prov. xx. 10. xxii. 22. Jer. xxii. 3. Ez. xxii. 29.

z Mark x. 19. Luke iii. 13. 1 Thes. iv. 6.

a Deut. xxiv. 14. 15. Job xxxi. 39. Jer. xxii. 13. Mal. iii. 5. Jam. v. 4.

b Deut. xxvii. 18. Rom. xii. 14. xiv. 18. 1 Cor. viii. 8-13. x. 32.

c Rev. ii. 14.

d 32. xxv. 17. Gen. xlii. 18. Neh. v. 15. 1 Pet. i. 17.

e 35. Ex. xxvii. 21. xxiii. 2. 3. 7. 8.

f Deut. i. 17. xvi. 19. xxv. 13-16.

g xxvii. 19. 2 Chr. xix. 6. 7. Ps. lxxvii. 2. Prov. xviii. 5. xxiv. 23. Jam. ii. 6-9.

h Ex. xxiii. 1. Ps. xv. 3. 1. 20. Prov. xi. 13. xx. 19.

i Jer. vi. 28. ix. 4. Ez. xlii. 9. 1 Tim. iii. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 3. Tit. ii. 3.

j 1 Pet. ii. 1.

k Ex. xx. 16. xxiii. 7. 1 Kings xxi. 10-13.

l Matt. xxvi. 60. 61. xxvii. 4. Acts vi. 11-13. xxiv. 4-9.

m Gen. xxvii. 41. Prov. xxvii. 24-26. 1 John ii. 9.

n 11. iii. 12-15.

o Ps. cxli. 5. Prov. ix. 8. xxvii. 5, 6.

p Matt. xxvii. 15-16. Tit. i. 13. ii. 15.

q 2 John 10, 11.

V. 4. The word (אִלִּים) rendered *idols*, signifies *phantoms, things of nought, vanities*, and not deities. It is a word of contempt as well as of execration.

V. 5-8. (Notes, iii.) The word (אָבִימִינָבִיל) rendered *abominable* (7) is used concerning the flesh of unclean animals. (Is. lxx. 4. Ez. iv. 14.)—It, however, seems to mean *fetid, or corrupted*, and therefore *abominable*; and to be used figuratively of the flesh of an unclean animal.—Christ rose the third day, and “saw no corruption;” and to keep the flesh of any sacrifice to the third day would have endangered its corruption, and been contrary to the typical meaning of that appointment.—Many reasons, for the repetition of some laws more than others, might arise from the conduct or customs of the people, or those of the surrounding nations.

V. 9, 10. (Marg. Ref.)—Where, in any code of laws merely human, is a requisition to be found, so counteracting selfishness, so encouraging liberality, so beneficently considering the poor and needy, while the more wealthy were gathering in their abundance?

V. 11, 12. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xx. 7. 15.

V. 13. The wages, &c.] That is, if the person concerned required payment.

V. 14. The spirit of this law forbids speaking to the disadvantage of the absent; reproaching and insulting the meek; imposing on the ignorant, or giving them bad coun-

sel; and reviling or ridiculing men's bodily infirmities. (Note, Deut. xxvii. 18.)

V. 15. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xxiii. 1-9.

V. 16. A tale-bearer.] The original word (רִמְיָה) seems to imply a *pedlar*, who trades in scandal, and goes from place to place, bartering one slander for another, to the injury of all parties concerned. This infamous, though common practice, is here joined with conspiring or procuring the death of another, as the false witnesses did, who stood up against the life of Naboth, of Stephen, yea, of Christ himself. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 17. If any one have injured us, instead of harbouring resentment, venting reproaches, or contriving revenge, we should calmly and fairly reason the matter with him; not only in order that, being convinced of his fault, he may make proper acknowledgments and reparation to us, but that he may repent and obtain forgiveness from God. (Notes, Matt. xviii. 15-18; and P. O. 15-22.) This seems the *literal* import of this remarkable precept: but the spirit of it extends much further; and shews that it evinces a want of love to others, if we see them commit sin and continue in it, with indifference, and without attempting to bring them to repent and forsake their evil courses; and that mild, plain, and reasonable reproofs are the best expressions of love to our brother, of which we are capable, though very difficult and generally unwelcome.

d Ex xxiii. 4, 5.  
Deut. xxxii. 35.  
2 Sam. xiii. 22.  
28 Prov. xx. 22.  
Matt. v. 43, 44.  
Rom. xii. 17, 19.  
xiii. 4. Gal. v. 20.  
Eph. i. 3. Col. iii. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 1.

e Matt. v. 43, xix. 19.  
xxii. 59.  
Mark xii. 31—34.  
Luke x. 27.  
—37. Rom. xiii. 9.  
Gal. v. 14.  
James ii. 8.

f Gen. xxxvi. 24.  
2 Sam. xiii. 29.  
xviii. 9. 1 Kings i. 33. Ezra ii. 66.

g Deut. xxii. 9—11.  
Matt. ix. 16.  
17. Rom. xi. 6.  
2 Cor. vi. 14—17.  
Gal. iii. 9—11.

\* Or, abused by any. Heb. reproached by, or, for man.

† Or, they. Heb. there shall be a scourging.

h Ex xx. 20, 21.  
Deut. xxii. 23, 24.  
i v. vi. 1—7.

18 Thou shalt not <sup>d</sup>avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but <sup>e</sup>thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I *am* the LORD.

19 ¶ Ye shall keep my statutes. Thou shalt not let <sup>f</sup>thy cattle gender with a diverse kind: thou shalt not sow thy field with <sup>g</sup>mingled seed: neither shall a garment mingled of linen and woollen come upon thee.

20 And whoever lieth carnally with a woman that is a bondmaid <sup>h</sup>betrothed to an husband, and not at all redeemed, nor freedom given her; <sup>i</sup>she shall be scourged: <sup>j</sup>they shall not be put to death, because she was not free.

21 And he shall bring his <sup>k</sup>trespass-

offering unto the LORD, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, *even* a ram for a trespass-offering.

22 And the priest shall make an atonement for him with the ram of the trespass-offering before the LORD, for his sin which he hath done: <sup>l</sup>and the sin which he hath done shall be forgiven him.

23 ¶ And <sup>m</sup>when ye shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised: three years shall it be as <sup>n</sup>uncircumcised unto you: it shall not be eaten of.

24 But in the fourth year <sup>o</sup>all the

See on iv. 20. 27.

See on xiv. 34.

xii. 3. xxi. 27.  
Ex. vi. 12. 30.  
xxii. 29, 30. Jer.  
vi. 10. ix. 25, 26.  
Acts vii. 51.  
m Num. xviii. 12.  
13. Deut. xii. 17.  
18. xiv. 28, 29.  
xviii. 4.

—It is like seizing a serpent, which is about to bite a man mortally, at the hazard of being bitten ourselves. The last clause is, however, by some supposed to mean, that in reproving an injurer, we should be careful not to overcharge him, or needlessly put him to shame before others.

*Not suffer sin, &c.]* “That thou bear not sin for him.” (*Marg.*)—This meaning, which the original may well convey, would imply, that neglecting the proper means of restraining others from sin, renders any one a “partaker of their evil deeds;” so that the crimes, which they commit, will be imputed to the negligent person, and punished in him also.

V. 18. *Love thy neighbour, &c.]* This law, as given to the Israelites, *seems* here limited to their brethren of the house of Israel; for, as they would at first live among the devoted Canaanites, whom they were required to extirpate, they could not extend to them this law of love: and their love to each other was a representation of that special love, which we owe to our believing brethren in Christ Jesus.—This gave rise to the narrow interpretation, which the Scribes put upon it; though they might have seen from this same chapter that others also were included in it. (*Note, 33, 34.*)—The whole law, as it relates to our duty to man, “is briefly comprehended in this saying, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself;” (*Note, Rom. xiii. 8—10;*) which is so often quoted in the New Testament, and so highly commended.—It evidently requires that we should be as unwilling to injure, and as desirous to benefit, any human being, as we are unwilling to hurt, and desirous to do good to ourselves; and this in relation to body, soul, property, character, ease, peace, and connexions: (*Notes, Ex. xx. 13—17;*) and that we should honour what is honourable, love what is lovely, commend what is commendable, excuse what is excusable, and compassionate what calls for pity; even as we would have others do in our own case.—This one rule, properly observed, would fill the world with peace and happiness; even as full as it now is of discord and misery. (*Note, Matt. vii. 12.*)

V. 19. These practices might be considered, as an attempt to alter the original constitution of God in creation: and the law may not unaptly be regarded, as imply-

ing a command of “simplicity and godly sincerity” in all things. An entire dependence on the mercy of God through the merits and mediation of Christ; a single eye to his will, glory, and approbation; and an expectation of happiness from him alone as our Portion; may be considered as required by the spirit of it. And the prohibition may fairly be accommodated to the case of those who endeavour to reconcile the service of God and mammon; or the pleasures of the world and those of religion; to unite works and grace in the matter of justification: and to many other heterogeneous and unnatural commixtures.

V. 20—22. As the woman here spoken of was neither fully married, nor yet in any degree set at liberty; her case was made different from that of a free woman espoused to an husband: for then both parties would have been adjudged to death. (xx. 10. *Note, Deut. xxii. 22—27.*) Yet the crime was heinous, and must not be passed over; but “there must be a scourging,” (a most severe scourging, as the word implies,) probably of the man as well as of the woman: and he must also offer a trespass-offering for his sin, as the ransom of his life; which the woman having no property was not expected to do.—The legal sacrifices could not atone for sin, as pertaining to the conscience, in such a manner that the impenitent should be actually forgiven in respect of the eternal judgment; and the penitent and believing, whether sin-offerings or trespass-offerings were required or not, were certainly pardoned and justified through the Saviour that was to come, there was therefore no real difference in the situation of the two parties; both were rescued from death; and their final salvation, or the contrary, depended on something widely different from the ceremonial institutions.—The words, rendered “betrothed to an husband,” are translated in the margin, *reproached by, or for man*; as if they implied, that the woman was previously of suspicious character; and this has been by some considered as the ground of the difference between this and other cases of a similar kind.

V. 23—25. Whatever was unfit for use was accounted *uncircumcised*, till that *unfitness* was removed, or ceased. The fruit of young trees was therefore to be thus deemed

\* Heb. *kotemem* of fruit thereof shall be \*holy, to praise the LORD *withal*.

25 And in the fifth year shall ye eat of the fruit thereof, <sup>a</sup> that it may yield unto you the increase thereof: I am the LORD your God.

26 ¶ Ye shall not eat *any thing* <sup>o</sup> with the blood: neither shall ye <sup>p</sup> use enchantment, <sup>q</sup> nor observe times.

27 Ye shall not <sup>r</sup> round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard.

28 Ye shall not make any <sup>s</sup> cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor <sup>t</sup> print any marks upon you: I am the LORD.

29 Do not <sup>u</sup> prostitute thy daughter, to cause her to be a whore; lest the land fall to whoredom, and the land become full of wickedness.

30 Ye shall <sup>v</sup> keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.

31 Regard not them that have <sup>w</sup> familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards <sup>x</sup> <sup>y</sup> <sup>z</sup>

to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God.

32 Thou shalt <sup>a</sup> rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD.

33 And <sup>b</sup> if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not <sup>c</sup> vex him.

34 *But* the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and <sup>d</sup> thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

35 Ye shall do <sup>e</sup> no unrighteousness in judgment, <sup>f</sup> in mete-yard, in weight, or in measure.

36 Just balances, just <sup>g</sup> weights, a just ephah, and a just hin shall ye have: I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt.

37 Therefore shall ye <sup>h</sup> observe all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: I am the LORD.

unclean, during three years; and either to be destroyed before it was ripe, or left to perish. On the fourth year it was consecrated as a thank-offering to praise the Lord: but in the fifth the owner might eat of it, and expect a blessing to render the increase abundant.—Some suppose that this law had reference to the idolatrous customs of the surrounding nations: but it also might be intended to teach the people to wait patiently the Lord's time for every desirable good, and not to yield to the eagerness of their natural appetites and inclinations.—Thus he also waits for the maturity of our fruits of righteousness; though our first attempts to glorify him may be *unmeet* for that purpose, even as the fruits of these young trees, whilst they were to be accounted *uncircumcised*.

V. 26. *Use enchantment, &c.*] Astrological calculations, or other attempts at prediction or fortune telling; the use of spells and charms for the cure of diseases; with many other practices, too frequent among professed Christians; are attempts to revive this worship of Satan, and should be abhorred as his very ordinances: being *means used* to get help and information *elsewhere*, instead of depending on God, submitting to him, and waiting for all needful good from him, in the use of lawful means (31).

V. 27—29. Some explain the words, "Thou shalt not <sup>u</sup> mar the corners of thy beard," as forbidding the Israelites to shave their beards: but if this had been intended, it would have been more plainly expressed. (*Marg. Ref.* r, s.) The meaning of the several clauses is not very clear; but, no doubt, they were all superstitious practices of the Heathens. And perhaps the prohibition of the twentieth verse has also relation to the very common practices of idolaters in honour of their infamous deities: and indeed nothing could so promote lewdness as to make it a

part of religion.—But alas, numbers even in Christian countries, are guilty of violating this prohibition, to a degree not in general known, or suspected.

V. 31. *Notes*, 26. xx. 6. *Ex.* xxii. 18.

V. 32. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 33, 34. The Israelites were commanded to encourage strangers to reside among them, that they might learn the knowledge of God, and of his truth, law, and worship. Remembering the kind usage which their fathers at first met with in Egypt, and how reasonable it appeared to them, they were required to imitate it: and remembering how cruel and hard they deemed their subsequent oppression, they were cautioned to avoid copying so bad an example.—The Jews most unreasonably expound this precept, as relating only to such strangers as had been fully proselyted to their religion; whereas the reason assigned for it demonstrates, that all strangers who dwell among them were intended. By such traditionary glosses, they have, ever since as well as before the coming of Christ, explained away the holy commands of God; so that their comments should be read with peculiar caution, and constant reference to the New Testament.

V. 35, 36. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, *Ex.* xx. 17.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Though "the LORD is rich in mercy and goodness," yet his perfect holiness renders it impossible that we should be happy in him, or that he should delight in us, unless we be made holy also: those therefore, whom he especially loves, he effectually sanctifies. To understand the nature of holiness, let us meditate on these moral precepts: for there we shall learn, that it consists in reverencing the majesty and authority of God, in loving his

## CHAP. XX.

The man who gave of his seed to Molech must be stoned; or the Lord would cut him off, with those who connived at him, and those who consulted wizards, 1—6. Holiness required, 7, 8. Capital punishments appointed for him who cursed his parents, or committed adultery, or some kinds of incest, or unnatural crimes; and vengeance denounced on such as violated the laws concerning marriage, 9—21. Exhortations to holy obedience, 22—26. Witches and wizards to be stoned, 27.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Again, thou shalt say to the children of Israel, <sup>a</sup>Whosoever *he be* of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that <sup>b</sup>giveth any of his seed unto Molech; he shall

a xvii. 8, 13, 15.  
b xviii. 21. Deut. xii. 31. xviii. 10. 2 Kings xviii. 17. xxiii. 10. 2 Chr. xxviii. 3. xxxiii. 6. Ps. cvi. 38. 1a. lvi. 5, 6. Jer. vii. 31. xxxii. 35. Ez. xvi. 20, 21. xx. 26. 31. xxiii. 37. 39.—Acts vii. 43. Moloch.

excellency, in gratefully remembering his mercies, in delighting in his worship and service, in keeping his sabbaths, and reverencing his sanctuary; in submitting to his will, and confiding in his power and love: and that it includes truth, integrity, equity, and universal benevolence, love to our brethren, compassion for the miserable, liberality to the poor, kindness to strangers and to enemies, with a suitable regard to all relative duties; and also purity, chastity, sobriety, and an habitual government of the appetites and passions, according to the commandments of God. Would we know in what manner this holiness is to be attained, we must consider the intention and meaning of the positive institutions of the Scripture; that by a believing attendance on those which the New Testament enjoins, we may through them receive, from the Redeemer's fulness, the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit; remembering also, that the vanities of the world, and the superstitions of false religion, are as much the *means of sin*, as divine ordinances are *means of grace*; and therefore we must withdraw from them to the utmost distance, if we would be the holy people of a holy God.—As he is peculiarly attentive to the poor, if we are his people we shall be so too; and “while he gives us all *things richly to enjoy*,” we must not think that our indigent brother is to be always put off with bare necessities, but should enable him to taste the comforts of life also; not deeming that wasted which he receives. All these duties must be performed from a regard to the Lord, who both avenges the injuries done, and recompenses the kindness shewn, to those who cannot avenge themselves, or make return for the benefits they receive; and who especially blesses those who obey their parents, and give honour to whom honour is due.—And let it be well noticed, that the great Judge of the world, not only observes and will certainly punish gross and scandalous instances of injustice, but also the petty dishonesty of false weights and measures: and our consciences ought to be no less exact and minute.—Alas! how prone to iniquity must man's heart be, when parents are capable of prostituting their own daughters; and when such shameful practices, instead of exciting abhorrence, are readily imitated till they over-

surely be put to death: <sup>c</sup>the people of the land shall stone him with stones.

3 And <sup>d</sup>I will set my face against that man, and will cut him off from among his people: because he hath given of his seed unto Molech, <sup>e</sup>to defile my sanctuary, and to <sup>f</sup>profane my holy name.

4 And if the people of the land do any ways <sup>g</sup>hide their eyes from the man, when he giveth of his seed unto Molech, <sup>h</sup>and kill him not;

5 Then I will set my face against that man, and <sup>i</sup>against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go <sup>j</sup>after him, to commit whoredom with Molech, from among their people.

27. xxi. 14. 21. Num. xv. 35, 36. Deut. xii. 10, 11. xvii. 6—7. xxi. 21. Acts vii. 56, 59. d See on xvii. 10. —1 Pet. iii. 12. e Num. xix. 20. Ez. v. 11. xxiii. 38, 39. f xviii. 21. Ez. xxx. 39. 2 Cor. vi. 16. g Acts xvii. 30. h Deut. xxi. 8. Josh. vii. 14. 1 Sam. iii. 13, 14. 1 Kings xx. 42. Jer. ii. 14. i Ez. xx. 6. Jer. xxxii. 29—35. 38. j xvii. 7. Ps. cvi. 39.

spread whole nations! But though some crimes are more enormous than others, none can be expiated save by the blood of Christ, or forgiven without repentance: nor should any precepts of the Lord be accounted small; but we must shew our simplicity and godly sincerity, by giving every part of religion its due place and proportion, without neglecting or perverting any.—If sin is the greatest of all evils, what need have we to be thankful to those, who tell us plainly of our faults, and will not suffer sin upon us! and how important is it that we learn to perform this duty in a proper manner! But all men should detest the conduct of those who backbite and slander others, and rob them of their characters, when they have no power to defend themselves.—Finally, the nearer our lives and tempers are to the precepts of God's law, the happier shall we be, and the happier shall we render all around us, and the better shall we adorn the gospel: let us then daily and earnestly pray, ‘Lord have mercy upon us, and write *all thy laws in our hearts, we beseech thee.*’ (Ex. xx. P. O.)

## NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 2—5. (Note, xviii. 21.) Molech is supposed to have been an idol, worshipped by the Ammonites and neighbouring nations, to whom they sometimes offered their children as sacrifices; according to some authors in the following manner. An image of an enormous size, made of hollow iron, was heated with great fires beneath; and when it was sufficiently hot, they put the children into its arms, where they were burnt to death: mean time their cries were drowned in the noise of drums or trumpets, and of musical instruments played on for that purpose. At other times the children only passed through a fire, or between two fires, and were thus devoted to this demon. The former, however, is supposed to be here meant. Nothing can be conceived more horrible than such practices. Nothing can more demonstrate the madness and desperate wickedness of the human heart, and the power of Satan, than that there should be any need to enact such laws as this, and to prohibit parents from such cruelty to their own offspring on pain of death; except it be that, notwithstanding, numbers of Israelites

6 And the soul that turneth after such as have <sup>k</sup> familiar spirits, and after wizards, to <sup>l</sup> go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will <sup>m</sup> cut him off from among his people.

7 ¶ <sup>n</sup> Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I *am* the LORD your God.

8 And <sup>o</sup> ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I *am* the LORD which <sup>p</sup> sanctify you.

9 For every one that <sup>q</sup> curseth his father or his mother, shall be surely put to death: he hath cursed his father or his mother, <sup>r</sup> his blood *shall be* upon him.

10 And the man that committeth adultery with *another* man's wife, *even* he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, <sup>s</sup> the adulterer and the <sup>t</sup> adulteress shall surely be put to death.

11 And the man that <sup>u</sup> lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; <sup>v</sup> their blood *shall be* upon them.

12 And if a man <sup>w</sup> lie with his daughter-in-law, both of them shall surely be put to death: they have wrought <sup>x</sup> confusion; their blood *shall be* upon them.

13 If a man also <sup>y</sup> lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood *shall be* upon them.

14 And if a man take <sup>a</sup> a wife and her mother, it is wickedness: they shall be <sup>b</sup> burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.

15 And if a man <sup>c</sup> lie with a beast, he shall surely be put to death: and ye shall slay the beast.

16 And if a woman approach unto any beast, and lie down thereto, thou shalt kill the woman and <sup>d</sup> the beast: they shall surely be put to death; their blood *shall be* upon them.

17 And if a man shall take his <sup>e</sup> sister his father's daughter, or his mother's daughter, and see her nakedness, and she see his nakedness, it is a wicked thing; and they shall be cut off in the sight of their people: he hath uncovered his sister's nakedness; he shall bear his iniquity.

18 And if a man shall lie with a woman <sup>f</sup> having her sickness, and shall uncover her nakedness, he hath <sup>g</sup> discovered her fountain, and she hath uncovered the fountain of her blood: and both of them shall be cut off from among their people.

19 And thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy <sup>h</sup> mother's sister, nor of thy father's sister: for he <sup>i</sup> uncovereth his near kin: they shall bear their iniquity.

20 And if a man shall lie with his <sup>j</sup> uncle's wife, he hath uncovered his uncle's nakedness: they shall bear their sin; they shall die <sup>k</sup> childless.

were, from age to age, so infatuated as to persist in this barbarity! (*Marg. Ref. b.*) Committed by *them*, it was the highest imaginable contempt of the Name, sanctuary, and worship of God; and a shameful violation of their national covenant! So that the very strangers, who were allowed to sojourn among them, must pay such respect to the sanctuary of JEHOVAH, who dwelt among his people, and to his holy name, as to stand aloof from these abominations, on the same penalty as native Israelites: and if the criminal escaped the sword of the magistrate, through a wicked connivance, God determined to execute vengeance on him, on his family, and on all who abetted this spiritual whoredom.—Ten thousands of sacrifices equally horrible are offered in India annually, and connived at by British Rulers!

V. 6. *Go a whoring.*] This expression still further proves, that consulting with men or women, who practise, or pretend to, witchcraft in any form, is a real act of idolatry, and of worshipping the devil (27).

V. 9. *His blood shall be upon him.*] They who put the offender to death would contract no guilt: he deserved his doom, and had none to blame but himself. (*Note, Ex. xxi. 15—17.*)

V. 10—19. The laws, before given against these several enormities, (*Notes, xviii. 6—23.*) are here guarded by a sentence of death to be inflicted on the offenders by the magistrate. It is supposed that in many cases this punishment was inflicted by *strangling*; in others *stoning* is expressly appointed; and in one instance *burning with fire*, though the reason of this latter sanction is not obvious. It is not said, that the criminals should be *burnt alive*: and when Achan, by the express direction of the Lord, was burnt with fire, he was *first stoned*: and it does not appear, why this might not be the case in the present instance, and on similar occasions. (*Note, Josh. vii. 25, 26.*)

V. 20, 21. *Childless.*] *Marg. Ref. i.*

κ xviii. 16. Matt.  
xiv. 4.  
• Heb. a separa-  
tion

21 And if a man shall take <sup>κ</sup> his brother's wife, it is <sup>•</sup> an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness, they shall be childless.

l xviii. 4, 5, 26.  
xix. 37. Ps. xix.  
8—11. cv. 45.  
cxix. 80, 145.  
171. Ez. xxxvi.  
27.

22 ¶ Ye shall therefore keep all my <sup>l</sup> statutes, and all my <sup>m</sup> judgments, and do them; that the land whither I bring you to dwell therein <sup>n</sup> spue you not out.

• Ex. xxi. 1. Deut.  
iv. 45. v. 1. Ps.  
cxix. 20, 106.  
160, 164 175. Is.  
xxvi. 8, 9

23 And ye shall not walk <sup>o</sup> in the manners of the nations which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and <sup>p</sup> therefore I abhorred them.

• xviii. 25—28.  
xxvi. 33. Deut.  
xxviii. 25, 26.

• xviii. 3, 24, 30.  
Deut. xii. 30, 31.  
Jer. x. 1, 2.

24 But <sup>q</sup> I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I *am* the LORD your God, <sup>r</sup> which have separated you from *other* people.

• xviii. 27. Deut.  
ix. 5. Ps. lxxviii.  
59. Zech. xi. 8  
• See on Ex. iii. 8  
17. vi. 8.

• Ex. xix. 5, 6.  
xxiii. 16. Num.  
xxiii. 9. Deut.  
vii. 6. xiv. 2.  
John xv. 19.  
2 Cor. ii. 17.  
1 Pet. ii. 9.  
• xi. Deut. xiv. 3  
—21. Acts x. 11  
—15, 28. Eph. v.  
7—11.  
• xi. 43.

25 Ye shall therefore <sup>s</sup> put difference between clean beasts and unclean: and between unclean fowls and clean: and ye shall not make your souls <sup>t</sup> abominable by beast or by fowl, or by any

manner of living thing that <sup>u</sup> creepeth <sup>Or, moveth.</sup> on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean.

26 And ye shall be holy unto me: for I <sup>v</sup> the LORD *am* holy, and have <sup>w</sup> severed you from *other* people, that ye should be mine.

u 7. xix. 2. Ps. xix.  
5, 9. Is. vi. 3.  
xxx. 11. 1 Pet.  
i. 15, 16. Rev. iii.  
7. iv. 8.  
x Tit. ii. 14.

27 A man also or woman that hath <sup>y</sup> a familiar spirit, or that <sup>z</sup> is a wizard, shall <sup>z</sup> surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones; <sup>z</sup> their blood shall be upon them.

• xix. 31. Ex. xxii.  
18. Deut. xviii.  
10—12. 1 Sam.  
xxviii. 7, 8.  
• See on 9.

## CHAP. XXI.

Laws, for the mourning and marriages of the priests, 1—8: the punishment of a priest's daughter convicted of fornication, 9: the mourning and marriage of the high priest, 10—15: and the bodily blemishes which excluded from the work of the priesthood, 16—24.

AND the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>a</sup> Speak unto the priests the sons of Aaron, and say unto them, <sup>b</sup> There shall none be defiled for the dead among his people.

• Hos. v. 1. Mal.  
ii. 1, 4.  
• 11. x. 6, 7  
Num. xix. 14, 16.  
Ez. xiv. 25.

V. 22—26. Notes, xviii. 24—30. xix. 2.

V. 27. Note, Ex. xxii. 18.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When neither the fear and love of God, nor regard to a future and eternal recompence, nor any motives of reason, truth, decency, and the welfare of society, can deter men from enormous crimes; it is needful for the magistrate to use his sword, and by cutting off a mortified limb, to prevent further mischief to the body politick. Such examples of severity, when not needlessly multiplied, are wholesome lessons; and the lives of individuals, thus taken away, prevent the increase of wickedness, and the accumulation of national guilt. But if magistrates neglect their duty, and criminals evade human laws, God will set his face against them, and against those who suffer them to escape, and even against their families likewise. And no pleas of compassion, or of indulgence to relations, friends, or the female sex, will be noticed in excuse of this criminal lenity, which emboldens numbers to venture on crimes, till whole nations are corrupted, and desolating judgments prove the awful consequence.—Are we shocked at the unnatural cruelty of ancient idolaters, in sacrificing their children to the devil in the form of an idol? Alas! there are vast multitudes of parents, who, by their pernicious instructions and wicked examples, and by the mysteries of iniquity into which they early initiate their children, effectually devote them to Satan's service, and blindly forward their everlasting destruction, in a manner no less to be lamented. But what an account must they at last render to God! and what a meeting will they have with their children at the day of judgment! On the other hand let children remember, that "he who cursed father or mother was surely put to death," with "his

"blood upon his own head." Let adulterers hear the judgment of God respecting their crimes; and remember that the slackness of human justice, and the impunity which now emboldens them in sin, can give but an expiring joy, and will probably occasion their still deeper guilt and condemnation.—The secret and unnatural crimes, of which many are conscious who conceal them from men, will soon be brought to light, and into judgment, before a holy God: and criminal indulgences will surely issue in dreadful lamentations hereafter, if not mourned for with godly sorrow and bitter remorse in this world.—Such crimes caused God to abhor the Canaanites, and he will much more abhor them in his professing people. By his word and ordinances he hath severed us from others, and is known by the name of "The LORD that sanctifieth us." Let us then separate ourselves from the company and practices of the ungodly; and let us attend on his ordinances, plead his promises, and seek his salvation: that we may be holy in reality, as well as in profession; that we may learn and observe the difference between clean and unclean in every thing; and that the Lord may indeed be our God and Portion, and we his people in time and to eternity.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1—5. The word rendered *the dead*, is far more commonly translated, *the soul*, or *the life*. When it signifies *the dead*, it means the body of some creature which lately had life. The paucity of words, in most languages, occasions phrases to prevail in a sense, widely different from the primary meaning of the terms composing them; and consequently they must be understood according to the connexion.—The clause here implies, that the priests must not defile themselves for any person whatever, when dead, except the near relations

c xviii. 6 1 The  
iv 12.

2 But for his <sup>e</sup>kin that is near unto him, *that is*, for his mother, and for his father, and for his son, and for his daughter, and for his brother.

3 And for his sister a virgin, that is nigh unto him, which hath had no husband; for her may he be defiled.

\* Or, being as husband among his people, he shall not defile himself for his wife, &c. Ez. xxiv. 16, 17.

4 But <sup>e</sup>he shall not defile himself, *being* a chief man among his people, to profane himself.

d x. 6. xix. 27, 28. Deut. xiv. 1. 12. Jer. xvi. 6. xlviii. 37. Ez. xlv. 20. Am. viii. 10. Mic. i. 16.

5 They shall <sup>d</sup>not make baldness upon their head, neither shall they shave off the corner of their beard, nor make any cuttings in their flesh.

e 8. x. 3. Ex. xxxviii. 36. xxxix. 44. Ezra viii. 28. 1 Pet. ii. 9. f xviii. 21. xix. 12. Mal. i. 6. 11, 12. g iii. 11. Ez. xlv. 7. Mal. i. 7.

6 They shall be <sup>e</sup>holy unto their God, and not <sup>e</sup>profane the name of their God: for the offerings of the LORD made by fire, *and* the <sup>e</sup>bread of their God, they do offer: therefore they shall be holy.

h 8. Ex. xlv. 22. 1 Tim. iii. 11.

7 They shall not take a wife <sup>h</sup>that is a whore, or profane; neither shall they take a woman <sup>i</sup>put away from her husband: for he *is* holy unto his God.

i Deut. xiv. 1, 2. Is. i. 1.

k 6. Ex. xix. 10. 14. xxviii. 41. xxxix. 1. 43, 44.

8 Thou shalt <sup>k</sup>sanctify him therefore, for he offereth the bread of thy God:

particularly specified; and consequently that they must in no other case attend a funeral, or enter the tent where a corpse lay.—*The wife* is not here mentioned, and the marginal reading (4) seems to imply that she was excepted; yet this is not likely: and when Ezekiel, who was a priest, refrained by express command from signs of mourning for his wife, the people deemed it very strange. Being a distinguished person among his people, his example and ministrations were of great importance: and he must not “profane himself,” or separate himself from his sacred employments, on any ordinary occasion. (*Notes, Ex. xxiv. 16—24.*)—By these restrictions, and the prohibition of expressing grief by any extravagant or superstitious tokens, the priests were taught to moderate their natural passions; and perhaps to avow their belief of a future state. (*Note, 1 The. iv. 13—18.*)

V. 6. The office of the priests in offering sacrifices, (here called “the bread of their God,” the provisions of God’s house and altar, where he, as it were, came and feasted with his people,) would place them in a conspicuous light, and many would note their conduct: it behoved them therefore to be very circumspect, lest God and his worship should be disregarded, through their misconduct even in lighter matters.

V. 7. A priest must not marry a woman who had been a harlot, though penitent; or one of suspicious character, or ungodly; or one who had been divorced, as it might be presumed that it was for some misconduct. All the male children of the priests were priests by birth, “and he that would seek a godly seed, must first seek a godly wife.”

Henry.

VOL. I.

he shall be holy unto thee; <sup>l</sup>for I the LORD which sanctify you *am* holy.

9 And <sup>m</sup>the daughter of any priest, if she profane herself by playing the whore, she profaneth her father: she shall be <sup>n</sup>burnt with fire.

10 ¶ And *he that is* the high priest among his brethren, <sup>o</sup>upon whose head the anointing oil was poured, and that is <sup>p</sup>consecrated to put on the garments, shall not <sup>q</sup>uncover his head, <sup>r</sup>nor rend his clothes;

11 Neither shall he go in to any dead body, nor defile himself for <sup>s</sup>his father, or for his mother:

12 Neither shall he <sup>t</sup>go out of the sanctuary, nor profane the sanctuary of his God; <sup>u</sup>for the crown of the anointing oil of his God *is* upon him: *I am* the LORD.

13 And he shall take a wife in her virginity.

14 A widow, or a divorced woman, or profane, *or* an harlot, these shall he not take: but he shall take <sup>v</sup>a virgin of his own people to wife.

V. 8. This seems addressed to Moses, (and to all subsequent rulers in Israel,) as a command to exercise his authority and influence, that the priests might be preserved from unhallowed marriages, and from every other thing inconsistent with their sacred character.

V. 9. Whoredom in a priest’s daughter would be highly disgraceful to religion, and a reflection upon the parent’s care of his family. The dreadful punishment denounced by God himself would not only be a restraint upon the children; (*Note, xx. 10—19;*) but likewise a lesson to the parents to watch over them, to keep them out of the way of temptation, and to give them a proper education.

V. 10—15. The eldest son of the high priest is supposed by many to have been anointed in his father’s lifetime, if he came to a proper age, and to have acted as his deputy, in case of sickness or ceremonial uncleanness; and upon his death the office immediately devolved upon him; nor must he incapacitate himself for performing it, on any account whatever. It is therefore thought that he, or the apparent successor to the high priesthood, was bound by these rules, as well as the high priest actually in office.—The high priest however, as the immediate type of Christ, must shew greater superiority over his natural affections, and be more circumspect in his whole conduct, than the other priests. He must therefore marry none but a virgin; nor leave any stain on his posterity, either by his own improper marriage, or by allowing them to marry improperly. Many learned men indeed think, that all the priests were bound by the law of marrying none but virgins: but they can bring no proof of it from *Scripture*, except from Ezekiel’s mystical vision, (*Note, Ez. xlv.*

<sup>a</sup> Para ii. 62. ix. 15 Neither shall he <sup>1</sup>profane his seed among his people: for I the LORD do sanctify him.

16 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

17 Speak unto Aaron, saying, Whosoever *he be* of thy seed in their generations, that hath *any* <sup>1</sup>blemish, <sup>2</sup>let him not approach to offer the <sup>3</sup>bread of his God:

18 For whatsoever man *he be* that hath a blemish, he shall not approach: <sup>4</sup>a blind man, or a lame, or he that hath a flat nose, or any thing superfluous,

19 Or a man that is broken-footed, or broken-handed.

20 Or <sup>5</sup>crook-backed, or <sup>6</sup>a dwarf, or that hath a blemish in his eye; or

be scurvy, or scabbed, or <sup>7</sup>hath his <sup>8</sup>stones broken:

21 No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest, shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire: he hath a blemish, he shall not come nigh <sup>9</sup>to offer the bread of his God.

22 He shall eat the bread of his God <sup>10</sup>both <sup>11</sup>of the most holy, and <sup>12</sup>of the holy;

23 Only he shall not <sup>13</sup>go in unto the veil, nor come nigh unto the altar, because he hath a blemish; that he <sup>14</sup>profane not my sanctuaries: for I the LORD do sanctify them.

24 And Moses told *it* unto <sup>15</sup>Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel.

22;) which certainly varies in many things from the law of Moses; and the context, in this chapter, evidently implies the contrary. It is more properly observed, that polygamy was virtually forbidden the high priest; but not a second marriage, as some have imagined.

V. 17—24. These several blemishes in the body incapacitated the priests for some of their sacred work; yet did not exclude them from their maintenance, or from subordinate services, or even from instructing the people. They were external emblems of the scandals and reproaches of sin, resting on a man's character, which render even the penitent unfit for the ministry, until the impression, made by them on the minds of men, be done away by a continued course of good behaviour.—Learned men have copiously shewed, that the pagans literally observed several of these rules respecting priests; probably they originally derived their usages from the law of Moses.—Some have argued from these laws that a deformed person, or one who wants a limb, or is otherwise materially blemished, should not be a minister of the gospel; but this is a groundless imagination, as these incapacitating blemishes were mere shadows of a wrong state of heart and mind.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

As these priests were *types* of Christ, so all ministers especially must be *followers* of him; that their example may elucidate and corroborate their instructions, and teach the people in imitating them to imitate the Saviour. He was perfectly superior to all natural affections; and in the business of his heavenly Father, would not be interrupted or biassed, even by his regard to his earthly parent. Absolutely dead to the world, and filled with zeal for the glory of the Father and compassion to the souls of men, he was unwearied in his labours, and persevering in his sufferings, till he could say, "It is finished." Without blemish, and separate from sinners, he executed his priestly office on earth: and, being ascended into heaven, he is preparing his church of redeemed sinners, that "not <sup>16</sup>having spot, or blemish, or any such thing," he may

espouse it as a chaste virgin unto himself for ever: and he requires all his family to remember the relation in which they stand unto him, and to act consistently. What manner of persons then should his ministers be? Surely their characters should be free from scandal; and their hearts from the dominion of sin, and from the love of filthy lucre, worldly honour, and sensual indulgence! They should be unwearied and cheerful in their work, "giving themselves wholly to it," and letting nothing divert them from it. They should be patient in tribulations, superior to the power of their passions, circumspect in their walk, cautious in their connexions, and exemplary in the government of their families. Nothing is of more importance to the interests of religion than the unblemished character, and the sober, decent, and respectable conduct and demeanor of the wives and children of ministers: for the people will always think themselves authorized to go further in conformity to the world, and its vain fashions and customs, and in pursuit of its interests and pleasures, than the minister and his family do; and will interpret his preaching by *their* practising; supposing *him* accountable for *their* misconduct, or as giving it the sanction of his approbation. (Notes, 1 Tim. iii. 2—5.)—Our God is as holy *now*, as when he commanded the offending daughter of a priest to be burnt with fire; how then should the children of ministers tremble lest they disgrace the character of their parents, prevent the effects of their ministry, and expose themselves to the fierce wrath of God! Equally careful should this render ministers of their children; not aiming to give them a genteel education, in conformity with the customs and fashions of the world; but to train them up in useful knowledge, with sobriety, frugality, and industry, and in the fear of God; restraining and correcting every evil propensity, setting them a good example, and offering continual prayers for them: for the child's wickedness will be considered as the parent's *reproach*, as well as *affliction*; and frequently it is so, though not always.—But we are all, if Christians, spiritual priests: and the minister is called to set a good ex-

## CHAP. XXII.

The priests might not eat of the holy things when unclean, 1—9. Who might eat of them, 10—13. The restitution to be made by him who had unwittingly eaten of them, 14—16. The sacrifices must be without blemish, and above seven days old, 17—28. The law of eating the sacrifices of thanksgiving, 29, 30. Calls to obedience, 31—33.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, that they <sup>a</sup>separate themselves from the holy things of the children of Israel, and that they <sup>b</sup>profane not my holy name in those things which they <sup>c</sup>hallow unto me: I am the LORD.

3 Say unto them, Whosoever he be of all your seed among your generations, that goeth unto the holy things, which the children of Israel hallow unto the LORD, <sup>d</sup>having his uncleanness upon him, that soul shall be cut off <sup>e</sup>from my presence: I am the LORD.

4 What man soever of the seed of Aaron is <sup>f</sup>a leper, or hath a <sup>g</sup>running issue; he shall not eat of the <sup>h</sup>holy things, <sup>i</sup>until he be clean. And whoso toucheth any thing <sup>j</sup>that is <sup>k</sup>unclean by the dead, or a man <sup>l</sup>whose seed goeth from him;

5 Or <sup>m</sup>whosoever toucheth any creeping thing, whereby he may be made unclean, <sup>n</sup>or a man of whom he may

take uncleanness, whatsoever uncleanness he hath:

6 The <sup>o</sup>soul which hath touched any such shall be unclean until even, and shall not eat of the holy things, unless he wash his flesh with water.

7 And when the sun is down, he shall be clean, and shall afterward eat of the holy things; <sup>p</sup>because it is his food.

8 That which <sup>q</sup>dieth of itself, or is torn with beasts, he shall not eat to defile himself therewith: I am the LORD.

9 They shall therefore keep mine ordinance, lest they <sup>r</sup>bear sin for it, and die therefore, if they profane it: I the LORD do sanctify them.

10 There shall <sup>s</sup>no stranger eat of the holy thing: a sojourner of the priest, or an hired servant, shall not eat of the holy thing.

11 But if the priest buy <sup>t</sup>any soul with <sup>u</sup>his money, he shall eat of it, and he that is born in his house: they shall eat of his meat.

12 If the priest's daughter also be married unto <sup>v</sup>a stranger, she may not eat of an offering of the holy things.

13 But if the priest's daughter be a widow or divorced, and have no child, and is <sup>w</sup>returned unto her father's house, <sup>x</sup>as in her youth, she shall eat of her father's meat; but there shall no stranger eat thereof.

<sup>a</sup> 2-6. xv. 31. Num. vi. 3-8.

<sup>b</sup> 22. xviii. 31. xix. 12. xx. 3. xxi. 6.

<sup>c</sup> Ex. xiii. 12. xxviii. 38. Num. xviii. 32. Deut. xv. 19.

<sup>d</sup> vii. 20, 21.

<sup>e</sup> Ex. xxxiii. 14. 15. Ps. xvi. 11. li. 11. Matt. xxv. 41. 2 Thes. i. 9.

<sup>f</sup> See on xiii. 2, 3. 44-46.

<sup>g</sup> Heb. running of the reins. xv. 2.

<sup>h</sup> H. 3. 10. vi. 25. 29. xxi. 22. Num. xviii. 9. 19.

<sup>i</sup> xiv. 2. &c. xv. 13-15.

<sup>j</sup> xxi. 1. Num. xix. 11-16.

<sup>k</sup> xv. 16.

<sup>l</sup> xl. 43, 44.

<sup>m</sup> xv. 7. 19.

<sup>n</sup> xi. 24, 25. xv. 8. xvi. 24-26. Num. xix. 7-10. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Heb. x. 22.

<sup>o</sup> xxi. 22. Num. xviii. 11-13. Deut. xviii. 3, 4. 1 Cor. ix. 4. 13, 14. p xvii. 15. Ex. xxi. 31. Deut. xiv. 21. Ez. xiv. 31.

<sup>q</sup> x. 1, 2. xvi. 2. Ex. xxviii. 43. Num. xviii. 22. 32.

<sup>r</sup> 1 Sam. xxi. 6. Matt. xii. 4.

<sup>t</sup> Heb. the purchase of his money. Gen. xiii. 18. Num. xviii. 11-13.

<sup>v</sup> Heb. a man, stranger.

<sup>w</sup> Gen. xxxviii. 11.

<sup>x</sup> x. 14. Num. xviii. 11-19.

ample, in order that the people may imitate it. They too must be dead to the world and separated from it: not sorrowing or rejoicing, desiring or pursuing, or possessing temporal things, in the same manner as others do; but taking the Lord for their Portion, rejoicing in him continually, delighting in his service, and using all to his glory.—Our bodily infirmities, blessed be God, cannot exclude us from his heavenly glory. And they, who on many accounts may be disqualified for the work of the ministry, may serve God with comfort in other situations in his church. Finally, such as, without their own fault, are incapable of further service, must neither be despised, nor deprived of suitable maintenance.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 2. "Holy things" were the parts of the sacrifices given to the priests, the shew-bread, and whatever was more immediately presented to the Lord. Some were *most holy*, to be eaten only by the priests in the sanctuary; others were *holy*, to be eaten by them and their families in their own houses. But the proportion of the

tithes which belonged to the priests, and many other perquisites, might be disposed of at their will.

V. 3—9. The females, as well as the males, were bound by these laws. Yet, as the holy things constituted a considerable part of the stated maintenance of the priests and their families, the uncleanness, contracted in some of the specified cases, was speedily and easily removed. But if any persons presumptuously neglected the prescribed rules, they would "bear sin for it," and might expect to be cut off by divine justice, after the example of Nadab and Abihu.

Cut off from my presence. (3) Some interpret this of the offender being excluded from officiating as a priest; others, of his being cut off by some immediate stroke from God.

V. 10—13. Boarders, lodgers, and hired labourers or servants, not being a regular part of the priest's family, were not allowed to eat of the holy things; but slaves, whether bought, or born in the house, as a part of his stated family, were.—If his daughter married a priest, she might eat of them in right of her husband, as well as of her father; but if she married any other man she forfeited

u v. 15—19. xxvii.  
13, 15

14 And if a man <sup>u</sup>eat of the holy thing unwittingly, then he shall put the fifth *part* thereof unto it, and shall give *it* unto the priest, with the holy thing.

x 9. xix. 8. Num  
xxviii. 32. Ez.  
xxii. 26.

15 And they shall not <sup>x</sup>profane the holy things of the children of Israel which they offer unto the LORD;

\* Or, *lade themselves with the iniquity of trespass in their eating.*

y vii. 18. Pa.  
xxxviii. 4. Is.  
lvi. 11, 12. 1 Pet.  
ii. 24.

16 Or <sup>y</sup>suffer them <sup>y</sup>to bear the iniquity of trespass, when they eat their holy things; <sup>y</sup>for I the LORD do sanctify them.

z 9.—See on xx. 8.

17 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

a xvii. 10. 13.  
b Num. xv. 14—  
16.

c vii. 16. xxiii. 38.  
Num. xv. 8.  
Deut. xii. 6. Pa.  
xxii. 25. lvi. 12.  
lxi. 5. 8. lxx. 1.  
lxxvi. 13. cxvi.  
14. 18. Ec. v. 4.  
Jon. i. 16. ii. 9.  
Nab. i. 16. Acts  
viii. 18.

d Num. xv. 8.  
Deut. xii. 6. 17.  
xvi. 10.

e l. 3. 10. iv. 32.  
Ex. xii. 5. Matt.  
xxvii. 4. 19. 24.  
34. Luke xxiii.  
14. 41. 47. John  
xix. 4. 2 Cor. v.  
21. Eph. v. 27.  
Heb. ix. 14. 1 Pet.  
i. 19. ii. 22—24.  
iii. 18.

f 25. Deut. xv. 21.  
xvii. 1. Mal. i.  
8. 13, 14.

g iii. 1. 6. vii. 11.  
&c.

h Gen. xxviii. 20.  
xxxv. 1—3.  
Deut. xxiii. 21  
—23. Pa. i. 14.  
Prov. vii. 14. Ec.  
v. 4. 5.

18 Speak unto Aaron, and to his sons, and unto all the children of Israel, and say unto them, <sup>a</sup>Whatsoever *he* be of the house of Israel, or <sup>b</sup>of the strangers in Israel, that will offer his oblation for all his <sup>c</sup>vows, and for all his <sup>d</sup>free-will offerings, which they will offer unto the LORD for a burnt-offering:

19 *Ye shall offer at your own will* <sup>a</sup>a male without blemish of the beeves, of the sheep, or of the goats.

i 19. ii. 22—24.  
iii. 18.

j 25. Deut. xv. 21.  
xvii. 1. Mal. i.  
8. 13, 14.

k iii. 1. 6. vii. 11.  
&c.

l Gen. xxviii. 20.  
xxxv. 1—3.  
Deut. xxiii. 21  
—23. Pa. i. 14.  
Prov. vii. 14. Ec.  
v. 4. 5.

20 *But whatsoever* <sup>i</sup>hath a blemish, *that* shall ye not offer: for it shall not be acceptable for you.

21 And whosoever offereth a sacrifice <sup>j</sup>of peace-offerings unto the LORD, <sup>k</sup>to accomplish *his* vow, or a free-will offer-

ing in beeves, or <sup>l</sup>sheep, it shall be <sup>l</sup>perfect to be accepted; there shall be no blemish therein.

22 <sup>l</sup>Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy, or scabbed, ye shall not offer these unto the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar unto the LORD.

23 Either a bullock, or a <sup>m</sup>lamb, that hath any thing superfluous or lacking in his parts, that mayest thou offer *for* a free-will offering; but for a vow it shall not be accepted.

24 Ye shall not offer unto the LORD that which is bruised, or crushed, or <sup>n</sup>broken, or cut; neither shall ye make *any offering thereof* in your land.

25 Neither from <sup>o</sup>a stranger's hand shall ye offer <sup>o</sup>the bread of your God of any of these; because their corruption *is* in them, *and* blemishes *be* in them: they shall not be accepted for you.

26 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

27 When a bullock, or a sheep, or a goat, is brought forth, then it shall be <sup>p</sup>seven days under the dam: and from the eighth day, and thenceforth, it shall be accepted for an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

28 And *whether it be* cow or <sup>q</sup>ewe, <sup>q</sup>Or, *she* goat.

that right: and if left a widow with children, she and they formed a family distinct and separate from the priesthood; but if left a widow without children, or if being divorced she returned to her father's house to live with him as in her youth, she became again a part of his family, and might partake of the holy things.

V. 14—16. The presumptuous transgressor was left to the judgment of God; but he, who inadvertently ate any part of what belonged to the priest, was required, when he found out his mistake, to make restitution with a fifth part added to the value of it. This the priests must require, that the hallowed things might not be applied to common uses. For that would indeed be allowing the people to burden themselves with guilt, by violating the divine law in eating the holy things: while that very action typically implied a vain attempt to expiate their own guilt; instead of transferring it to the priests, who were in this respect the types of Christ. (Notes, v. 15, 16. x. 16—18.)

V. 18—24. The burnt-offerings typified Christ's unblemished sacrifice, and denoted the offerer's entire devotedness to God; and the peace-offering of a vow implied an *indispensable* duty: in these cases therefore no animal having any kind of blemish would be accepted.—But one that had a disproportion in its limbs, or something superfluous or wanting, might be accepted as a free-

will offering; when love for the courts and altar of God, and for his brethren, disposed a man, without any previous obligations, to offer a sacrifice, and make a sacred feast for his friends, for the priests, and for the poor. Yet even in this case such animals as were blemished, or diseased in other respects, must not be offered.—Without entering into the particulars of these defects and blemishes, it is obvious that the word translated *bullock* means a young bull; for the male, unless a bull, was blemished.—It is evident, from the original of the twenty-third verse, that the words often translated *at your own will* (29), should in most places be rendered *for your acceptance*. (Note, i. 3.)

V. 25. As an intimation of the Lord's purposes of mercy to the Gentiles, they were encouraged to offer sacrifices to him; but these were not allowed of, unless free from blemish.—Some are of opinion, that the Gentiles were not allowed to offer any sacrifices, except burnt-offerings: but the connexion of this verse seems unfavourable to that supposition.

V. 27. From the same time as the male children were dedicated to the Lord by circumcision, the cattle were deemed meet for sacrifice: that is, say the Jewish writers, when one sabbath, which sanctifies all things, must have passed over them. (Note, xii. 2—5.)

V. 28. The reason of this restriction is not very evi-

o **Ex. xxxiii. 19.** \*ye shall not kill it and her young both  
 xxiv. 26. Deut.  
 xiv. 21. xxi. 6, in one day.

p **vii. 12. Ps. cvii.** 29 And when ye will offer <sup>a</sup> a sacri-  
 22. cxvi. 17. fice of thanksgiving unto the LORD,  
 Hos. xiv. 2. offer *it* at your own will.  
 Amos iv. 5.  
 Heb xlii. 15.  
 1 Pet. ii. 5.

q **vii. 15—18. xix.** 30 On the same day it shall be eaten  
 7. Ex. xvi. 19, up; ye shall <sup>a</sup> leave none of it until the  
 20. morrow: I *am* the LORD.

r **See on xxi. 4. 5.** 31 Therefore shall ye <sup>a</sup> keep my  
 —Num. xv. 40. commandments, and do them: I *am*  
 Dent. iv. 40. the LORD.  
 1 The. iv. 1, 2.

s **See on 2—xxiii.** 32 Neither shall ye <sup>a</sup> profane my  
 21. holy name; but <sup>a</sup> I will be hallowed  
 t **x. 3. Is. v. 9.** among the children of Israel: I *am* the  
 Matt. vi. 16. LORD which <sup>a</sup> hallow you,  
 Luke xi. 2.

u **16. x. 8. xxi. 8.** 33 <sup>a</sup>That brought you out of the  
 15. Ex. xix. 5, 6. land of Egypt, to be your God: I *am*  
 John xvii. 17. the LORD.  
 1 Cor. i. 2.  
 x. xi. 45. xix. 36.  
 xxv. 38. Ex. vi.  
 7. xx. 2. Num.  
 xv. 41.

dent. The practice might seem cruel and unfeeling; yet it does not seem to have been forbidden thus to slay other cattle for food, besides these here mentioned. It might perhaps refer to some pagan superstition.

V. 29, 30. Note, vii. 15—18.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Whilst with gratitude we recollect, that our holy and glorious High Priest is not liable to any incapacitating impediments to the discharge of his office, either habitual or incidental, but is perfectly such an one as became us; and that his unblemished sacrifice is of perpetual efficacy for “all who come to God through him;” let us also remember, that the Lord requires us likewise to reverence his Name, his truths, his ordinances, and his commandments. The man, who enters into the ministry, and who handles the word of God, or administers his sacraments, out of covetousness or ambition, whilst he indulges in known, habitual sin, either openly or in secret; and those professed Christians who make religion their pretence, but gain their object; or who approach the Lord’s table as a step to preferment, or with a heart full of covetousness, malice, or lust;—such persons, I say, presume to eat of the holy things with their uncleanness upon them, and must answer for it to God. Let us then beware of hypocrisy; and both examine ourselves, and seek to be purified from our sinful defilements, in the blood of Christ, and by his sanctifying Spirit: that we may not profane the Name of God in these hallowed things, but use them with acceptance, to his glory, and to our own benefit and comfort; and when, as his priests, we have feasted at his table, let us never more defile ourselves with the base pleasures of sin.—It is very proper, that we should carefully distinguish between those who ought, and those who ought not, to eat of these holy things: and we shall find, if we carefully consult the Scriptures, that the man who attempts to expiate his own sin, or to justify himself before God by his own supposed virtues, puts as great an affront on Christ, whose bleeding love to sinners he professes to commemorate, as he who comes to the Lord’s table, from the indulgence of his passions by direct and gross immorali-

#### CHAP. XXIII.

Laws concerning the weekly sabbath, 1—3: the passover, the feast of unleavened bread, and the sheaf of first-fruits, 4—14: the feast of Pentecost; with a memento to leave the gleanings for the poor, 15—22: the feast of trumpets, 23—25: the day of atonement, 26—32: the feast of tabernacles, 33—44.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, *concerning* <sup>a</sup> the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall <sup>b</sup> proclaim *to be* holy convocations, *even* these *are* my feasts.

3 <sup>a</sup>Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day *is* the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation: ye shall do no

ties. This is a sin which is often committed unwittingly; but must be repented of, if men would not bear their own iniquities, which ‘is a burden too heavy for them’ to support. Nor can the minister, who loves the souls of the people, *suffer them* to continue in this dangerous delusion; but must call upon them, not only to repent and forsake their sins; but to put their whole trust in the atonement of Christ, for pardon and acceptance with God: for thus, and thus only, will the Lord sanctify them for his peculiar people.—We must serve the Lord with the best of all we have and are: yet if there be a willing mind, and an upright, humble, thankful heart, with a simple dependence on the unblemished sacrifice of Christ; our imperfect oblations will not be rejected of God, and will be useful to our fellow-creatures.—It is very desirable that strangers should be brought acquainted with the Saviour: but we should be careful, that our zeal for multiplying converts do not lead us to encourage hypocrites, “whose corruption *is in them*,” and who will be a scandal to the cause.—Even when the reason of the Lord’s appointments doth not appear, or when we meet with many repetitions in his word; we may profitably be reminded to exercise humility, faith in his wisdom, and submission to his authority, who deserves from us the most unreserved obedience and confidence in every thing.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 2. The word (מִצְוָה) rendered “feasts,” properly means *assemblies convened at an appointed time and place*.—It is sometimes translated *solemnities*. (Is. xxxiii. 20.) The day of atonement was a great *solemnity*, but it was a *fast*.

V. 3. The weekly sabbath was the greatest of all these solemnities, as instituted in remembrance of the creation, to be observed through all generations.—It is called “a holy convocation;” and it may be supposed at least to have been the will of the Lawgiver, that assemblies for religious worship and instruction should be held in every place, as well as for sacrifices at the temple. This was done at length in the synagogues; but besides this, it was also to be observed as a sacred rest in all the dwellings of Israel.

work therein: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.

4 ¶ These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.

5 In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD's passover.

6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.

7 In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work therein.

8 But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation, ye shall do no servile work therein.

9 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof,

then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest:

11 And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it.

12 And ye shall offer that day, when ye wave the sheaf, an he-lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt-offering unto the LORD.

13 And the meat-offering thereof shall be two tenth-deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD for a sweet savour: and the drink-offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin.

14 And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the self-same day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations, in all your dwellings.

Or, handful.  
Heb omer  
Prov. iii. 9, 10.  
Eccl. xiv. 30.  
Rom. xi. 16.  
1 Cor. xv. 20—  
23 James i. 18  
Rev. xiv. 4.  
Ex. xix. 24.

10. Heb. x.  
10—12. 1 Pet.  
i. 19.

ii. 14—16. xiv.  
10. Num. xv. 3  
—12.

m Ex. xix. 40,  
41, xxx. 9. Num.  
xxviii. 10. Joel  
i. 9. 13. ii. 14.  
n Ex. xxx. 24. Ex.  
ii. 11. xiv. 24  
xvii. 14.  
o xix. 23—25. xxv.  
2, 3. Gen. iv. 4.  
6. Josh. v. 11, 12

iii. 17. x. 11.  
Deut. xvi. 12.  
Neh. ix. 14. Ps.  
xix. 8.

d Ex. xii. 2—14.  
xiii. 3—10. xxi.  
16. Num. ix. 2  
—7. xxviii. 16.  
Deut. xvi. 1—7.  
Josh. v. 10.  
2 Chr. xxxv. 18.  
19. Matt. xxvi.  
17. Mark xiv. 12.  
Luke xii. 7.  
1 Cor. v. 7, 8.  
e Ex. xii. 15, 16.  
xiii. 6, 7. xxxiv.  
18. Num. xxviii.  
17, 18. Deut.  
xvi. 8. Acts xii.  
3, 4.  
f Num. xxviii. 18  
—26.

g See on xiv. 34.  
h ii. 12—16. Ex.  
xxiii. 16. 19.  
xxxiv. 22. 26.  
Num. xv. 2. 18  
—21. xxviii. 26.  
Deut. xvi. 9. h  
Josh. iii. 15.

V. 4. *Ye shall proclaim, &c.*] The priests were directed to give notice of the solemnities, and to call together the holy convocation by sound of trumpet. It would also devolve upon them to calculate the seasons of the annual feasts: and, in order that the computation by moons might coincide as nearly as could be with the revolutions of the sun, proper intercalations must be made from time to time. For twelve revolutions of the moon want about eleven days of one entire revolution of the sun; so that a month must have been intercalated sometimes in the third, and at others in the second year; in order that the fifteenth day of Nisan might never precede that season of the year, which the offering of the first-fruits required. (Note, 10—14.)—Many other observances would require the same. When the people were settled in Canaan, proclamation must, in some way, be made to all the tribes, that there might be no error or disunion among them.

V. 5—8. (Notes and P. O. Ex. xii.) It is observable, that in respect of all the solemnities, except the weekly sabbath and the day of atonement, the word *servile* is added, in the prohibition of the work to be done upon them. Hence it is reasonably concluded, that several things of a domestick nature might be performed on the other solemnities, which must not be done on the weekly sabbath, or the day of atonement. The Jewish writers are very particular on this distinction: but it is enough to state in general, that in one case any work, except such as respected commerce, manufactures, agriculture, or menial services, was allowable; but in the other none, unless strictly speaking *necessary*, or subservient to the exercise of piety, charity, and humanity, could accord to the strictness of the injunction.

V. 10—14. The word rendered *sheaf* in the text, is in the original *omer*, as in the margin.—It is supposed, that

some barley, (for that must be meant,) having been reaped, was dried by the fire, ground, and made into fine flour; enough of which to fill an omer, was annually presented in the name of the whole nation, when put in possession of Canaan, with a sacrifice, a meat-offering, and a drink-offering.—The sabbath, here mentioned, was the day of holy convocation, or the first day of unleavened bread, which might or might not be the weekly sabbath. According to the exact letter, (5—7, and *Marg. Ref. d.*) Christ was crucified on this day of holy convocation: yet whether the Jews calculated the days in another manner, or not, it seems not to have been thus observed; but the next being the sabbath was a high day, and probably was kept as the day of holy convocation. Thus the first day of the week was the day of offering the first-fruits, on which day Christ arose the first-fruits from the dead. The first-fruits, presented to God with a sacrifice, implied that the title of the Israelites to the fruits of the earth rested on the gift of a reconciled God, through the sacrifice of the promised Saviour; and that the comfortable and holy use of them arose from their devoting themselves and their substance to his service and glory.—They also prefigured Christ, not only as the first-fruits from the dead, and the earnest of the great harvest of the resurrection, but as the first-fruits of all the race of Adam; and who, having sanctified himself to be obedient to the precept, and to endure the penalty of the law of God, presented himself unto the Father as the earnest of an innumerable multitude of his brethren, being consecrated to God through him. For Christians also themselves are a kind of first-fruits of God's creatures: and while they partake of the sanctifying influences of the Spirit as the first-fruits of glory, their feeble worship and adoration are the first-fruits of their eternal hallelujahs. (James i. 18.)

15 ¶ And ye shall count unto you <sup>q</sup> from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave-offering: seven sabbaths shall be complete.

16 Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath, shall ye number <sup>r</sup> fifty days, and ye shall offer a new meat-offering unto the LORD.

17 Ye shall bring out of your habitations <sup>s</sup> two wave loaves of two tenth-deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with <sup>t</sup> leaven; *they are* <sup>u</sup> the first-fruits unto the LORD.

18 And ye shall offer with the bread <sup>v</sup> seven lambs without blemish, of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be <sup>w</sup> for a burnt-offering unto the LORD, <sup>x</sup> with their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, <sup>y</sup> even an offering made by fire of sweet savour unto the LORD.

19 Then ye shall sacrifice <sup>z</sup> one kid of the goats for a sin-offering, and <sup>aa</sup> two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace-offerings.

20 And the priest shall <sup>ab</sup> wave them with the bread of the first-fruits <sup>ac</sup> for a wave-offering before the LORD, with the two lambs: they shall be <sup>ad</sup> holy to the LORD for the priest.

21 And ye shall <sup>ae</sup> proclaim on the

self-same day, *that* it may be an holy convocation unto you: ye shall do no servile work *therein*: *it shall be* <sup>af</sup> a statute for ever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

22 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, <sup>ag</sup> thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: *I am* the LORD your God.

23 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

24 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, <sup>ah</sup> In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation.

25 Ye shall do no servile work *therein*: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

26 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

27 Also on <sup>ai</sup> the tenth day of this seventh month *there shall be* a day of atonement, it shall be an holy convocation unto you: and ye shall <sup>aj</sup> afflict your souls, and <sup>ak</sup> offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

28 And ye shall do no work in that

V. 15—21. (Note, Ex. xxiii. 14—18.) By the time of "the feast of weeks," or the Pentecost, the barley-harvest, which was eared and nearly ripe at the feast of the pass-over, would be gathered in; and the wheat-harvest ripe, and in part reaped. Of this latter, therefore, the people must make another acknowledgment "out of their habitations," as the first-fruits were from the field; in fine flour made into bread, and leavened as for food, not for sacrifice. This was to be accompanied with burnt-offerings, a sin-offering, and peace-offerings: all denoting their unworthiness in themselves, their acceptance through Christ, devotedness to God, consequent comfortable use of their substance, and communion with God and with their brethren. Two bullocks and but one ram are mentioned in Numbers; but the reason of this difference is not evident: perhaps it was left to the option of the priests or rulers. (Num. xxviii. 27.)—The feast is supposed to have been held in remembrance of the giving of the law, fifty days after the departure of the people out of Egypt; and to have looked forward to the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, fifty days after the resurrection of Christ. (Notes, Ex. xix. 1. Acts ii. 1.) Having finished and presented his perfect obedience and acceptable sacrifice, as the first-fruits unto the Father; he, through the gift of the Holy Ghost to the

apostles, and by the conversion of three thousand souls at once, presented the other first-fruits of the Christian church, as an earnest of that harvest of innumerable multitudes, which hath been gathering, and shall yet be gathered, in all ages and nations to the end of time.

V. 22. Marg. Ref. f. Note, xix. 9, 10.

V. 24, 25. (Note, Num. x. 2—10.) This feast seems to have been instituted on the first day of the seventh month, both because the civil new year began at that time; and because of the other solemnities observed in that month, which were thus announced.—The blowing of trumpets especially represented the preaching of the gospel; by which men are called to repent of sin, and accept the salvation of Christ, which was signified by the day of atonement; and to rejoice in God, and become strangers and pilgrims upon earth, which was denoted by the feast of tabernacles, both of which were observed in this month.—Some think, that the feast of trumpets was appointed as a memorial of the creation, which they suppose to have been completed at this season of the year.

V. 26—32. (Notes, and P. O. xvi.) The day of atonement was only five days before the feast of tabernacles: and though the Israelites were not required to attend at

<sup>1</sup> xvi. 34. Is. liii. 10. Dan. ix. 24. Zech. iii. 9. Rom. v. 10, 11. Heb. ix. 12, 26. x. 10, 14. 1 John ii. 2. iv. 10. v. 6. <sup>m</sup> See on 27. 32.

same day: for it is <sup>1</sup> a day of atone-  
ment, to make an atonement for you  
before the LORD your God.

29 For whatsoever soul *it be* <sup>m</sup> that  
shall not be afflicted in that same day,  
he shall be cut off from among his  
people.

<sup>a</sup> xx. 3. Gen. xvii. 14. Jer. xv. 7. Ez. xiv. 9. Zeph. ii. 6. 1 Cor. iii. 17.

30 And whatsoever soul *it be* that  
doeth any work in that same day, <sup>m</sup> the  
same soul will I destroy from among  
his people.

31 Ye shall do no manner of work:  
*it shall be* a statute for ever through-  
out your generations in all your dwell-  
ings.

<sup>c</sup> See on xvi. 31.—Matt. xi. 28—30. Heb. iv. 8. 11. <sup>p</sup> See on 27. Ps. xxxv. 13. 11. 17. lxx. 10. cxvii. 5. 6. 11. lvii. 15. 18. 19. lviii. 3—7. lxi. 3. Matt. v. 4. 1 Cor. xi. 31. <sup>d</sup> Heb. rest.

32 *It shall be* unto you <sup>a</sup> a sabbath  
of rest, and ye shall <sup>1</sup> afflict your souls:  
in the ninth *day* of the month at even,  
from even unto even shall ye <sup>a</sup> cele-  
brate your sabbath.

33 ¶ And the LORD spake unto  
Moses, saying,

<sup>q</sup> Ex. xxxiii. 16. xxxiv. 22. Deut. xvi. 13—15. Ezra iii. 4. Neh. viii. 14. Zech. xiv. 16—19. John i. 14. vii. 2. Heb. xi. 9. 13.

34 Speak unto the children of Israel,  
saying, <sup>1</sup> The fifteenth day of this  
seventh month *shall be* the feast of ta-  
bernacles for seven days unto the  
LORD.

<sup>r</sup> 7. 8. 24. 25

35 On the first day *shall be* <sup>1</sup> an holy  
convocation: ye shall do no servile  
work *therein*.

<sup>e</sup> Num. xxix. 12—38.

36 <sup>a</sup> Seven days ye shall offer an of-  
fering made by fire unto the LORD: on  
the eighth day shall be an holy con-  
vocation unto you; and ye shall offer  
an offering made by fire unto the LORD:  
<sup>1</sup> Heb. day of re-  
straint. Deut.  
xvi. 8. Joel i.  
14. margin.

it is <sup>a</sup> a solemn assembly, and ye shall  
do no servile work *therein*.

37 These *are* <sup>m</sup> the feasts of the LORD,  
which ye shall proclaim *to be* holy con-  
vocations, to offer an offering made by  
fire unto the LORD, a burnt-offering,  
and a meat-offering, a sacrifice, and  
drink-offerings, every thing upon his  
day:

38 Beside <sup>a</sup> the sabbaths of the  
LORD, <sup>1</sup> and beside your gifts, and be-  
side all your vows, and beside all your  
freewill-offerings, which ye give unto  
the LORD.

39 Also in the fifteenth day of the  
seventh month, <sup>1</sup> when ye have ga-  
thered in the fruit of the land, ye shall  
keep a feast unto the LORD seven days:  
<sup>a</sup> on the first day *shall be* a sabbath, and  
on the eighth day *shall be* a sabbath.

40 And ye shall take you on the first  
day <sup>1</sup> the <sup>a</sup> boughs of goodly trees,  
branches <sup>a</sup> of palm-trees, and the boughs  
of thick trees, and willows of the  
brook; and ye shall <sup>a</sup> rejoice before  
the LORD your God seven days.

41 And ye shall keep it a feast unto  
the LORD seven days in the year: *it  
shall be* a statute for ever in your ge-  
nerations: ye shall celebrate it in the  
seventh month.

42 Ye shall dwell <sup>a</sup> in booths seven  
days: all that are Israelites born shall  
dwell in booths.

43 That <sup>1</sup> your generations may know  
that I made the children of Israel to  
dwell in booths, when I brought them  
out of the land of Egypt: I *am* the  
LORD your God.

the tabernacle or temple, as on the three great feasts; yet  
it might be expected that many of them would come in  
time to be present at this solemnity also. But whether  
they did, or did not, they were required strictly to observe  
the day, as a most holy sabbath, and a season of peculiar  
mortification and self-denial, on pain of death by the im-  
mediate judgment of God.—All these meetings tended to  
increase their acquaintance and affectionate intercourse  
with each other.

*Afflict, &c.* (27) *Marg. Ref. i, p.*

V. 34—36. (Note, *Ex. xxiii. 14—18.*) The feast of  
tabernacles, strictly so called, is supposed to have conti-  
nued only seven days, during which all the Israelites dwelt  
in booths, except sickness or some other hindrance pre-  
vented them. (Notes, 39—42. 1 Kings viii. 63—65. Neh.  
viii. 14—18.)—The eighth day is thought to have been an  
additional festival, observed in gratitude for the fruits of  
the earth which had just been gathered in; and which, it

is said, they celebrated in their own houses. The sacri-  
fices to be offered during this solemnity are elsewhere  
specified. (Notes, *Num. xxix. 12—38.*)

V. 37, 38. The weekly sabbaths, with the sacrifices,  
first-fruits, vows, and free-will offerings, were strictly to  
be attended to; though these stated solemnities might  
sometimes appear to supersede them, or to interfere with  
them.

V. 39—43. This annual solemnity was especially a  
commemoration of Israel's dwelling in tents in the wilder-  
ness, as well as of their fathers having lived in tents in  
Canaan; to remind the nation both of the meanness of  
their origin, and also of the greatness of their deliverance.  
Christ, tabernacled in human nature, might also be pre-  
figured: but especially the believer's life on earth, as a  
joyful stranger and pilgrim, whose home is in heaven,  
whither he is daily journeying, is very aptly represented.  
(*Marg. Ref. d, e.*)



A WILD PALM-TREE AT THE FOOT OF MOUNT SINAI



1. 2. xxi. 24.  
Matt. xxviii. 20.

44 And Moses <sup>a</sup>declared unto the children of Israel the feasts of the LORD.

### CHAP. XXIV.

Laws concerning the oil for the lamps of the golden candlestick, and the ordering of them, 1—4: and concerning the shew-bread, 5—9. Shelomith's son stoned for blasphemy, with some laws repeated on that occasion, 10—23.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

<sup>a</sup> Ex. xxvii. 20.  
21. xxix. 37.  
xl. 24, 25. Num.  
viii. 2—4. 1 Sam.  
iii. 3, 4.

2 Command the children of Israel, <sup>a</sup>that they bring unto thee pure oil-

V. 44. *The feasts.*] All the solemnities, except that of the new moon, are here enumerated.

### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—22.

We should not overlook the admonition of observing "the sabbath of the LORD," not only in publick, "but in all our dwellings;" both ourselves, and in our families: allowing our domesticks to cease from labour, and teaching them, by precept and example, to improve their leisure; in order that their souls may now find rest in Christ, and at length enjoy "the rest reserved for the people of God."—We should also learn to consider the time employed in the service of God as profitably spent; and to esteem his ordinances as holy feasts, relished more by the heaven-born soul than all other pleasures, which it willingly renounces for the sake of them. A day, thus set apart for the business of religion, will have so much and so important work belonging to it, that all other employment must be postponed to make way for it.—Let us never forget "to honour the LORD with our substance, and with the first-fruits of all our increase; so shall our barns be filled with plenty, and our presses burst out with new wine." And "when we give alms of such things as we have, behold all things are clean unto us." Nor will the husbandman ever have cause to complain, that he has less profit or comfort from his crop; because, by leaving good gleanings, he hath made a *little harvest* for the poor widow, and the labouring man with a large family, who have no land or crop of their own.—In all these solemnities we should look unto Jesus, as the great Sacrifice for sin, the true Paschal Lamb, the First-fruits unto God, our Forerunner to glory, the provision for our souls, and the Fountain of grace; from whose fulness the Holy Spirit flows to all his people, as the Source of all joy, and heavenly hope, and victory over the world and every enemy.

V. 23—44.

Viewing these solemnities together, we may consider them as an abstract of the life of faith, and the walk with God.—Being called from the service of Satan, and from a worldly, sensual life, the true penitent begins his course with the sprinkling of the Saviour's blood, by the exercise and upright profession of faith in him.—In godly sorrow, self-denial, and bearing the cross, he purges out the old

VOL. I.

olive beaten for the light, to cause <sup>b</sup>the lamps to <sup>c</sup>burn continually.

3 Without the veil of the testimony, in the tabernacle of the congregation, shall Aaron order it from the evening unto the morning, before the LORD continually: *it shall be* a statute for ever in your generations.

4 He shall order the lamps upon the <sup>c</sup>pure candlestick before the LORD continually.

5 ¶ And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake <sup>d</sup>twelve cakes thereof: two tenth-deals shall be in one cake.

b 2 Chr. xiii. 11.  
Ps. cxix. 105.  
130. Prov. vi. 23.  
Is. viii. 20. xl. 2.  
Matt. iv. 16. v.  
16. xxv. 1—8.  
Luke i. 79. John  
i. 4. 9. v. 35. viii.  
12. Acts xxvi.  
18. 2 Cor. iv. 6.  
Eph. i. 17. 18.  
v. 8—14. Phil. ii.  
15, 16.  
\* Heb. ascend.  
c Ex. xxv. 31—39.  
xxxix. 8. xxxvii.  
17—24. Num. iii.  
31. iv. 9. 1 Kings  
vii. 49. 1 Chr.  
xxviii. 15. Jer.  
lii. 19. Zech. iv.  
2, 3, 11—14. Heb.  
ix. 2. Rev. i. 20.  
ii. 1. 5. xi. 4.  
d Ex. xxv. 30. xl.  
23. 1 Kings xxviii.  
31. Acts xxvi. 7.  
Jam. i. 1.

leaven of malice and wickedness; feasts upon the Passover before God, with "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth;" tastes the first-fruits of heavenly joy, and offers the first-fruits of heavenly adoration; yea, presents himself and all that he has, to be as the first-fruits unto God, and consecrated to his glory. That law, which was given from mount Sinai, written on tables of stone, and lodged in the ark of the covenant, (as an emblem of its being honoured in the Saviour's life and death,) he now desires to have written in his heart, by the Spirit which was given to the apostles and first Christians on the day of Pentecost; and he has his desire granted, and his prayer answered.—Still, however, the trumpet of the gospel, though a joyful sound, often reminds him to renew his repentance, to afflict his soul, and to apply to the atonement. And indeed they who do not thus "afflict their souls" for sin, "shall be cut off from among the people," notwithstanding the atonement and their professed belief of it. But mourning for sin makes way for heavenly joy; and from his depth of humiliation, the Christian soars nearer heaven, and leaves the world further and further beneath. A stranger and pilgrim here below, his home and heart are above; where his Saviour, who once tabernacled on earth, now in human nature dwells in glory: and as his assurance increases of having "a building not made with hands eternal in the heavens," he becomes desirous of "departing hence, and being with Christ which is far better;" for though he has holy feasts from time to time on earth, yet they suffer many interruptions, and have much alloy; and he expects "the fulness of joy at God's right hand for evermore."—May the God of all grace prepare the heart of the writer and of every reader of these observations, for this self-same thing, and give us the earnest of his Spirit, through Christ Jesus. Amen.

### NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 1—4. *Marg. Ref.—Note, Ex. xxvii. 20, 21*

V. 5—9. These loaves of bread, one for each tribe, presented before the Lord every week, and afterwards eaten by the priests, might typify Christ, as the Bread of life and the continual Food of the souls of his people, having offered himself unto God for them. Or they may denote the services of believers, presented before God through him, and accepted for his sake. Or the whole may mean

3 D

e 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

f Ex. xxv. 23, 24.  
xxxvii. 10—16.  
xxxix. 36. xl. 22.g 2 Kings vii.  
48. 2 Chr. iv. 19.  
xiii. 11. Heb. ix.h ii. 2. Eph. i. 6.  
Heb. vii. 25.  
Rev. viii. 3, 4.i John vi. 55. 51.  
Gen. ix. 16. Ex.xii. 14. xlii. 9.  
xviii. 14. Acts x.  
4. 31. 1 Cor. xi.  
23—25.k Num. iv. 7.  
1 Chr. ix. 82.  
xxiii. 29. 2 Chr.ii. 4. Neh. x. 33.  
Matt. xii. 8—5.  
i viii. 31. 1 Sam.xxi. 6. Mal. i.  
12. Matt. xii. 4.  
Mark ii. 26.Luke vi. 4.  
m vi. 16. x. 17. xxi.  
22. Ex. xxix. 32.n Ex. xii. 58. Num.  
xi. 4.o 15, 16. Ex. xx.  
7. 2 Sam. xii.  
14. 1 Kings x. 25.p 10, 13. 2 Kings  
xviii. 30. 35. 37.  
xix. 1—3. 6. 10.q 22. 2 Chr. xxxii.  
14—17. Ps. lxxiv.  
18. 22. Matt.xxvi. 45. Acts vi.  
11—13. Rom. ii.  
24. 1 Tim. i. 13.Rev. xvi. 11. 21.  
p Job i. 5. 11. 22.  
ii. 5, 9, 10. Is.viii. 21.  
q Ex. xviii. 22. 26.  
Num. xv. 33—  
35.

6 And thou shalt set them <sup>e</sup>in two rows, six on a row, upon the <sup>f</sup>'pure table before the LORD.

7 And thou shalt put <sup>g</sup>'pure frankincense upon *each* row, that it may be on <sup>h</sup>the bread for <sup>i</sup>'a memorial, *even* an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

8 Every <sup>k</sup>sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *being taken* from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant.

9 And it shall be <sup>l</sup>'Aaron's and his sons', and <sup>m</sup>they shall eat it in the holy place; for it *is* most holy unto him, of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, by a perpetual statute.

10 ¶ And the son of an Israelitish woman, whose <sup>n</sup>'father *was* an Egyptian, went out among the children of Israel: and this son of the Israelitish woman and a man of Israel strove together in the camp;

11 And the Israelitish woman's son <sup>o</sup>'blasphemed the name of *the* LORD, and <sup>p</sup>'cursed: and they <sup>q</sup>'brought him unto Moses; (and his mother's name *was* Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan:)

12 And they put him in ward, <sup>r</sup>'that <sup>s</sup>'the mind of the LORD might be shewed them.

13 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

14 Bring forth him that hath cursed <sup>t</sup>'without the camp; and let <sup>u</sup>'all that heard *him* lay their hands upon his head, and <sup>v</sup>'let all the congregation stone him.

15 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall <sup>w</sup>'bear his sin.

16 And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, *and* all the congregation shall certainly stone him: <sup>x</sup>'as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he <sup>y</sup>'blasphemeth the name of *the* LORD, shall be put to death.

17 And <sup>z</sup>'he that <sup>aa</sup>'killeth any man shall surely be put to death.

18 And he <sup>ab</sup>'that killeth a beast shall make it good; <sup>ac</sup>'beast for beast.

19 And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him;

20 <sup>ad</sup>'Breach for breach, eye for eye,

<sup>r</sup> Heb. to expound unto them according to the mouth of the LORD.

<sup>r</sup> Ex. xviii. 15, 16.  
23 Num. xxvii. 5 xxxvii. 5, 6.

<sup>u</sup> xiii. 46. Num. v. 2—4. xv. 35.  
<sup>t</sup> Deut. xiii. 9. xvii. 7.

<sup>u</sup> xx. 2. 27. Num. xv. 35, 36. Deut. xiii. 10. xxi. 21. xxii. 21. Josh. vii. 25 John viii. 59. x. 31—33. Acts vii. 53, 59.

<sup>v</sup> v. 1. xxx. 16, 17. Num. ix. 13.

<sup>x</sup> Ps. lxxiv. 10. 18. Matt. xii. 31. Mark iii. 28, 29. John viii. 58, 59.

<sup>y</sup> x. 33—36. Acts xxvi. 11. 1 Tim. i. 18. James ii. 7.

<sup>z</sup> Gen. ix. 6. 6. Ex. xxi. 12—14. Num. xxxv. 31.

<sup>aa</sup> Heb. smiteth the life of a man.

<sup>ab</sup> Ex. xxi. 34—36. <sup>ac</sup> Heb. life for life.

<sup>ad</sup> Ex. xxi. 23—25. Deut. xix. 21. Matt. v. 38. vii. 2.

communion betwixt our reconciled Father, and his adopted children in Christ Jesus; who, as it were, feast at the same table, whilst *he* delights in the fruits of his Spirit in their hearts, and *they* are feasted with his love. The frankincense placed upon each loaf for a memorial, and then burnt upon the altar, may denote either the advocacy of Christ, or the sweet influences of his Spirit, which are a memorial to the Lord, to ensure the acceptance of the believer's person and services. This would be a sweet savour unto God, whilst the bread would be serviceable to the priests; which applies both to the sacrifice of Christ, as honourable to God and beneficial to man, and also to the good works of his people. (Eph. v. 2. Phil. iv. 18.)—The bread and the frankincense formed one offering; of which the frankincense, as the part required by the Lord, was burnt upon the altar, among the offerings made by fire unto him.

*Tenth-deals.* (5) עֲשֵׂיִים, *tenth parts*: generally supposed to mean of an ephah; being the same as the omer: about three quarts.—*Pure table.* (6) *Note, Ex. xxv. 23—30.*

V. 10—12. No doubt, this man was one of the mixed multitude who accompanied Israel out of Egypt; (*Note, Ex. xii. 37, 38*;) but it is uncertain whether he had ever professed the religion of Israel. It is supposed that, by reason of the dispute betwixt him and an Israelite, he was brought before the magistrates; and the cause being, according to the law of God decided against him, he blasphemed, or cursed Him, before whose tremendous name all heaven adores, and all hell trembles! The words, "of

*the LORD,*" are added in the translation; but with a sort of solemn reverence are omitted in the original, as if the sacred writer scrupled to mention whose name it was that the man blasphemed. (15, 16.) This blasphemer's name is not mentioned; for he, who thus treated the holy name of God, was not distinguished by having his name written in the sacred scriptures.

V. 13—16. By the express command of God himself, all who heard the blasphemy were required to lay their hands on the head of the blasphemer; as solemnly persevering in their testimony, and as devoting him to death, that the guilt of such a crime might not rest on Israel; and avowing that his blood was upon his own head, and that all the rest were clear. This was done after he had been brought without the camp, as in the case of the sin-offering, on which the guilt and merited curse of Israel was laid; and he was stoned to death, by the general act of the congregation. This event occasioned the giving of a law against speaking in a reviling and opprobrious manner of the God of Israel, or blaspheming his sacred name; in which all strangers dwelling in the land were included.—It is a vain imagination of the Jews, that the very mention of the word *JEHOVAH* was the crime intended; for it certainly is implied that the criminal mentioned it with contempt and enmity, nay, malignant execration.

V. 17—22. This event occasioned a third interruption in giving the law: and these precepts also are here repeated, on occasion of the contest with this son of a stranger. (*Notes, Ex. xxi. 12—36.*)

tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him *again*.

21 And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it: and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death.

<sup>b</sup> *xxv. 10, xix. 34. Ex. xc. 49. Num. ix. 4. xv. 15, 16, 22.* 22 Ye shall have <sup>b</sup> one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country: for I *am* the LORD your God.

<sup>c</sup> *See on 14—16.—Num. xv. 35, 36. Heb. ii. 2, 3. x. 28, 29.* 23 And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, <sup>c</sup> that they should bring forth him that had cursed out of the camp, and stone him with stones: and the children of Israel did as the LORD commanded Moses.

### CHAP. XXV.

The law of the sabbatical year, 1—7. That of the year of jubilee, 8—17. Various laws, relating to the due observance of the sabbatical year, and the year of jubilee, 18—35.

<sup>a</sup> *Ex. xix. 1. Num. i. 1. x. 11, 12. Gal. iv. 24, 25.* **AND** the LORD spake unto Moses <sup>a</sup> in mount Sinai, saying,

### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

#### V. 1—9.

Jesus Christ is the Light of his church, yea “the Light of the world:” in and through his word He shines: and his ministers, in opening and alledging, in reasoning and persuading from the Scriptures, tend and order the light, which, by the influences of his Spirit, illuminates the minds of men unto salvation. (*Note, Ps. cxix. 130.*) But the people who enjoy and value this light, must defray the expenses of it; and contribute cheerfully towards its shining brighter and wider, and continuing to future generations: and they must be spoken to on this subject, if not ready of themselves.—By this light, we shall discern the spiritual food prepared for our souls, first presented to the Father, and then distributed to us; and shall daily, but especially from sabbath to sabbath, “feed on it in our ‘hearts by faith with thanksgiving:’ and in consequence shall render worship well pleasing unto the Lord, and perform good works very profitable to his people, which will again “abound in many thanksgivings unto God.” Thus we shall have “fellowship with the Father, with his Son “Jesus Christ,” and with the brethren, by the communion of the Holy Ghost, and at last shall all “be presented faultless “before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.”

#### V. 10—20.

The marriages of professed believers with ungodly persons produce fatal effects even to posterity; and contentions betwixt men often make way for blasphemies against God: yet profligate manners give rise to wholesome laws. But how wicked soever men are, nothing must be done against them unadvisedly; or without consulting the mind

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, <sup>b</sup> When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land <sup>a</sup> keep a sabbath unto the LORD.

<sup>b</sup> *See on xiv. 34.—Deut. xxxiii. 8. 49. xxxiv. 4. Ps. xxiv. 1, 2. cxv. 16. Is. viii. 8. Jer. xxvii. 5. \* Heb. rest. xxiii. 32. marg.*

3 Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;

4 But <sup>c</sup> in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD; thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.

<sup>c</sup> *20—23. xxvi. 34, 35, 43. Ex. xxiii. 10, 11. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 21.*

5 That which <sup>d</sup> groweth of its own accord of thy harvest, thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of <sup>e</sup> thy vine undressed: *for* it is a year of rest unto the land.

<sup>d</sup> *2 Kings xix. 29. Is. xxxv. 30.*

<sup>e</sup> *Heb. thy separation.*

6 And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; <sup>f</sup> for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee,

<sup>f</sup> *Ex. xxiii. 11. Acts ii. 44. iv. 32, 34, 35.*

7 And for thy cattle, and for the beast that *are* in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.

and will of God, as now completely made known to us in his holy word. And it is his will that strangers, or those of another religion, should neither be oppressed, nor allowed to commit wickedness with impunity; but in this respect be treated as other members of society.—Blasphemy against God, yea, contempt of him, expressed in words or actions, is in its own nature not only more heinous than theft or robbery of any kind, but even than murder; and though it frequently escapes unpunished by man, yet it shall by no means escape the righteous vengeance of God.—The solemn and publick execution of daring offenders, not only sets a salutary example, but purges away national guilt; and every member of society is bound to concur in his place in bringing such criminals to justice; yet so that it be done with the utmost caution, and that none bear any testimony to which they cannot stand. What enmity against God must be in the heart of man, when curses and blasphemies against him proceed out of his mouth! And if “he that despised Moses’s law died without mercy;” of “what punishment will they be thought worthy,” who despise and abuse the gospel of the Son of God! Let us learn then to watch against anger; to do no evil, but only good to all men, especially to the household of faith; to avoid all improper connexions with wicked people; and to reverence and honour habitually that worthy name which sinners blaspheme or despise.

### NOTES.

CHAP. XXV. V. 1—7. (*Notes, Ex. xxiii. 10—12.*) The appointment of the sabbatical year might be intended, among other reasons, to impress the minds of the people more forcibly with the obligation of the weekly sabbath, and to afford them more leisure for the study of the law

18 ¶ And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years, and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.

9 Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound, on the tenth day of the seventh month: in the day of atonement, shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.

10 And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubilee unto you: and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

11 A jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you: ye shall not sow, neither reap that which groweth of itself in it, nor gather the grapes in it of thy vine undressed.

12 For it is the jubilee; it shall be holy unto you: ye shall eat the increase thereof out of the field.

13 In the year of this jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession.

14 ¶ And if thou sell ought unto thy

neighbour, or buyest ought of thy neighbour's hand, ye shall not oppress one another.

15 According to the number of years after the jubilee thou shalt buy of thy neighbour, and according unto the number of years of the fruits he shall sell unto thee:

16 According to the multitude of years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of years thou shalt diminish the price of it: for according to the number of the years of the fruits doth he sell unto thee.

17 Ye shall not therefore oppress one another, but thou shalt fear thy God; for I am the LORD your God.

18 ¶ Wherefore ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety.

19 And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety.

20 And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we

17. xix. 13. Deut. xvi. 19, 20. Judg. iv. 3. 1 Sam. xii. 3, 4. 2 Chr. xvi. 10. Neh. ix. 36, 37. Job xx. 19, 20. Ps. x. 18. Prov. xiv. 31. xxi. 13. xxii. 16. xxviii. 3, 8, 16. Ec. v. 8. Is. i. 17. iii. 12—15. v. 7. xxxiii. 15. lvi. 6. Jer. xxxii. 17. Ez. xxii. 7, 12, 13. Amos v. 11, 12. vii. 4—7. Mic. ii. 2. vi. 10—12. vii. 3. Luke iii. 14. 1 Cor. vi. 8. Jam. v. 1—5. xxvii. 18—23. Phil. iv. 6. 43. xix. 14, 22. Gen. xx. 11. xxii. 12. xxxix. 9. xlii. 18. Ex. x. 20. Deut. xxi. 18. 1 Sam. xii. 24. 2 Chr. xix. 7. Neh. v. 9, 15. Ps. xix. 9. Prov. i. 7. Mal. iii. 5. Luke xii. 5. Acts ix. 31. 2. 35. Rom. iii. 18. xi. 20. xix. 37. xxvi. 3—12. Deut. xii. 10. xxviii. 1—14. xxxiii. 12. Jer. i. 33. Jer. vii. 3—7. xxi. 6, xxi. 5, xxxiii. 16. Ez. xxxiii. 24—26. 29. xxxvi. 24—28. Ps. lxvii. 6. lxxxv. 12. Is. xxx. 23. lxxv. 21, 22. Ez. xxxiv. 25—28. xxxvi. 30. Joel ii. 24, 25. u Num. xi. 4, 18. 2 Kings vi. 15—29. Phil. iv. 6. Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

and the business of religion; as well as to give the poor some relaxation from their labours, and an acquisition to their enjoyments.—The Israelites were thus taught to live by faith in the providence of God, to receive their supply from his hand, and to be generous in the use of it: and the observance was a profession, that they were the worshippers of JEHOVAH, and held their estates immediately of him by a special tenure. They were likewise reminded of the life of paradise, before sin had laid men under the sentence of “eating bread by the sweat of their brow:” and the institution might typify the believer’s rest of soul in Christ by faith on earth, and the rest of heaven.—The Israelites did not get possession of Canaan, till seven years after they entered the land; and probably the seventh year afterwards, or the fourteenth after their entrance, was observed as a sabbatical year. It is supposed to have begun in autumn, after the harvest and vintage.

V. 8—13. After seven returns of the sabbatical year had been completed, notice was ordered to be given throughout the land, on the evening of the great day of atonement, for the observance of the year of jubilee; and while the people were seeking forgiveness of their own sins from God, it might be hoped, that they would be more disposed to kindness to each other. Thus the proclamation of liberty and salvation by the gospel results from the atoning sacrifice of the Redeemer; and is intended to cheer the hearts of the humble and penitent.—This notice was given by a peculiarly sonorous and animated sound of trumpets; for this seems to be the meaning of the word

rendered *jubilee*.—The language, used by the sacred writer, absolutely decides that the year of jubilee was not the same as the seventh sabbatical year, but the year afterwards, that is, the *fiftieth*, and not the *forty-ninth* year: and similar language concerning the day of Pentecost is always thus explained. (xxiii. 15, 16. Deut. xvi. 9, 10.) The only objection of any weight, which can be urged against this opinion, namely, the difficulty of the nation subsisting for two years without sowing their ground, is afterwards expressly obviated. (Note, 20—22.)—This institution would form a suitable trial of the people’s faith, and served to illustrate the power and faithfulness of God, whenever they observed it: but we read scarcely any thing of the year of jubilee after its institution.

V. 14—17. Thus it was provided that the lands of Israel should not be alienated from the families, to which they were assigned by lot; for they could only be disposed of by leases, at a proportionable price, till the year of jubilee, and must then return, either to the seller, if living, or to his next heir. This tended to preserve the tribes and families of Israel, and consequently their genealogies, distinct, till the coming of the Messiah: it would also prevent the exorbitant wealth of some, and the extreme poverty of others; promote a brotherly equality among them; and remind them not to oppress their brethren.

V. 20—22. The sabbatical year commenced in the autumn of the sixth year: at the close of the eighth year, (or the year of jubilee,) according to the civil computation of time, when two full years had passed without sowing

shall not sow, nor gather in our increase:

21 Then <sup>a</sup>I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for <sup>b</sup>three years.

22 And ye shall sow the <sup>c</sup>eighth year, and eat *yet* of <sup>d</sup>old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old *store*.

23 The land <sup>e</sup>shall not be sold <sup>f</sup>for ever: <sup>g</sup>for the land *is* mine, for <sup>h</sup>ye are strangers and sojourners with me.

24 And in all the land of your possession, ye shall grant a <sup>i</sup>redemption for the land.

25 If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away *some* of his possession, and <sup>j</sup>if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold.

26 And if the man have none to redeem it, and <sup>k</sup>himself be able to redeem it:

27 Then <sup>l</sup>let him count the years of the sale thereof, and restore the over-

plus unto the man to whom he sold it, that he may return unto his possession.

28 But if he be not able to restore *it* to him, then that which is sold shall remain in the hand of him that hath bought it until the year of jubilee: and in the jubilee it shall go out, and <sup>m</sup>he shall return unto his possession.

29 And if a man sell a dwelling-house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold: *within* a full year may he redeem it.

30 And if it be not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house, that *is* in the walled city, shall be established for ever to him that bought it, throughout his generations: it shall not go out in the jubilee.

31 But the houses of the villages which have no walls round about them, shall be counted as the fields of the country; <sup>n</sup>they may be redeemed, and they shall go out in the jubilee.

32 Notwithstanding, <sup>o</sup>the cities of

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xxv. 12. xli. 47. Ex. xvi. 29. Deut. xxviii. 3. Ps. cxxxiii. 3. Prov. x. 22. 2 Cor. ix. 10. y 4. 8—11. z 2 Kings xix. 29. Is. xxxvii. 30. a Josh. v. 11, 12.

b See on Is. 10.—1 Kings xxi. 3. Ez. xlviii. 14. c Or, to be quite cut off: Heb. for cutting off.

d Deut. xxxii. 43. 2 Chr. vii. 20. Ps. xxi. 1. Is. viii. 8. Hos. ix. 3. Joel ii. 18.

e Gen. xlii. 9. 1 Chr. xxix. 15. Ps. xxxix. 12. cxix. 19. Heb. xi. 9—13. 1 Pet. ii. 11.

f 27. 31. 51—53. Rom. viii. 23. 1 Cor. i. 30. Eph. i. 7. 14. iv. 30.

g Ruth ii. 20. iii. 2. 9. 12. iv. 4—6. Jer. xxxii. 7, 8. 2 Cor. viii. 9. Heb. ii. 13, 14. Rev. v. 9.

h Heb. his hand hath attained, and found sufficiency. v. 7. marg. i 50—53.

h See on Is. xxxv. 3, 10. Jer. xxxii. 15. 1 Cor. xv. 52—54. 1 Thes. iv. 13—18. 1 Pet. i. 4, 5.

i Heb. redemption belongeth unto it. Ps. xlix. 7, 8. 1 Num. xxxv. 2—8. Josh. xxi.

or reaping, the people were directed to make preparation for the harvest in the ninth year, and it was expressly promised, that the fruits of the sixth year should suffice, not only for the sabbatical year, (which the supposed enquiry more directly mentions,) but also for the year of jubilee, and till the crop was ripe in the following year. As the sixth year brought forth fruits for *three* years, and not merely for *two*; it is evident that both the sabbatical year, and the year of jubilee, were distinctly provided for.—They would not sow, from the sixth to the eighth year, omitting *two seed-times*; nor reap from the sixth to the ninth year, omitting *two harvests*. Can any thing be more explicit? (Note, 8—13.)—No legislator, unless conscious of being divinely inspired, would have committed himself by enacting such a law as this: nor can any thing of the kind be found among the systems of jurisprudence of any other nations, ancient or modern.—It therefore stands as a proof that Moses acted, not according to the dictates of human policy, but by the express direction of the almighty God.—How incredible is it, that any legislator would have ventured to propose such a law as this: or any people have submitted to receive it, except in consequence of the fullest conviction on both sides, that a divine authority had dictated this law, and that a peculiar Providence would constantly facilitate its execution!... Nothing could have produced this conviction, but the experience or the belief of some such miraculous interposition as the history of the Pentateuch details. The very existence of this law is a standing monument, that when it was given, the Mosaic miracles were fully believed. Now the law was coeval with the witnesses of the miracles themselves. *Graves on the Pentateuch*, vol. i. p. 230.

V. 25—28. The nearest relation had a claim to the first

refusal of the lands, which were to be sold: but if another had bought them, the kinsman had a right to redeem them at the same price, deducting for the time, during which the purchaser had enjoyed them; and he was in that case appointed to keep them for the proprietor till the year of jubilee. Or the seller, if he afterwards were able, might redeem his estate: otherwise it continued till the year of jubilee, when it returned to him or his family freely.—The kinsman here evidently typified Christ, our Brother and Redeemer, who ransoms our lost inheritance, and will keep it for us till the day of judgment, when he will restore it unto us: whereas that of the wicked must be forfeited for ever, as they can never redeem it, and have none to redeem it for them.

V. 29, 30. The houses in cities and walled towns did not mark the distinction of families; they were built with labour and expense, and were not the inheritance of fathers: they would also want continual repairs, and undergo great alterations in a little time; and therefore they were under another law than the rest of the land. These houses were especially useful for commerce: and this allowance of acquiring them as permanent property, would induce strangers to come and settle among the Israelites; and be an encouragement to proselytes, who might possess houses in full right, though they could not thus obtain lands.

V. 32—34. (Note, Num. xxxv. 2—8.) The houses possessed by the Levites, in the cities afterwards allotted to them, and the gardens and pastures in the suburbs, were in fact their only permanent estate in Israel: and they were therefore under the same law as the lands of the other tribes; except that, (as some think,) any Levite might redeem the house which another had sold; though he was not otherwise related to him, than as one of the same tribe.

the Levites, *and* the houses of the cities of their possession, may the Levites redeem at any time.

\* Or, one of the Levites redeem them.  
 33 And if <sup>a</sup> a man purchase of the Levites, then the house that was sold, and the city of his possession shall go out in the *year of jubilee*: <sup>b</sup> for the houses of the cities of the Levites *are* their possession among the children of Israel.

34 But <sup>c</sup> the field of the suburbs of their cities may not be sold; for it is their perpetual possession.

35 ¶ And if <sup>d</sup> thy brother be waxen poor, and <sup>e</sup> fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt <sup>f</sup> relieve him: *yea, though he be* <sup>g</sup> a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.

36 Take thou no <sup>h</sup> usury of him, or increase: but <sup>i</sup> fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee.

37 Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.

38 I *am* the LORD your God, <sup>j</sup> which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land of Canaan, <sup>k</sup> and to be your God.

39 ¶ And if thy brother *that dwelleth* by thee be waxen poor, and <sup>l</sup> be sold unto thee; thou shalt not <sup>m</sup> compel him to serve as a bond-servant:

40 *But* as an hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of the jubilee.

41 And <sup>n</sup> then shall he depart from thee, *both* he and his children with him, and <sup>o</sup> shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return.

42 For they *are* <sup>p</sup> my servants, which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold <sup>q</sup> as bond-men.

43 Thou shalt not <sup>r</sup> rule over him with rigour, <sup>s</sup> but shalt fear thy God.

44 Both <sup>t</sup> thy bond-men, and thy bond-maids, which thou shalt have, *shall be* of the heathen, that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bond-men and bond-maids.

45 Moreover, <sup>u</sup> of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that *are* with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession.

46 And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit *them* for a possession; <sup>v</sup> they shall be your bond-men for ever: but over your brethren, the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigour.

47 ¶ And if <sup>w</sup> a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother *that dwelleth* by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger or sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger's family:

48 After that he is sold he may be

For the clause, "And if a man purchase of the Levites," may be rendered, "And whoever of the Levites shall re-deem, &c." (Marg.)

V. 35—37. (Note, Exod. xxii. 25—27.) When an Israelite was reduced to poverty, and lived among his brethren as a stranger and sojourner, without any possession or inheritance; they must remember to treat him as a brother, both giving to him liberally, and lending him what he wanted without usury. Indeed poor strangers also seem to be intended. (Marg. Ref. p.)

V. 39—43. When a man was sold for some debt, or fraud for which he could not make restitution, he was liberated at the end of seven years. (Notes, Exod. xxi. 1—6.) But if he voluntarily, through poverty, sold himself without limitation of time; or from love to his master, and his wife and children, had refused liberty at the end of seven years; and perhaps if he had been sold for some larger debt, or greater crime; he continued a servant for life, unless the year of jubilee intervened: but then he was set at liberty, and returned with his family to his in-

heritance. In the mean time, his master must not treat him with rigour as a slave, but with kindness as a hired servant.

V. 44—46. The Israelites were permitted to keep slaves of other nations; perhaps in order to typify, that none but the true Israel of God participate of that liberty with which Christ hath made his people free. But it was also allowed, in order that in this manner the Gentiles might become acquainted with true religion: (Gen. xvii. 10—13. xviii. 19.) and where the Israelites copied the example of their pious progenitors, there can be no reasonable doubt, that it was over-ruled to the eternal salvation of many souls. It does not, however, appear from the subsequent history, that the people availed themselves of this allowance to any great extent; for we read but little of slaves from among the Gentiles possessed by them.

V. 47—55. In case any of the strangers, who were allowed to sojourn in the land, (Notes, Ex. xii. 48, 49. xxii. 21—24,) growing rich, should purchase a poor Israelite as a slave, the relations of the slave were allowed the pri-

d See on 25. Neh. redeemed again; <sup>d</sup> one of his brethren  
v. 8. Gal. iv. 4. may redeem him:  
5. Heb. ii. 11—  
18.

49 Either his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or *any* that is nigh of kin unto him, of his family, may redeem him: or, <sup>e</sup> if he be able, he may redeem himself.

e See on 26.

f 27.

50 And he shall <sup>f</sup> reckon with him that bought him from the year that he was sold to him, unto the year of jubilee; and the price of his sale shall be according unto the number of years; <sup>g</sup> according to the time of an hired servant shall it be with him.

g 40. 63. Deut. xv.  
18. Job vii. 1, 2.  
xiv. 6. Is. xvi.  
14. xxi. 16.

51 If *there be* yet many years *behind*, according unto them he shall give again the price of his redemption, out of the money that he was bought for.

52 And if there remain but few years unto the year of jubilee, then he shall count with him, *and* according unto his

years shall he give him again the price of his redemption.

53 *And* as a yearly hired servant shall he be with him: <sup>h</sup> *and the other* shall not rule with rigour over him in thy sight. h See on 43.

54 And if he be not redeemed <sup>i</sup> in these years, then <sup>i</sup> he shall go out in the year of jubilee, *both* he, and his children with him. i Or, by these means.  
40, 41. Est. xxi.  
2, 3. Is. xlix. 9  
25. iii. 3.

55 For unto me the children of Israel *are* servants; they *are* <sup>k</sup> my servants whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: *I am* the LORD your God. k 42. Ex. xiii. 3.  
xx. 2. Ps. cxvi.  
16. Is. xliii. 8  
Luke i. 74, 75.  
Rom. vi. 14, 17.  
18. 22. 1 Cor.  
vii. 22, 23. ix.  
19. 21. Gal. v.  
13

### CHAP. XXVI.

Idolatry again forbidden, and regard to the Lord's sabbaths and sanctuary required, 1, 2. Blessings ensured to the people while obedient, 3—13. Judgments threatened in case of disobedience, and still more and more severe as long as they persisted in it, 14—39. Encouragements, if at length they should repent, 40—46

vilege of redeeming him at any time: or if property came into his possession, he might redeem himself; deducting from the purchase-money, according to the proportion of years which had passed since his sale, to those which remained till the year of jubilee. And if he were not redeemed before that time, he was then entitled to liberty.—It is not said that his relations were bound to redeem him, but it seems to have been left to their discretion.—The father is not mentioned; for it could hardly be conceived he would let his son sell himself, if he likewise had not been impoverished. The magistrates also were to take care, that strangers did not oppress such Israelites, as they kept for servants.—This law exhibited a type of Christ, as our Brother, redeeming us from the bondage of sin and Satan, to be his servants.

### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is a desirable privilege to have seasons of relaxation from worldly care and employments, that we may have more leisure for the study of the Scriptures, and the concerns of our souls. The poor labourer too should be allowed such intervals: and our hearts should rejoice to see him refreshed from his toil, and enjoying the fruits of our liberality. All these statutes teach us “to beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of his possessions;” to exercise willing dependence on Providence for our support; to be contented with food and raiment for the present, and to be thankful for them; and without hesitation to leave the future to that God, whose blessing suffices abundantly, in various ways which we cannot imagine, to make up every supposed loss, which might be feared in consequence of simply obeying his commandments.—We should also consider ourselves as the Lord's tenants and stewards, if we have land or property; and use it accordingly: and not only be

moderate and temperate in our enjoyments, but kind and gentle to our inferiors, “ready to distribute and willing to communicate” to our poor brethren, after his example, who, “though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich.”—He is our Redeemer, and assumed our nature, that he might ransom our souls from Satan's bondage, into which we had been sold for the debts which we had contracted, and for the crimes that we had committed; nay, into which we had foolishly sold ourselves, through love of sinful pleasures: and that, together with our liberty, he might also redeem our forfeited and wasted inheritance, without which we must otherwise have been to all eternity in most miserable want. Having paid the ransom, and entered into possession of the inheritance in our behalf, and in virtue of his atonement; he, by the gospel's joyful sound, from age to age proclaims “liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prison to those that are bound:” (*Notes, Is. lxi. 1—3. Luke iv. 16—19:*) and, accompanying this Proclamation by his powerful grace, he sets his people at liberty; which they enjoy with rest for their souls, and the earnest of heaven through faith in him and obedience to him. When they die, their souls ascend to heavenly rest; and ere long the last trumpet shall sound the jubilee of the resurrection, “the redemption of the body,” and they shall be then put in final and eternal “possession of the purchased inheritance to the praise of his glory;” whilst the wicked must sink into “the blackness of darkness for ever.” We cannot ransom our own souls, or our forfeited inheritance; but let us not “neglect so great salvation,” thus freely proposed, and the fruit of such love and of such sufferings. We cannot ransom our fellow sinners: but we may recommend Christ to them; and by his grace our holy lives may adorn his gospel, express our love and gratitude, and glorify his holy name.

**YE** shall <sup>a</sup>make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a <sup>b</sup>standing image, neither shall ye set up <sup>c</sup>any <sup>d</sup>image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I *am* the LORD your God.

2 Ye shall <sup>e</sup>keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I *am* the LORD.

3 ¶ If ye walk in my statutes, and

<sup>a</sup> xix. 4. Ex. xx. 4, 5. 23. xxiii. 24. xxiv. 17. Deut. iv. 16—19. v. 8, 9. xvi. 21. 22. xxvii. 15. Ps. xcvi. 7. cxv. 4—8. Is. ii. 20. xlii. 9—20. xlviii. 5—8. Jer. x. 3—8. Acts xvii. 29. Rom. ii. 22, 23. 1 Cor. x. 19, 20. Rev. xiii. 14, 15. xxii. 15.

<sup>b</sup> Or, pillar.

<sup>c</sup> Or, figured stone.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. a stone of picture.

<sup>e</sup> See on xix. 30. c xviii. 4, 5. Deut. xi. 13—15. xxviii. 1—14. Josh. xxiii. 14, 15. Judg. ii. 1, 2. Ps. lxxxi. 12—16. Is. i. 10. xlviii. 18, 19. Matt. vii. 24, 25. Rom. ii. 7—10. Rev. xxii. 14.

keep my commandments, and do them;

4 Then <sup>f</sup>I will give you rain in due season, and <sup>g</sup>the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

5 And your <sup>h</sup>threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing-time: and ye

19. Zech. viii. 12.

f Amos ix. 13. Matt. ix. 37, 38.

d Deut. xxviii. 12. 1 Kings xvii. 1. Job i. 10. xxxvii. 11—13. xxxviii. 25—28. Ps. lxxv. 9—13. lxxviii. 9. civ. 13. Is. v. 6. xxx. 25. Jer. xiv. 22. Ez. xxxiv. 26, 27. Joel ii. 23. Amos iv. 7, 8. Matt. i. 45. Acts xiv. 17. Jam. v. 7. 17. 18. Rev. xi. 6. xxi. 21. Ps. lxxvii. 6. lxxxv. 12. Ez. xxxvi. 30. Hag. ii. 18. John iv. 35, 36.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXVI. V. 1, 2. *Marg. Ref. Notes, Ex. xx. 4, 5. 8—10.*

V. 3, 4. These promises to Israel, in case they were obedient, should be understood with a special reference to their national covenant. As long as they maintained a national regard to the worship, sabbaths, and sanctuary of God, and did not turn aside to idolatry, he engaged to continue to them various temporal mercies, and distinguishing religious advantages. Yet even among the Israelites, individuals were not uniformly prosperous or afflicted, according to their obedience or disobedience: nay, the contrary was so commonly the case, that the prophets and the Psalmist, in several places, speak of it as a peculiar temptation; (*Marg. Ref. d. Notes, Ps. lxxiii. Jer. xii. 1—4;*) and the royal preacher declares, “that all things come *“alike to all.”* (*Note, Ec. ix. 1—3.*) But national prosperity was uniformly, and without one exception, the effect of national obedience, and national judgments the result of national wickedness. Israel indeed was under a peculiar covenant, and no other people is governed exactly according to the same rule: yet still God deals with nations as collective bodies; nothing but regard to religion and righteousness can ensure national prosperity; and wickedness will end in the ruin of any people, especially where the word of God and the light of the gospel are afforded. Individuals will exist, and be judged and recompensed in a future world; but bodies politick will have no future existence, and are therefore recompensed in this world.—Concerning individual Christians, it is enough to say, that the Lord will afford them as much temporal prosperity, as his infinite wisdom sees good for them; that in one way or other, their comforts are proportioned to the simplicity and exactness of their obedience; and that they frequently experience the Lord’s kindness to them in his providence, and in answer to their prayers, whether according to the letter of these temporal promises, or not. Their obedience has a natural tendency to exempt them from a variety of miseries which others endure, and to secure them many comforts of body, mind, and circumstances, which others do not enjoy; all their trials and afflictions are needful and useful, sanctified to them, and counterbalanced by inward peace: and upon the whole, even in this world, including their heavenly hope, they have by far the largest proportion of true felicity, notwithstanding all the tribulation and persecution which they endure, the self-denial which they exercise, and the correction of their Father’s love.—These promises may

also be considered as typical of the *spiritual* prosperity, health, peace, and victory, with which the Lord favours his believing people when walking in his ways, and of the blessings which his church enjoys. From the beginning of this chapter, and other passages of a similar nature, some learned men have undertaken to shew, that the church, before the coming of Christ, had only temporal promises, and that the law of Moses was enforced merely by temporal sanctions. This however, at first glance, appears very paradoxical, to those who consider the language of ancient believers, and the declarations of Christ and his apostles respecting them: (*Matt. viii. 11. xxii. 32. Heb. xi. 13—16. 26. 35;*) yet it has not a little perplexed many serious persons. But let it be well considered, that “the covenant which was confirmed before of God in Christ,” with Abraham and his seed, “the law which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.” (*Note, Gal. iii. 15—18.*) The church of Israel was not deprived of any part of the light previously communicated, when God entered into a national covenant with them; and a Saviour to come, and a future and eternal world, were, beyond all doubt, revealed to the patriarchs, from the very fall of Adam. The examples of Abel, and Enoch, and Noah, and Abraham, recorded by Moses himself, as introductory to the law, powerfully inculcated these grand truths, and many others connected with them. The belief of a Saviour to come, a future state of retribution, and the resurrection of the dead, was generally maintained in the church of Israel, during all succeeding ages, to the coming of our Lord. (*John xi. 24.—Note, Matt. xxii. 23—33.*) The law, as to individuals in things pertaining to the conscience, was enforced by promises and threatenings to be fulfilled in the eternal world: unbelievers, in the most flourishing times of religion, and most prosperous state of the nation, remained under the curse: believers always were interested in the promises made especially to Abraham; but the nation as a corporate body, received the law with only temporal sanctions. Indeed the nature of the case did not admit of any other; though in every age, the careless and carnal thence deduced erroneous conclusions.

V. 5. Large crops of corn, and plentiful vintages, would keep the people constantly employed, and consequently well provided for, all the year round.—This is by some considered, as an emblem of the abundant increase given to the seed of the word, in the days of the apostles, and in the primitive times of Christianity.

g xxv. 19. Ex. xvi. 8. Deut. xl. 15. Joel ii. 19. 26. h Acts xiv. 17. 1 Tim. vi. 17.

h xxv. 18. Job xl. 18, 19. Ps. xlv. 1—7. xc. i. xci. 1—14. Prov. i. 33. xxviii. 10. Jer. xxxiii. 6. Ez. xxxiv. 25—27. Matt. xxiii. 37. 1 Pet. i. 5. i 1 Chr. xxxii. 9. Ps. xxxix. 11. cadvii. 14. Is. ix. 7. xlv. 7. Jer. xxx. 10. Hos. ii. 18. Mic. iv. 4. Zech. ix. 10. John xiv. 27. Rom. v. i. Phil. iv. 7—9.

k Ps. iii. 6. iv. 8. cxxvii. 1, 2. Prov. iii. 24. v. 22. Jer. xxxi. 26. Ex. xxxiv. 25. Zeph. iii. 13. Acts xii. 6.

l Heb. cause to cease. Ex. xxiii. 29. 2 Kings ii. 24. xvii. 25, 26. Job v. 23. Is. xxxv. 9. Ez. v. 17. xiv. 15. 21. 1 Ez. xiv. 17.

m Num. xiv. 9. Deut. xxviii. 7. xxxii. 30. Josh. xxxiii. 10. Judg. vii. 19—21. 1 Sam. xiv. 6—16. xvii. 45—52. 1 Chr. xi. 11. 20. Ps. lxxxi. 14, 15.

n Ex. ii. 26. 2 Kings xiii. 23. Neh. ii. 20. Ps. lxxxix. 3. cxxviii. 6, 7. Jer. xxxiii. 3. Heb. viii. 9.

o Gen. xvii. 6, 7. 26. xxvi. 4. xxviii. 3. 14. Ex. i. 7. Deut. xxviii. 4. 11. Neh. ix. 23. Ps. cvii. 39. Gen. vi. 18. xvii. 7. Ex. vi. 4. Is. lv. 5. Ez. xvi. 62. Luke i. 72.

q xxv. 22. Josh. v. 11. 2 Kings xix. 29. Luke xii. 17. Ez. xvi. 8. xxi. 45. Josh. xxi. 19. 1 Kings viii. 13. 27. Ps. lxxvii. 2. lxxviii. 68, 69. cxxviii. 13, 14. Ez. xxxvii. 26—28. Eph. ii. 22. Rev. xxi. 3.

r Ex. xxi. 8. xxi. 45. Josh. xxi. 19. 1 Kings viii. 13. 27. Ps. lxxvii. 2. lxxviii. 68, 69. cxxviii. 13, 14. Ez. xxxvii. 26—28. Eph. ii. 22. Rev. xxi. 3.

s xx. 23. Deut. xxxii. 19. Ps. cvi. 40. Jer. xiv. 21. Lam. ii. 7. Zech. i. 8. t Gen. iii. 8. v. 22. 24. vi. 9. Deut. xxxiii. 14. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Rev. ii. 1. u Gen. xvii. 7. Ez. iii. 6. vi. 7. xix. 5, 6. Ps. i. 7. lxxviii. 18—20. Is. xii. 2. xli. 10. Jer. vii. 23. xl. 4. xxx. 22. xxxi. 33. xxxii. 38. Ez. xi. 20. xxxvi. 28. Joel ii. 27. Zech. xiii. 19. Matt. xxi. 32. Heb. xi. 16. Rev. xxi. 7.

x xxv. 38. 42. 55.—See on Ex. xx. 2.—Ps. lxxxi. 6—10. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. y Ps. cxvi. 16. Is. li. 23. Jer. ii. 20. Ez. xxxiv. 27.

shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.

6 And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land.

7 And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword.

8 And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.

9 For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you.

10 And ye shall eat old store, and bring forth the old because of the new.

11 And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you.

12 And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.

13 I am the LORD your God which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright.

14 But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments;

15 And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant;

16 I also will do this unto you: I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain; for your enemies shall eat it.

17 And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.

18 And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.

19 And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass.

20 And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits.

21 And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you, according to your sins.

22 But if ye will hearken unto my voice, says the LORD, then I will be a Father to the fatherless, and a Merciful to the widow.

23 And I will be a Father to the fatherless, and a Merciful to the widow, says the LORD.

14 ¶ But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments;

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25 And I will be a Father to the fatherless, and a Merciful to the widow, says the LORD.

26 And I will be a Father to the fatherless, and a Merciful to the widow, says the LORD.

27 And I will be a Father to the fatherless, and a Merciful to the widow, says the LORD.

28 And I will be a Father to the fatherless, and a Merciful to the widow, says the LORD.

29 And I will be a Father to the fatherless, and a Merciful to the widow, says the LORD.

30 And I will be a Father to the fatherless, and a Merciful to the widow, says the LORD.

31 And I will be a Father to the fatherless, and a Merciful to the widow, says the LORD.

32 And I will be a Father to the fatherless, and a Merciful to the widow, says the LORD.

18. Deut. xxxviii. 15. Jer. xvi. 27. Lam. i. 18. Mal. ii. 2. Acts iii. 23. Heb. xii. 25.

a 43. Num. xv. 31. 2 Sam. xii. 9, 10. 2 Kings xviii. 16. 2 Chr. xxxviii. 16. Prov. i. 7. 30. Jer. vi. 19. Zech. vii. 11—13. Acts xiii. 41. 1 Thes. iv. 8. Ps. i. 17. Prov. v. 12. Rom. viii. 7.

c Gen. xviii. 14. Ex. xiv. 5. xlv. 7. Deut. xxxi. 16. Is. xxiv. 5. Jer. xl. 10. xxxi. 32. Ez. xvi. 59. Heb. viii. 9.

d Ps. cix. 6. f Heb. upon you. Deut. xxviii. 65—67. xxxii. 25. Job xv. 20, 21. xviii. 11. xx. 26. Ps. lxxviii. 19. Is. vii. 2. Jer. xv. 8. xx. 4. Heb. x. 31.

g Ex. xv. 26. Deut. xxxviii. 21, 22. 35. Deut. xxxviii. 32. 34. 67. 1 Sam. ii. 33. Ps. lxxviii. 33. Ez. xxxiii. 10. Zech. xiv. 12.

h Deut. xxxviii. 33. 51. Judg. vi. 3—6. 11. Job xxxi. 8. Is. lxxv. 22—24. Jer. v. 17. xii. 18. Mic. i. 6. Hag. i. 6.

i See on xvii. 10. xx. 6.—Ps. lxxviii. 1, 2. k Deut. xxxviii. 25. Judg. ii. 14. 1 Sam. iv. 10. xxxi. 1. Neh. ix. 27—30. Ps. cvii. 41, 42. Jer. xix. 7. Lam. i. 5.

l 36. Ps. lxxi. 5. Prov. xxxviii. 1. 21. 24. 28. Dan. iii. 19.

n 1 Sam. iv. 8. 11. Is. li. 12. xcv. 11. xxxvi. 5. Jer. xlii. 9. Ez. vii. 24. xxx. 6. Dan. iv. 87. Zeph. iii. 1.

o Deut. xxxviii. 23. 1 Kings xvii. 1. Jer. xiv. 1—6. Luke iv. 29.

p Ps. cxxvii. 1. Is. xlix. 4. Hab. ii. 13. Gal. iv. 11. q See on 4.—Deut. xl. 17. xxxviii. 18. 38—40. 42. Job xxxi. 40. Ps. cvii. 34. Hag. i. 9—11. ii. 16. 1 Cor. iii. 6.

r At all adventures with me: and so 24.

z Or,

God did not abhor the fellowship of such sinners, as they were when most obedient; and that if they were rebellious he would abhor them. (30. 44. Notes, Job xlii. 1—6. Ez. xxxvi. 31, 32.)—In the days of Joshua, of some of the judges, of David and Solomon, and some of their successors, these prophetic promises had their accomplishment: and indeed this chapter and the twenty-eighth of Deuteronomy, are a prophetic abstract of the future history of Israel even to this day; nor has it yet received its full accomplishment. (Notes, Ex. xxiii. 20—30.)

V. 14—18. Marg. Ref.

V. 19. The heavens should no more give rain than if they were iron, nor the earth any more yield corn than if it were brass; and this would effectually break the pride of Israel's power. (Note, Deut. xxviii. 23.)—This prophecy had a remarkable accomplishment during the long famine foretold by Elijah, in the time of Ahab. (1 Kings xvii. xviii.)

V. 20. Marg. Ref.—Note, Hag. i. 5—11.

V. 7, 8. Notes, Deut. xxxii. 30, 31. Is. xxx. 15—17.

V. 10. This promise intimated, that the people ought not, and would not be disposed, to build new barns in which to hoard their plenty for future use: (Notes, Luke xii. 15—21 :) but that they would bring it forth to make room for the new; and so dispose of it, at a low price or freely, to the poor and needy; having a liberal heart, as well as an abundant provision.

V. 11, 12. The continuance of the ordinances of religion, among the Israelites, was the chief of these promises; but this was only 'the means of grace,' and a shadow of the privilege of every true believer. Yet the language here used, if duly attended to, was sufficient to convince them, that under the temporal promises made to them as a nation, spiritual blessings were engaged to every true believer, reaching even to eternity: "for God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."—The expression, "My soul shall not abhor you," is remarkable; and implies that it was an act of mere mercy, that so holy a

22 I will also send <sup>r</sup> wild beasts among you, which shall <sup>r</sup> rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number, and <sup>r</sup> your high-ways shall be desolate.

23 And if <sup>r</sup> ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me;

24 Then <sup>r</sup> will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.

25 And <sup>r</sup> I will bring a sword upon you, that shall <sup>r</sup> avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, <sup>r</sup> I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.

26 And when <sup>r</sup> I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and

<sup>r</sup> 6. Dent. xxxii. 24. 2 Kings xvii. 25. Jer. xv. 3. Ez. v. 17. xiv. ii. 21. <sup>s</sup> 2 Kings ii. 24. <sup>t</sup> Judg. v. 6. 2 Chr. xv. 3. Is. xxiv. 6. xxxiii. 8. Lam. i. 4. Ez. xiv. 16. xxxiii. 28. Mic. iii. 12. Zech. vii. 14. <sup>v</sup> Is. i. 16—20. Jer. ii. 30. v. 3. Ez. xxiv. 13, 14. Am. iv. 6—12. <sup>w</sup> 2 Sam. xxii. 27. Job ix. 4. Ps. xviii. 26. <sup>x</sup> Deut. xxxii. 25. 41. Judg. ii. 14—16. Ps. lxxviii. 62—64. Is. xxxiv. 5, 6. Jer. ix. 16. xiv. 12. ii. 21. —4. Lam. ii. 21. Ez. v. 17. vi. 3. xiv. 17. xxi. 4—17. xxxiii. 2. <sup>y</sup> Deut. xxxii. 35. Ps. xciv. 1. Ez. xx. 37. Heb. x. 28—30. <sup>z</sup> Num. xiv. 12. xvi. 49. Deut. xxxviii. 21. 2 Sam. xxiv. 15. Jer. xiv. 12. xxiv. 10. xxxi. 17, 18. Am. iv. 10. Luke xxi. 11. <sup>a</sup> Ps. cv. 16. Is. iii. 1. ix. 20. Jer. xiv. 12. Lam. iv. 3—9. Ez. iv. 10. 16. v. 16. xiv. 13. Hos. iv. 10. Mic. vi. 14. Hag. i. 6.

they shall deliver *you* your bread again <sup>a</sup> by weight: and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied.

27 And if ye will not for all this <sup>b</sup> hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me;

28 Then I will walk contrary unto <sup>c</sup> you also <sup>a</sup> in fury: and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.

29 And <sup>b</sup> ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.

30 And <sup>c</sup> I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcases upon the carcases of your idols, and <sup>d</sup> my soul shall abhor you.

31 And <sup>e</sup> I will make your cities waste, <sup>f</sup> and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and <sup>g</sup> I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours.

<sup>g</sup> See on Gen. viii. 21.—Is. i. 11—14. lxvi. 3. Am. v. 21—23. Heb. x. 26

Is. xxvii. 4. Iiz. 18. lxiii. 3. lxvi. 15. Jer. xxi. 5. Ez. v. 18. 15. viii. 18. Nah. i. 2, 6. Deut. xxxviii. 53. —57. 2 Kings xvi. 29, 2. Jer. xxi. 9. Lam. ii. 20. iv. 10. Ez. v. 10. Matt. xxiv. 19. Luke xxiii. 29. 1 Kings xiii. 2. 2 Kings xxiii. 8. 16. 20. 2 Chr. xiv. 3—5. xxiii. 17. xxxi. 1. xxxiv. 3—7. Is. xxvii. 9. Jer. viii. 1—3. Ez. vi. 3—6. 13. See on 11. 15—xx. 28. Ps. lxxviii. 58, 59. lxxxix. 38. Jer. xiv. 19. 2 Kings xxv. 4—10. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 19. Neh. ii. 3. 17. Is. i. 7. xxiv. 10—12. Jer. iv. 7. ix. 11. Lam. i. 1. ii. 7. Ez. vi. 6. xxi. 15. Mic. iii. 12. Ps. lxxix. 3—8. Jer. xxi. 6. xxxvi. 6. 9. lii. 13. Lam. i. 10. Ez. ix. 6. xxiv. 21. Matt. xxi. 1, 2. Luke xxi. 5, 6. 24. Acta vi. 14. Heb. x. 26

V. 24. *Yet seven times.*] The Lord repeatedly declared that he would render the miseries of rebellious Israel still more and more dreadful; as Nebuchadnezzar attempted, by making the furnace seven times hotter than usual, to increase the torture of the objects of his vengeance. His indeed was a mere impotent, foolish effort; but the Lord was able to accomplish his denunciations, however awful, in the fullest sense. (*Note, Ps. xc. 11.*)

V. 25, 26. When the sword of the enemy threatened the disobedient Israelites, they would flock into the defended cities for security; but the Lord declared, that in this case, he would commission the pestilence to pursue them, till they should be compelled to surrender themselves into the hands of the besiegers: or he would visit them with the most dreadful and desolating famines.—The reader who consults the marginal references, will in them find the most instructive comment on this chapter; and be more and more convinced, as he proceeds, that it is a kind of prophetic history of that nation, even to this present time; which could never have been written, except by inspiration of God, who seeth the events of the most remote futurity as if actually present.—It is thought that the expression, *walk contrary to me*, implies that the people would remain careless, imputing their calamities to chance or second causes; till the constant increase of them, and their long continuance, should convince them, that the dreadful vengeance of God was poured out upon them.

*Avenge, &c.* (25) *Note, Ez. xx. 33—38.*

*By weight.* (26) *Note, Ez. iv. 9—17.*

V. 29. *Eat the flesh, &c.*] This was literally fulfilled in the siege of Samaria by Benhadad; in the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans; and in the last siege of Jerusalem by the Romans, as is recorded by the Jewish historian, Josephus. (*Notes, Deut. xxviii. 49—57. 2 Kings vi. 28, 29. Lam. iv. 10.*)

V. 30. The several words used in this threatening, re-

late to different kinds of idolatry afterwards prevalent in Israel. We shall hereafter have frequent occasions of considering the *high places*, both for idolatry, and for the irregular worship of JEHOVAH. The *images* here mentioned are supposed to have been statues dedicated to the sun: and the word rendered *idols* (עֲצָבִים) is similar to that which signifies *dung* (הֲבֵא), and is an expression of extreme contempt for their worthless, filthy objects of worship. The connexion of this verse with the preceding has been thought to imply, that the Israelites would be more attached to their idols than even to their children. But the order is more remarkable, if considered as a prophecy. Though the pious kings of Judah, especially Hezekiah and Josiah, were employed by the Lord to execute, in a measure, this sentence, and the latter burned the bones of the priests on the altars of their idols; and though Sennacherib cast many of their idols into the fire, when he invaded the land; yet the grand fulfilment of the prophecy was subsequent to the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, in which the people had actually been reduced to eat their own children. The desolations, connected with that event, effectually swept away all their idols, and idol-altars, and temples, so that they were never afterwards restored. Thus the Lord, abhorring the people for their wickedness (11), cast their dead carcases on their broken or degraded idols, and destroyed the idolaters and idolatry at once. (*Marg. Ref. c.*)

V. 31—35. These verses also contain a prophecy, both of Israel's sin and punishment; which the subsequent history sufficiently explains.—By the *sanctuaries*, some understand the temple, as divided into the *holy place* and the *holy of holies*, with its several courts; but others include the high-places, both in Judah and Israel, in which God was worshipped; and some think synagogues also were meant: but the next clause, "I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours," seems to confine the expression

b Deut. xxix. 23  
Is. i. 7, & v. 6, 9.  
vi. 11. xxiv. 1.  
xxvii. 13, 14.  
lxiv. 10. Jer. ix.  
11. xvi. 30. xlv.  
2. 22. Lam. v.  
18. Ez. xxxiii.  
26, 29. Dan. ix.  
2. 15. Hab. iii.  
17. Luke xxi. 20.  
Deut. xxviii. 27.  
xxix. 24—28.  
1 Kings ix. 8.  
Jer. xviii. 16.  
xix. 8. Lam. iv.  
12. Ez. v. 15.  
k Deut. iv. 27.  
xxviii. 64—66.  
Ps. xlv. 11. Jer.  
ix. 16. Lam. i. 3.  
iv. 15. Ez. xii.  
14. 16. xx. 23.  
xxii. 15. Zech.  
vii. 14. Luke  
xii. 24. Jam. i.  
1.

l xxv. 2—4. 10.  
2 Chr. xxxvi. 21.  
m Is. xxiv. 5, 6.  
Rom. viii. 22.

n Gen. xxxv. 5.  
Deut. xxviii. 65.  
—67. Josh. ii. 9.  
—11. v. 1. 1 Sam.  
xvii. 24. 2 Kings  
xv. 6, 7. 2 Chr.  
xiv. 14. Job xv.  
21, 22. Is. vii. 2.  
4. Ez. xxi. 7, 12.  
o 7, 8, 17. Deut. i.  
44. Prov. xxviii.  
1. 1a. xxx. 17.  
\* Heb. driven.  
p Judg. vii. 22.  
1 Sam. xv. 15.  
15. Is. x. 4. Jer.  
xxxvii. 10.  
q Num. xiv. 42.  
Josh. vii. 12, 13.  
Judg. ii. 14.

32 And <sup>b</sup> I will bring the land into desolation; and <sup>1</sup> your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it.

33 And <sup>a</sup> I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you; and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.

34 Then <sup>1</sup> shall the land enjoy her sabbaths as long as it lieth desolate, and ye <sup>be</sup> in your enemies' land: *even* then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths.

35 As long as it lieth desolate, it shall rest; <sup>m</sup> because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.

36 And upon them that are left *alive* of you, <sup>a</sup> I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and <sup>o</sup> the sound of a <sup>\*</sup> shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth.

37 And <sup>p</sup> they shall fall, one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth: and <sup>q</sup> ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies.

38 And <sup>r</sup> ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.

39 And they that are left of you <sup>s</sup> shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; <sup>t</sup> and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them.

40 ¶ If <sup>u</sup> they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, <sup>v</sup> and that also they have walked contrary unto me;

41 And *that* I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then, <sup>w</sup> their uncircumcised hearts be <sup>x</sup> humbled, and <sup>y</sup> they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity:

42 Then <sup>z</sup> will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember: and <sup>a</sup> I will remember the land.

Matt. xxiii. 12. Luke xiv. 11. xviii. 14. Jam. iv. 6—8. 1 Pet. v. 5, 6.  
13. 15. Neh. ix. 38. Dan. ix. 7—14. 18, 19. b Gen. ix. 16. Ez. ii. 24. vi. 5. Deut.  
iv. 31. Ps. cvi. 45. Ez. xvi. 60. Luke i. 72. c Ps. lxxxv. 1, 2. xxxvi. 23. Ez.  
xxxvi. 1—15. 33, 34.

Deut. iv. 27.  
xxviii. 48, 68.  
Is. xxvii. 13.  
Jer. xlii. 17, 18.  
22. xlv. 12—14.  
27, 28.  
Deut. xxviii. 65.  
xxx. 1. Ps. xxxii.  
3, 4. Jer. iii. 25.  
Ez. iv. 17. xxiv.  
23. xxxiii. 10.  
t Ez. xx. 5. xxxiv.  
7. Num. xiv. 18.  
Deut. v. 9. Jer.  
xxxi. 29. Ez.  
xviii. 2, 3, 19.  
Matt. xxiii. 35.  
36. Rom. xi. 8—  
10.  
u Num. v. 7.  
Deut. iv. 29—  
31. xxx. 1—3.  
Josh. vii. 19.  
1 Kings vii. 33.  
—36. 47. Neh.  
ix. 2. Job xxxiii.  
27, 28. Ps. xxxii.  
5. Prov. xxviii.  
13. Jer. xxxi. 18.  
—20. Ez. xxxvi.  
31. Dan. ix. 3—  
vi. 1, 2. Luke xv.  
18, 19. 1 John i.  
8—10.  
x 21. 24. 27, 28.  
Deut. xxx. 6.  
Jer. iv. 4. vi. 10.  
ix. 25, 26. Ez.  
xlv. 7. Acts vii.  
61. Rom. ii. 28.  
29. Gal. v. 6.  
Phil. iii. 3. Col.  
ii. 11.  
z Ex. x. 3. 1 Kings  
xxi. 29. 2 Chr.  
xii. 6, 7. 12.  
xxxii. 26. xxxiii.  
12, 13. 19. 23. Ez.  
vi. 9. xx. 43.  
a Ezra ix.  
13. 15. Neh. ix. 38.  
Dan. ix. 7—14. 18, 19.  
b Gen. ix. 16. Ez. ii. 24. vi. 5. Deut.  
iv. 31. Ps. cvi. 45. Ez. xvi. 60. Luke i. 72.  
c Ps. lxxxv. 1, 2. xxxvi. 23. Ez.

to places where sacrifices and incense were offered.—After the Babylonish captivity, the temple-worship was restored, and doubtless the Lord accepted the oblations of his faithful people: but after the time of Christ, the whole degenerated into a mere form of godliness; and the destruction of the temple by the Romans finally abolished that kind of service, because a more simple and spiritual worship had been introduced.—Indeed the dispersed state of the Jews since that time, more fully answers the import of the subsequent predictions, than even the desolations of the Babylonish captivity: during that calamity, however, the land enjoyed its sabbaths; and the prophecy seems to intimate, that this part of the divine law was generally neglected during most of the intervening ages. (*Note*, 2 Chr. xxxvi. 21.)

V. 36, 37. *Marg. Ref.—Notes*, Deut. xxviii. 65—67. Is. xxx. 15—17.

V. 38, 39. The ten tribes never returned to their own land, as a collective body. The Jews, who rebelliously determined to go into Egypt, miserably perished there. (*Jer. xlii—xliv.*) Great multitudes of the other Jews remained afterwards in the nations where they were dispersed; a large proportion of the whole multitude of Israelites have doubtless been lost, as it were, in the nations among whom they sojourned. The massacres made of them, in many countries and different ages, have been very great; and they have been more generally, durably, and cruelly oppressed, than perhaps any other people. For, continuing impenitent, formerly in idolatry and iniquity, and since the time of Christ, in obstinate unbelief; they lie under the load of national guilt, which has been accumulating

for ages; and pine away in heartless, timid despondency, or stupid insensibility, without earnestly enquiring into the causes of their calamities, or using proper means of redress and deliverance. It is remarkable, how exactly this passage describes the general character of the Jews at this day.

*Pine away.*] *Marg. Ref. s.—Notes*, Ez. xxiv. 19—24. xxxiii. 10.

V. 40. After all these threatenings to the nation of temporal calamities, most accumulated, aggravated, and long continued, which were a shadow of still more tremendous destruction to impenitent individuals in a future world; the prophet concluded with intimations of mercy in reserve for a remnant of the people, when at length brought to repentance.—Thus, previously to the deliverance of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, Daniel (with whom doubtless numbers concurred,) confessed his sins, and those of his fathers and people, in deep humiliation. (*Notes*, Dan. ix. 1—20.) And afterwards, before their further establishment in Judea, Ezra and Nehemiah, and the people with them, did the same, and in language which seems evidently to refer to this chapter. (*Notes*, Ezra ix. Neh. ix.)

V. 41, 42. Pride, impenitent love of sin, and enmity to JEHOVAH and his worship, proved the hearts of the people to be *uncircumcised*, that is, *unrenewed by divine grace*; for circumcision was the sacramental sign of regeneration: but when a change took place they would be humbled before God, acknowledge his hand, and submit to his justice in all their sufferings; they would seek forgiveness from his mercy, and return to their duty; and

<sup>d</sup> See on 34.  
<sup>e</sup> See on 41.—  
 1 Kings viii. 46  
 —48. 2 Chr.  
 xxxiii. 12. Job v.  
 17. xxxiv. 31, 32.  
 Ps. l. 18. cxix.  
 67. 71. 75. 1a.  
 xxvi. 16. Jer.  
 xxxi. 19. Dan.  
 ix. 7—9. 14.  
 Heb. xii. 5—11.  
<sup>f</sup> See on 15.—  
 2 Kings xvii. 7—  
 17. 2 Chr. xxxvi.  
 14—16.  
<sup>g</sup> 15. 30. Ps. l. 17.  
 Am. v. 10. Zech.  
 xi. 8. John vii.  
 7. xv. 23. 24.  
 Rom. viii. 7.  
<sup>h</sup> Deut. iv. 29, 30.  
 2 Kings xii. 23.  
 Neh. ix. 31. Ez.  
 xiv. 22, 23. Rom.  
 xi. 2. 26. <sup>i</sup> See on 11.

43 The land also shall be left of them, and <sup>a</sup> shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: <sup>e</sup> and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity; because, even because they <sup>f</sup> despised my judgments, and because <sup>g</sup> their soul abhorred my statutes.

44 And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, <sup>h</sup> I will not cast them away, neither will <sup>i</sup> I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and

<sup>k</sup> to break my covenant with them: for <sup>k</sup> I am the LORD their God.

45 But I will <sup>l</sup> for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, <sup>m</sup> whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt <sup>n</sup> in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD.

46 These <sup>o</sup> are <sup>o</sup> the statutes and judgments and laws, which the LORD made between him and the children of Israel <sup>p</sup> in mount Sinai, <sup>q</sup> by the hand of Moses.

then would he remember and deal with them according to the covenant made with their fathers, respecting Canaan, the type of heaven. (Notes, Deut. x. 16. xxx. 1—10. Jer. iv. 3, 4. ix. 25, 26. Rom. ii. 25—29.)

Covenant. (42) It is observable, that it is not said, the Lord would remember his covenant, ratified with Israel at mount Sinai; but the covenant made with their progenitors, the patriarchs, long before the Sinai-covenant. The future restoration of Israel will be in fulfilment of the Abrahamick covenant. (Notes, Rom. xi. 25—32. Gal. iii. 15—18. Heb. vi. 13—20.)

V. 43—45. Notwithstanding these promises, the land would certainly be desolated; and the preceding calamities would rest on the people, till they should "accept of the punishment of their iniquity," and acquiesce in it, as just.—The subsequent verses imply a prediction that the people would thus repent, as well as an assurance of reconciliation to the penitent. The word (נָחַם), rendered "for their sakes," may more literally and justly be translated *for them, or in their behalf*.—A glorious accomplishment of this part of the prophecy may hereafter be expected, by the conversion of the Jews to Christ, and probably by their restoration to their own land: and indeed, after the fulfilment of the previous threatenings, in their present dispersion of above seventeen hundred years' duration, they are still most marvellously preserved a distinct people, evidently in order to this most desirable event. (Notes, Num. xxiii. 9. Jer. xxx. 10, 11.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—13.

Our true interest and happiness consist in worshipping the Lord, giving him our hearts, hallowing his sabbaths, reverencing his sanctuary, and doing every thing with a believing regard to that Saviour, "in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Our obedience indeed cannot justify us: but that obedience, which takes its rise from "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ;" and which consists in a humble attendance on his ordinances, and an unreserved respect to all his commandments; both evinces that we are justified, and will induce peace and spiritual consolations into our hearts, with the hope of glory, and the blessing of God upon our families and possessions: so that the most afflicted state of a consistent Christian is more comfortable, than any ungodly prosperity however great. This

frame of mind is the health of the soul, and the antepast of heaven; while God sets up his tabernacle in us, and dwells and walks with us, as the sure pledge of eternal glory. But wilful sin, even in a believer, will grieve the Spirit, cloud this bright prospect, and bring darkness and distress into the soul, as well as chastisements from his heavenly Father's rod.—Righteousness also exalteth a nation, and among other blessings, especially ensures the continuance of the gospel with it. But it is truly wonderful, that the Lord hath not long since so *abhorred* this our sinful land, as to deprive us of our other manifold mercies, and especially of the word of his salvation, which has been so greatly neglected, despised, and perverted.

##### V. 14—46.

Sooner or later, sin will be the ruin, as well as reproach, of every people; and our *national* violation of the sabbath, contempt of the ordinances of God, opposition to his truth, and abhorrence of his commandments, after our manifold rebukes, dangers, and deliverances, which were intended to bring us to repentance and upright obedience, have a very gloomy aspect on this yet favoured land. If we continue still to "walk contrary to God," we may expect that he will punish us seven times more than he has done; and that he will avenge the quarrel of his gospel upon us; and if He, who has all creatures in his hand as ministers of his vengeance, should set his face against us, who can conjecture where the contest will end? Oh that, being deeply humbled before God, and ingenuously confessing our sins, we might, by a general revival of religion and reformation of manners, with the harmonious concurrence of all ranks and orders of men, avert the rising storm before it burst upon us!—But though *national* judgments, such as desolating war, pestilence, and famine, be dreadful; yet they are but *temporal* evils, and personal judgments alone are *eternal*: let every sinner then tremble for himself, take warning and flee from the wrath to come.—The career of iniquity commences in contempt of God's statutes, and hatred of his service: and ingratitude and abuse of his mercies soon make way for the hardening of the heart under afflictions, and against convictions. Such persons, "walking contrary to God," will find that he walks contrary to them: and as they turn their face from him, he will set his face against them, will abhor them, pursue them with one misery after another, and at length utterly destroy them, if they continue impenitent; and

## CHAP. XXVII.

Laws concerning singular vows to God, respecting persons, 1—8; and cattle, 9—13; and houses and lands, 14—25. Firstlings must not be thus dedicated, 26, 27. Of things devoted to destruction, 28, 29. The law of tithes, 30—34.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, \* When a man shall make a singular vow, the persons *shall be* for the LORD by thy estimation.

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xxviii. 20—22. Num. vi. 2. xxi. 2. Deut. xxiii. 21—23. Judg. xi. 30, 31. 1 Sam. i. 11.

<sup>b</sup> 14. v. 15. vi. 4. Num. xviii. 16. 2 Kings xii. 4. Marg.

<sup>c</sup> 26. Ex. xxx. 13.

<sup>d</sup> Zech. xi. 12, 13. Matt. xxvi. 15. xxvii. 9, 10.

<sup>e</sup> Num. iii. 40—43. xviii. 14, 16.

3 And <sup>b</sup>thy estimation shall be, of the male from twenty years old even unto sixty years old; even thy estimation shall be fifty shekels of silver,

4 And if it *be* a female, then thy estimation shall be <sup>d</sup>thirty shekels.

5 And if *it be* from five years old even unto twenty years old; then thy estimation shall be of the male twenty shekels, and for the female ten shekels.

6 And if *it be* \*from a month old even unto five years old; then thy esti-

mation shall be of the male five shekels of silver, and for the female thy estimation *shall be* three shekels of silver.

7 And if *it be* 'from sixty years old and above; if *it be* a male, then thy estimation shall be fifteen shekels, and for the female ten shekels.

8 But if he *be* 'poorer than thy estimation, then he shall present himself before the priest, and the priest shall value him: according to his ability that vowed shall the priest value him.

9 ¶ And if *it be* a beast, whereof men bring an offering unto the LORD; all that *any man* giveth of such unto the LORD shall be holy.

10 He <sup>h</sup>shall not alter it, nor change it, a good for a bad, or a bad for a good: and if he shall at all change beast for beast, then it and the exchange thereof shall be holy.

11 And if *it be* any 'unclean beast, of which they do not offer a sacrifice unto the LORD; then he shall present the beast before the priest:

12 And the priest shall value it,

the stoutest of them will find their hearts wax faint and tremble, and in black despair perceive that they have no power to resist or escape, when he arises to execute vengeance.—But if at length any sinner be deeply humbled, and confess his guilt, and cry for mercy through faith in Jesus Christ, and according to the covenant made with all believers in him; God will remember that covenant, and pardon that sinner “according to the multitude of his mercies:” so that none need despair, and “pine away in their iniquities.” Whilst we joyfully avail ourselves of such a precious privilege, and are confirmed in our faith even by the desolate and dispersed condition of the disobedient Israelites; let us not abhor and despise them, but compassionate them, and pray that they may at length be remembered according to the covenant made with their fathers. And let us take warning not to imitate their infidelity, and not to trust in external distinctions.—God grant that we may in this our day effectually consider the things which belong to our eternal peace.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXVII. V. 2—8. The Israelites, from an extraordinary zeal and love to the worship of God, would sometimes, by a solemn vow, dedicate themselves, or their children, to the immediate service of the Lord in the sanctuary for life: but as the priests and Levites were set apart, by God himself, for that service, and none were allowed to interfere with their work, these persons could only be

employed in the lowest and most laborious services; and if too great numbers thus devoted themselves, they would be an encumbrance, rather than an advantage, to the sanctuary. The Gibeonites were afterwards employed “as hewers of wood and drawers of water;” and perhaps some others, who refused to redeem themselves, performed menial services to the priests and Levites. Probably these, as well as the Gibeonites, were called *Nethinim*, or dedicated persons, of whom we shall read hereafter. (Notes, Josh. ix. 27. 1 Chr. ix. 2.) Samuel, who was a Levite, was thus dedicated by his mother; and, not being redeemed, he was employed about the sanctuary from his childhood, long before the age when the Levites entered upon their office.—Perhaps some others, who dedicated themselves or their children, were thus employed: yet in general they were allowed, or even ordered, to be redeemed, at the valuation here prescribed; which was equitable and moderate, and was reduced still lower in cases of poverty. Children might not thus devote themselves; but their parents might devote them. The women, if not redeemed, would find employment in spinning, weaving, and making the garments for the priests, or washing for them, and in various other ways; as we may suppose the Gibeonitish women, and the wives of the *Nethinim* did.

V. 9—13. If any particular animal were thus vowed unto the Lord, it was to be accounted holy, and must not be exchanged; but must be sacrificed, provided it were fit for sacrifice: otherwise it was to be valued and sold; but

\* Heb. according to thy estimation, O priest, whether it be good or bad; \* as thou valuest it, who art the priest, so shall it be.

13 But if he will at all redeem it, then he shall add a fifth part thereof unto thy estimation.

14 ¶ And when a man shall sanctify his house to be holy unto the LORD; then the priest shall estimate it, whether it be good or bad: as the priest shall estimate it, so shall it stand.

15 And if he that sanctified it will redeem his house, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be his.

16 And if a man shall sanctify unto the LORD some part of a field of his possession; then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof: an homer of barley-seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver.

17 If he sanctify his field from the year of jubilee, according to thy estimation it shall stand.

18 But if he sanctify his field after the jubilee; then the priest shall reckon unto him the money according to the years that remain, even unto the year of the jubilee, and it shall be abated from thy estimation.

19 And if he that sanctified the field

will in any wise redeem it; then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be assured to him.

20 And if he will not redeem the field, or if he have sold the field to another man, it shall not be redeemed any more.

21 But the field, when it goeth out in the jubilee, shall be holy unto the LORD, as a field devoted: the possession thereof shall be the priest's.

22 And if a man sanctify unto the LORD a field which he hath bought, which is not of the fields of his possession;

23 Then the priest shall reckon unto him the worth of thy estimation, even unto the year of the jubilee, and he shall give thine estimation in that day, as a holy thing unto the LORD.

24 In the year of the jubilee the field shall return unto him of whom it was bought, even to him to whom the possession of the land did belong.

25 And all thy estimations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary: twenty gerahs shall be the shekel.

26 Only the firstling of the beasts, which should be the LORD's firstling,

at a dearer rate to him who vowed it than to another person, as a rebuke for his rashness and inconstancy. Some suppose that the money was put into the treasury of the sanctuary, to defray the expenses of the worship there performed: others, that the priests had it for their own use.—The difference between this *singular vow* and *ordinary vows*, seems to have been this:—the ordinary vow was made, when in quest of some blessing, or when some special mercy was received: the person who vowed engaged to offer certain sacrifices of burnt-offerings or peace-offerings unto the Lord; and it included nothing else. But a singular vow was the solemn dedication of a man's person, or child, or some part of his property, to the immediate use of the sanctuary, or of the priests; with special designation, whether fit for sacrifice, or not.

V. 16. A man was not allowed to alienate in this manner his whole patrimony, but only some part of a field: he might express his good-will for the house of God, but he must not impoverish his own family.

[An homer, &c.] That is, as much land as required a homer of barley to sow it. An omer was only the tenth part of an ephah; a homer contained ten ephahs, or above eight bushels Winchester measure.

V. 17—19. Notes, xxv. 14—30.

V. 20—24. If the person who dedicated his land refused to redeem it, it became the perpetual inheritance of the priests, and could only be leased out till the year of jubilee. If he had sold his right in it to another man, after having made his vow; he forfeited that right, but the purchaser did not succeed to it. A man could not thus alienate such land, as by law returned at the year of jubilee to the family of which it had been bought; but if he had vowed it, he must redeem it at the estimation made of it. Houses and lands, if thus vowed, became the property of the priests at the year of jubilee; unless redeemed by him that vowed them. This was an additional reason, why the fifth part should in that case be added to the priest's estimation of them.

V. 26, 27. As these firstlings were the Lord's before, it would have been a solemn mockery to pretend to make them a matter of a singular vow; for they were already appointed, if clean, to be sacrificed. But if an unclean firstling were thus dedicated to God, the owner might redeem it, as another unclean firstling, though not with a lamb, but with its estimation in money, adding to it a fifth part: and if he refused to redeem it, it was killed, and sold for the benefit of the priests, or the support of the sanctuary.

no man shall sanctify it: whether *it be* ox or sheep, *it is* the LORD's.

27 And if *it be* of an unclean beast, then he shall redeem *it* according to thine estimation, and shall add a fifth *part* of it thereto: or if it be not redeemed, then it shall be sold according to thy estimation.

28 ¶ Notwithstanding, <sup>a</sup>no devoted thing that a man shall devote unto the LORD, of all that he hath, *both* of man and beast, and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed: every devoted thing *is* most holy unto the LORD.

29 None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed: *but* shall surely be put to death.

30 ¶ And <sup>e</sup>all the tithe of the land,

*whether* of the seed of the land, *or* of the fruit of the tree, *is* the LORD's: *it is* holy unto the LORD.

31 And if a man will <sup>f</sup>at all redeem <sup>g</sup>*it* <sup>h</sup>ought of his tithes, he shall add thereto the fifth *part* thereof.

32 And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, *even* of whatsoever <sup>i</sup>passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.

33 He shall not search whether it be good or bad, <sup>j</sup>neither shall he change <sup>k</sup>it: and if he change it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy: it shall not be redeemed.

34 These *are* <sup>l</sup>the commandments which the LORD commanded Moses, for the children of Israel <sup>m</sup>in mount Sinai.

<sup>a</sup> See on 21.—Ex. xxii. 20. Num. xxi. 2, 3. Deut. vii. 1, 2. xiii. 15, 16. xx. 16, 17. xxv. 19. Josh. vi. 17—19. 26. vii. 1. 11—13. 25. Judg. xi. 30, 31. xxi. 5. 11. 18. 1 Sam. xiv. 24—28. 38—45. xv. 3. 18. 32. 33. Matt. xxv. 41. Acts xxiii. 12—14. Rom. ix. 3. 1 Cor. xvi. 22. Gal. iii. 10. 13. Gen. xiv. 20. xxviii. 22. Num. xviii. 21—24. Deut. xii. 5, 6. xiv. 22, 23. 2 Chr. xxxi. 5, 6. 12. Neh. x. 37, 38. xii. 44. xiii. 5. 12. Mal. iii. 8—10. Matt. xxiii. 23. Luke xi. 42. xviii. 12. Heb. vii. 5—8.

<sup>g</sup> Jer. xxxiii. 13. Ez. xx. 37. Mic. vii. 14.

<sup>h</sup> 10.

<sup>i</sup> xxvi. 46. Deut. iv. 45. John i. 17.

<sup>k</sup> Num. i. 1. Gal. iv. 24, 25. Heb. xii. 18—25.

V. 28, 29. The word (חֵקֶן) here rendered *a devoted thing*, implies an *anathema*, or *curse*. Persons thus devoted, were by solemn vows consigned to utter destruction without redemption: but then this vow could not be valid, if contrary to any part of the divine law; and in that case the person making it needed repentance and forgiveness. In respect of *things devoted*, they were either utterly destroyed by fire, or wholly dedicated to religious uses. The Lord himself thus devoted the Amalekites, and the Canaanites in general, and the inhabitants of Jericho in particular; but he reserved the precious metals for the sacred treasury. And the Israelites thus devoted the cities of Arad. (Note, Num. xxi. 1—3.)—Probably Jephthah's vow, and his manner of performing it, arose from a misconception of this law; for whatever was thus devoted was surely to be put to death, if no divine law forbade: but the people rescued Jonathan, whom his father Saul had thus rashly and unwittingly devoted, and doubtless they acted properly. (Notes, Judg. xi. 34—40. 1 Sam. xiv. 36—46.)

V. 30—34. The custom of dedicating the tenth part of any profit or increase to religious uses, was doubtless more ancient than the Mosaic law: (Notes, Gen. xiv. 18—20. xxviii. 20—22;) and learned men have shewn that (probably from tradition,) it prevailed in many nations; though not so regularly as in Israel. From the law afterwards given concerning the division of these tithes, it is evident that they were intended to be a considerable part of the stated maintenance of the priests and Levites; (Num. xviii. 21—32;) and they must therefore be carefully distinguished from the *second tithes* on which the people feasted before the Lord, with the Levites. (Note, Deut. xiv. 22—29.) The regulations here made would prevent the introduction of a *modus* in collecting the tithes, as well as *impropriations*, and various other methods, which have in many places reduced almost to beggary the clergy, for whose maintenance tithes were originally given. Whatever may be said in this case, where tithes are only a human institution; it would certainly have been wrong

where they were an express divine appointment. Yet doubtless this law teaches, that they “who labour in the word and doctrine” have a right to a maintenance, and ought not to be defrauded of it.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is good to be zealously affected, and liberally disposed, to the service and sanctuary of the Lord: but consideration should precede, and prudence should direct, the application of our liberality; otherwise rash vows, and inconstancy in performing them, will dishonour God and embarrass our own minds.—We should dedicate ourselves and our families to his service, according to the situation of life in which the providence of God has placed us. But may we not aptly accommodate these “singular vows of persons” to the case of those, who, perhaps with *good intention*, but *great impropriety*, are determined to leave their proper employments, and to enter into the ministry; or to those, who resolve to bring up their children to that sacred office, before they can know whether they will be properly qualified or disposed for such a service? Too many seem to forget, that there are other ways of glorifying God and serving his church, besides preaching the gospel: and though no general rules can be prescribed in such cases; yet much caution, deliberation, prayer, patient waiting, and submission to Providence, should precede every person's leaving another calling to enter into the ministry. Nor should any resolutions or vows be considered binding, unless the Lord allows them, by giving proper qualifications and dispositions, and opening a regular door of admission in his providence. Otherwise such persons had better endeavour themselves, and bring up their children, to honour God by their example, influence, and substance in a private character: for to this day he will choose his own ministers, whom he employs in his sanctuary, without regarding our partial or selfish desires and intentions.—Our houses, lands, cattle, and substance should be possessed and used to his glory; and a portion dedicated immediately to the support of his worship, and to promote his cause, is acceptable to him.

if done with a constant and willing mind, and in prudence and equity. But he neither approves of those who grudge his servants their support, nor of those who injure their families, and perhaps their creditors, by an imprudent or ostentatious profusion in these respects; nor yet of those who rashly engage, and inconstantly retract their engagements.—But let us not forget that we sinners were devoted to utter destruction, as under the curse of a broken law; and that Jesus willingly devoted himself to be “made a curse for us,” and tasted the bitterness of death, yea, the wrath of the Father, for our redemption. The doom

of those who neglect this great salvation will be irreversible; and it will by the omnipotent Judge be said to them, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” Let us then flee to him as a Saviour for refuge; and, receiving the reconciliation, let us yield ourselves to him, without wishing or desiring a change, to be unto him a holy people, that “his name may be glorified in us,” living and dying, and forever; “and we glorified in him, according to the grace of our God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ.” (*Note, 2 Thes. i. 11, 12.*)

# THE FOURTH BOOK OF MOSES,

CALLED

## NUMBERS.

**THIS** book takes its name from the repeated numberings of the people and of the Levites, which it records. It derives this name (as the preceding books do theirs,) from the Septuagint; but the names of the others stand in the original Greek, while this is translated into English. It is called in the original, (בְּמִדְבָּר) '*In the wilderness*,' from the account which it contains of the Israelites in the wilderness. It opens with an account of the arrangement of the twelve tribes into regular encampments, in four divisions under their several leaders, around the tabernacle; the care of which, and of all its furniture, was committed to the Levites, in three divisions, according to their families. The history of Israel afterwards proceeds: and the sacred writer having recorded that instance of rebellion which provoked God "to swear in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest;" gives an account of the continuance of the Israelites in the wilderness for above thirty-eight years: and the whole is intermixed with many laws, moral and ceremonial.—In confirmation of the united testimony of antiquity, that Moses wrote the books ascribed to him, which is uniformly sanctioned by all the sacred writers, and in an especial manner by our Lord and his apostles; it may be useful to the studious reader to notice, how constantly the laws and facts of this book are referred to in all the subsequent parts of Scripture, as things of established credit and notoriety; which never could have been the case, had not the book been well known among the Israelites. In general, the marginal references, if carefully consulted, will most fully establish this point: in particular, the ministrations severally allotted to the priests and Levites; the unbelief and rebellion which excluded this generation of Israel from Canaan; their subsequent wanderings for almost forty years in the wilderness; the conquest of the countries possessed by Sihon and Og; and the settlement of two tribes and a half, east of Jordan, are pre-supposed as notorious facts in every subsequent part of the sacred Volume. But the prophecies delivered by Balaam, which have already received a most signal accomplishment, not only prove the narrative to be genuine, and that Balaam spake by the Spirit of prophecy; but as introduced in close connexion with the history, long before any of the predictions were fulfilled, or in human probability likely to be so; they form a collateral argument, that the book itself was divinely inspired: for in this manner the Lord has seen good to set his seal to most, if not all, of the several books of holy writ.

### CHAP. I.

The Lord commands Moses to number Israel, and appoints by name a prince from each tribe to assist him, 1—16. The number of each tribe, and the sum total, 17—46. The Levites are not numbered with the rest, being to serve at the tabernacle, 47—54.

II. C. 1490.

a x. 12. Ex. xix  
I. Lev. xxvii.

b Ex. xxx. 22  
Lev. i. 1

c Ex. i. x. 11. Ex.  
xl. 17. 1 Kings  
vi. 1.

**AND** the Lord spake unto Moses <sup>a</sup> in the wilderness of Sinai, <sup>b</sup> in the tabernacle of the congregation, <sup>c</sup> on the first day of the second month, in the

second year after they were come out <sup>B. C. 1490.</sup> of the land of Egypt, saying,

2 Take ye <sup>d</sup> the sum of all the congregation of <sup>e</sup> the children of Israel, after their families, by the house of their fathers, with the number of <sup>f</sup> their names, every male by their polls:

3 From <sup>g</sup> twenty years old and upward, all that are <sup>h</sup> able to go forth to war in Israel: thou and Aaron shall number them <sup>i</sup> by their armies.

d xxvi. 2—4. 53.  
64. Ex. xxx.  
12. xxxviii. 26.  
2 Sam. xxiv. 2.  
3. 1 Chr. xxi. 2.  
e Gen. xlix. 1—3.  
Ex. i. 1—6.  
f 18. 22. 26. &c.  
Ex. vi. 14—19.

g xiv. 29. xxxii.  
11. Ex. xxx. 14.  
h Deut. iii. 18.  
2 Chr. xvii. 13—  
18. xxvi. 11—13.  
i xxxiii. 1. Ex.  
xii. 17.

### NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1—3. Though the sum total in this chapter is exactly the same with that before mentioned,

VOL. I.

the numbering cannot be the same; for *that* preceded the construction of the tabernacle, which was set up on the first day of the first month, and the bases were formed of

4 ¶ And with you there shall be a man of every tribe, <sup>k</sup> every one head of the house of his fathers.

5 And these *are* the names of the men that shall stand with you: Of the *tribe* of Reuben; <sup>l</sup>Elizur, the son of Shedeur.

6 Of Simeon; <sup>m</sup>Shelumiel, the son of Zurishaddai.

7 Of Judah; <sup>n</sup>Nahshon, the son of Amminadab.

8 Of Issachar; <sup>o</sup>Nethaneel, the son of Zuar.

9 Of Zebulun; <sup>p</sup>Eliab, the son of Helon.

10 Of the children of Joseph: of Ephraim; <sup>q</sup>Elishama, the son of Ammihud: of Manasseh; <sup>r</sup>Gamaliel, the son of Pedahzur.

11 Of Benjamin; <sup>s</sup>Abidan, the son of Gideon.

12 Of Dan; <sup>t</sup>Ahiezer, the son of Ammishaddai.

13 Of Asher; <sup>u</sup>Pagiel, the son of Ocran.

14 Of Gad; <sup>x</sup>Eliasaph, the son of Deuel.

15 Of Naphtali; <sup>y</sup>Ahira, the son of Enan.

16 These *were* <sup>z</sup>the renowned of the congregation, princes of the tribes of their fathers, <sup>a</sup>heads of thousands in Israel.

17 ¶ And Moses and Aaron took these men which are expressed by *their* names:

18 And they assembled all the congregation together on the first *day* of the second month; and they declared <sup>b</sup>their pedigrees after their families, <sup>c</sup>by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, by their polls.

19 <sup>d</sup>As the LORD commanded Moses, so he numbered them in the wilderness of Sinai.

20 And the children of Reuben, <sup>e</sup>Israel's eldest son, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, by their polls, every male from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

21 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Reuben, <sup>f</sup>were forty and six thousand and five hundred.

22 ¶ Of the children of <sup>g</sup>Simeon, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, those that were numbered of them, according to the number of the names, by their polls, every male from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

the silver collected upon that occasion; whereas *this* was ordered on the first day of the second month. (*Ex.* xxxviii. 25—28. xl. 2.)—The Levites were exempted both from the tribute and from war, and consequently were not included in either account. None seem to have been numbered who were unserviceable, whether through age, or infirmities; but, as “there was not one feeble person among their tribes” when they left Egypt, we may suppose there were very few at this time. (*Note, Ex.* xiii. 17, 18, *latter part.*) Yet all the women, the minors, and probably the old men, were omitted; as well as the mixed multitude which came up with them out of Egypt. Each tribe was reckoned in even numbers; no less sum than fifty being mentioned, and that but in one instance (25): as they were ranked under rulers of thousands, of hundreds, and of fifties, yet according to their tribes, families, and households; it is probable they were registered accordingly, with the omission of the odd numbers: and the alterations had been so few since the former account was taken, that it made no difference in the round sum. Some indeed infer from this circumstance, that not one had died in the intervening space: but if this were allowed, it must also be supposed, that no individual had attained

the age of twenty years in that time; which is totally improbable! They were numbered in order to illustrate the divine faithfulness in thus increasing the seed of Jacob; to prepare the way for their regular march and encampments, as now about to depart from Sinai; and in order to their being trained up for the wars and conquest of Canaan; as well as to ascertain their genealogies, in order to the division of the land by lot.—The Israelites had now continued almost a year at mount Sinai. (*Note, Ex.* xix. 1.)

V. 5—16. (*Marg. Ref.*) The heads of the tribes are here arranged, according to the mothers of Jacob's sons. Those of Leah are first placed in the order of their birth, and then those of Rachel; but Ephraim, the younger son of Joseph, is placed first. Afterwards the sons of the handmaids are mentioned; but it is observable, that Bilhah's eldest son is first named, and the two sons of Zilpah next, yet the youngest first; and last Naphtali, the other son of Bilhah. This arrangement is not easily accounted for: nor is it adhered to in the subsequent part of the chapter.—Elishama, the son of Ammihud (10), was Joshua's grandfather. (1 *Chr.* vii. 26, 27.)

V. 17—21. *Marg. Ref.*—Comp. xxvi. 7.

V. 22, 23. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, xxvi. 14.

23 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Simeon, <sup>b</sup> *were* fifty and nine thousand and three hundred.

<sup>a</sup> ii. 13. xxv. 9, 14. xxvi. 14.

<sup>i</sup> Gen. xxx. 10, 11. xlix. 19.

24 ¶ Of the children of <sup>1</sup>Gad, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

25 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Gad, *were* <sup>k</sup> forty and five thousand six hundred and fifty.

<sup>k</sup> ii. 15. xxvi. 18.

<sup>i</sup> Gen. xxx. 28. xlix. 8-12. i Chr. v. 2.

26 ¶ Of the children of <sup>1</sup>Judah, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

27 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Judah, *were* <sup>m</sup> threescore and fourteen thousand and six hundred.

<sup>m</sup> ii. 3, 4. xxvi. 22. 2 Sam. xxiv. 9. 2 Chr. xvii. 4-16.

<sup>n</sup> Gen. xxx. 18. xlix. 14, 15.

28 ¶ Of the children of <sup>2</sup>Issachar, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

29 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Issachar, *were* <sup>o</sup> fifty and four thousand and four hundred.

<sup>o</sup> i. 5. xxvi. 25.

<sup>p</sup> Gen. xxx. 20. xlix. 13.

30 ¶ Of the children of <sup>3</sup>Zebulun, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

31 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Zebulun, *were* <sup>q</sup> fifty and seven thousand and four hundred.

<sup>q</sup> ii. 8. xxvi. 27.

32 ¶ Of the children of <sup>4</sup>Joseph, *namely*, of the children of Ephraim, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

<sup>r</sup> Gen. xxx. 24. xxxvii. xxxix. —xlviii. xlix. 22-26.

33 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of <sup>5</sup>the tribe of Ephraim, *were* forty thousand and five hundred.

<sup>s</sup> Gen. xlviii. 5. Deut. xxxiii. 17. <sup>t</sup> ii. 19. xxvi. 37.

34 Of the children of Manasseh, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

35 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Manasseh, *were* <sup>u</sup> thirty and two thousand and two hundred.

<sup>u</sup> ii. 21. xxvi. 34. Gen. xlviii. 19, 20.

36 ¶ Of the children of <sup>6</sup>Benjamin, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

<sup>x</sup> Gen. xxxv. 16. —18. xlv. 20. xlix. 27.

37 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Benjamin, *were* <sup>y</sup> thirty and five thousand and four hundred.

<sup>y</sup> ii. 28. xxvi. 41. Judg. xx. 44-46. 2 Chr. xvii. 17, 18.

38 ¶ Of the children of <sup>7</sup>Dan, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

<sup>z</sup> Gen. xxx. 5, 6. xlix. 16, 17.

39 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Dan, *were* <sup>a</sup> threescore and two thousand and seven hundred.

<sup>a</sup> ii. 26. xxvi. 43.

40 ¶ Of the children of <sup>8</sup>Asher, by their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from

<sup>b</sup> Gen. xxx. 12, 13. xlix. 20.

V. 24. The tribe of Gad marched along with that of Simeon, under the standard of Reuben; and it seems on that account to have been introduced in this order. The other tribes also are classed together according to their encampments, and the order of their subsequent march; and not according to the arrangement before given of their princes.

V. 25. Comp. xxvi. 18.

V. 26, 27. Jacob had given Judah the pre-eminence in his prophetic blessing; and that tribe was to have the precedency in the encampments of Israel: accordingly,

God had increased them more than any of their brethren; indeed, to more than double the number of some of the tribes.—Ephraim and Manasseh, according to the same prophecy, were numbered as distinct tribes, Ephraim having the superiority as it had been foretold; and Joseph indeed appears “a fruitful bough:” yet the tribe of Judah was more numerous, by one thousand nine hundred men, than these two tribes united. (32—35. xxvi. 22.—Notes, Gen. xlix. 8—10. 22—26.)

V. 28—46. Marg. Ref. Comp. xxvi. 23—51.

twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

41 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Asher, *were* <sup>e</sup> forty and one thousand and five hundred.

<sup>e</sup> ii. 28. xxvi. 47.

<sup>d</sup> Gen. xxx. 7, 8.  
xlix. 21.

42 ¶ Of the children of <sup>a</sup> Naphtali, throughout their generations, after their families, by the house of their fathers, according to the number of the names, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war;

43 Those that were numbered of them, *even* of the tribe of Naphtali, *were* <sup>e</sup> fifty and three thousand and four hundred.

<sup>e</sup> i. 30. xxvi. 50.

<sup>i</sup> 2-16 xxvi. 64.

44 ¶ These *are* those that were numbered, which Moses and Aaron numbered, and the princes of Israel, *being* twelve men: each one was for the house of his fathers.

45 So were all those that were numbered of the children of Israel, by the house of their fathers, from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war in Israel;

46 *Even* all they that were numbered were <sup>e</sup> six hundred thousand, and three thousand, and five hundred and fifty.

<sup>g</sup> ii. 32. xxiii. 10.  
xxvi. 51. Gen.  
xiii. 16. Ex. xii.  
37. xxxviii. 26.  
Deut. x. 22.  
1 Kings iv. 20.  
2 Chr. xiii. 3.  
Heb. xi. 11, 12.  
Rev. vii. 4-9.  
<sup>h</sup> ii. 33. iii. iv.  
xxvi. 57-62.  
<sup>i</sup> Chr. vi. xxi. 6.

47 ¶ But <sup>b</sup> the Levites, after the tribe of their fathers, were not numbered among them.

48 For the LORD had spoken unto Moses, saying,

49 Only thou shalt not number the tribe of Levi, neither take the sum of them among the children of Israel;

50 But <sup>i</sup> thou shalt appoint the Levites over <sup>k</sup> the tabernacle of testimony, and over all the vessels thereof, and over all things that *belong* to it: they shall bear the tabernacle, and all the vessels thereof, and they shall minister unto it, and shall <sup>i</sup> encamp round about the tabernacle.

iii. 8-10. Ex.  
15. 25-33. Ex.  
xxxii. 26-29.  
xxxviii. 21.  
1 Chron. xxi. 11.  
xxv. xxvi. Ezra  
viii. 25-30. 33.  
34. Neh. xii. 8.  
22. 47. xiii. 5.  
10-13. 22.  
<sup>k</sup> 53. xxx. 11. Ex.  
xxxii. 18. xxxviii.  
21. Pa. cxlii. 4  
ii. 17. iii. 23-38  
x. 21.

51 And when the tabernacle setteth forward, <sup>m</sup> the Levites shall take it down; and when the tabernacle is to be pitched, the Levites shall set it up: and <sup>n</sup> the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.

iv. 5-33. x. 17.  
21.

52 And the children of Israel shall <sup>o</sup> pitch their tents, every man by his own camp, and every man by his own standard, throughout their hosts.

iii. 10. 38. xvi.  
40. xviii. 22.  
Lev. xxii. 10-13.  
1 Sam. vi. 19. 2 Sam. vi. 7.

53 But the Levites <sup>p</sup> shall pitch round about the tabernacle of testimony, that <sup>q</sup> there be no wrath upon the congregation of the children of Israel: and <sup>r</sup> the Levites shall keep the charge of the tabernacle of testimony.

<sup>o</sup> ii. 2. 34.

<sup>p</sup> 50.

54 And the children of Israel did <sup>s</sup> according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did they.

<sup>q</sup> viii. 19. xvi. 46.  
xviii. 5. Lev. x.  
6. Jer. v. 31.  
xxiii. 15. Acts  
xx. 28-31.  
<sup>r</sup> iii. 7, 8. viii. 24.  
25. xviii. 3-5.  
xxx. 30. 47.  
1 Chr. xxiii. 32.  
2 Chr. xiii. 10.  
<sup>s</sup> ii. 34. Ex. xl. 16.  
32. Matt. xxviii.  
20.

V. 47-50. The Levites were by this regulation exempted from war, because they were appointed to another special service. It is evident that they had not been included, when the half shekel each was collected from those who were numbered: for intimations had all along been given of the Lord's intentions respecting them, which were on this occasion more explicitly declared. (Note, Ex. xxx. 11-16.)

V. 51. Notes, iv. 5-18.

V. 53. The wrath of God would have come on the whole congregation, if the service of the sanctuary had been neglected; or if the people had indiscriminately entered into the tabernacle, or attempted to remove it when they marched.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

From noting the faithfulness of God to his promises, however large, and however improbable the performance might appear in the case of Israel; we may take courage in expecting, and praying for, the accomplishment of those which yet remain to be fulfilled, to ourselves, and to the church of God. And again, by considering the astonishing manner in which this immense multitude of men, be-

sides women, children, and strangers, were fed, watered, and provided for in the wilderness; we may learn to trust the Lord for such things as are needful for us and our families. Yet when we recollect how soon, and in what manner, their carcasses fell in the wilderness; we may also be reminded to revere the awful justice of God, to prepare for death, which is continually making such ravages; and to repent and depart from sin which produces such fatal effects.—We here also see, as in a glass, the true Israel of God; “a number which no man can number,” yet all known by name, and written in the book of life, by the Captain of our salvation. They are his willing subjects, and do not “despise dominion,” whether of magistrates or ministers, as acting by commission from him; they are indeed men of peace, yet marshalled, armed, and prepared for battle; and they are daily assaulted, whilst on earth, by many enemies: but under the command and protection of their Captain, they shall <sup>a</sup> finally, one after another, be crowned conquerors.—Nor are ministers discharged from this war; but must be careful “not to entangle themselves with the affairs of this life, that they may please him, who hath chosen them to be soldiers,” yea, officers in his army; and they must learn “to endure

## CHAP. II.

A command that the people should encamp according to their tribes, 1, 2. Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, on the east; the first division, 3—9. Reuben, Simeon, Gad, on the south; the second division, 10—16. The Levites around the tabernacle in the midst, 17. Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin, on the west; the third division, 18—24. Dan, Asher, Naphtali, on the north, and in the rear, 25—31. A general recapitulation, 32—34.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

2 Every man of the children of Israel <sup>a</sup> shall pitch by his own standard, with <sup>b</sup> the ensign of their father's house: <sup>c</sup> far off <sup>d</sup> about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch.

3 ¶ And on the east side, toward the rising of the sun, shall they of <sup>e</sup> the standard of the camp of Judah pitch, throughout their armies: and <sup>f</sup> Nahshon the son of Amminadab shall be captain of the children of Judah.

4 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, <sup>g</sup> were threescore and fourteen thousand and six hundred.

5 And those that do pitch next unto

him shall be the tribe of Issachar: <sup>h</sup> and Nethaneel the son of Zuar shall be captain of the children of Issachar.

6 And his host, and those that were numbered thereof, <sup>i</sup> were <sup>j</sup> fifty and four thousand and four hundred.

7 Then the tribe of Zebulun; and <sup>k</sup> Eliab the son of Helon shall be captain of the children of Zebulun.

8 And his host, and those that were numbered thereof, <sup>l</sup> were <sup>m</sup> fifty and seven thousand and four hundred.

9 All that were numbered in the camp of Judah were an hundred thousand and fourscore thousand and six thousand and four hundred, throughout their armies: <sup>n</sup> these shall first set forth.

10 ¶ On the south side shall be the standard of the camp of <sup>o</sup> Reuben, according to their armies: and the captain of the children of Reuben shall be <sup>p</sup> Elizur, the son of Shedeur.

11 And his host, and those that were numbered thereof, <sup>q</sup> were <sup>r</sup> forty and six thousand and five hundred.

12 And those which pitch by him shall be the tribe of Simeon: and the

"hardship as good soldiers." (Note, 2 Tim. 3—7.) If exempted from secular concerns, it is in order that they may be the more given up to the study and preaching of the word of God, and to prayer, which are the chief weapons of their warfare; for by these means they may endeavour to avert the wrath of God from the people. As Christians are separated from the world, so ministers should be still more detached from its pursuits and employments, and examples to the flock; 'not,' says Mr. Henry, 'affecting to seem greater, but aiming to be really better, every way better, than others.'

## NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 2. The Israelites encamped in four grand divisions, with the tabernacle in the centre; yet at some distance from it, as a token of awe and reverence. The sanctuary and the ark, as pledges of JEHOVAH's special favour, were in reality the glory and defence of the people; yet the people were stationed, as if they had been the guardians of the sanctuary, and no enemy could approach it without forcing the way through their hosts. Religion is indeed *our* protection; yet it is our duty to support *its* cause and interest, with our whole power and ability.—This encampment is computed to have formed a moveable city of twelve miles square: and many think that the door of every tent faced the tabernacle, that thence the people might worship towards this token of God's presence upon a mercy-seat.—We know nothing certain concerning the

standards of the several tribes: but it is highly improbable that they should have been the figures of any animals, as the Jewish writers assert; for this might have proved an occasion to idolatry, and indeed it was deemed unlawful in after ages.

V. 3. The tribe of Judah, from which Christ sprang, was appointed to the highest station, and under it were ranked the tribes of Issachar and Zebulun, Judah's younger brethren by the same mother.—The tribe of Reuben, Jacob's eldest son, though degraded, was appointed to lead the second squadron, under whom ranked the tribe of Simeon his younger brother, and that of Gad, the eldest son of Zilpah, Leah's hand-maid.—The three tribes descended from Rachel formed the third squadron: and the three other tribes, descended from the concubines, formed the fourth, under the command of a captain of the tribe of Dan; concerning which Jacob prophesied, "Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel."—Thus the whole arrangement was formed in evident wisdom, as well as sovereign authority, so as to conduce to peace, and perpetuate relative affection. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 5. Nethaneel.] The remembrance of the God of their fathers, which many of the Israelites retained during their bondage in Egypt, appears from the names which they gave their children: as Nethaneel, which signifies, *the gift of God*: Eliab, *my God a father*: Elizur, *my God a rock*: Shelumiel, *God my peace*: Eliasaph, *my God hath added*: Elishama, *my God hath heard*, &c.

V. 6—16. Marg. Ref.

captain of the children of Simeon *shall be* <sup>p</sup> Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.

13 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, *were* <sup>a</sup> fifty and nine thousand and three hundred.

14 Then the tribe of Gad: and the captain of the sons of Gad *shall be* <sup>r</sup> Eliasaph the son of Reuel.

15 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, *were* <sup>a</sup> forty and five thousand and six hundred and fifty.

16 All that were numbered in the camp of Reuben, *were* <sup>a</sup> an hundred thousand and fifty and one thousand and four hundred and fifty, throughout their armies: and <sup>a</sup> they shall set forth in the second rank.

17 ¶ Then <sup>a</sup> the tabernacle of the congregation shall set forward, with the camp of the Levites in the midst of the camp: as they encamp so shall they set forward, every man in his place, by their standards.

18 ¶ On the west side *shall be* the standard of the camp of <sup>r</sup> Ephraim, according to their armies: and the captain of the sons of Ephraim *shall be* <sup>a</sup> Elishama the son of Ammihud.

19 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, *were* <sup>a</sup> forty thousand and five hundred.

20 And by him *shall be* the tribe of Manasseh: and the captain of the children of Manasseh *shall be* <sup>b</sup> Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.

21 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, *were* <sup>a</sup> thirty and two thousand and two hundred.

22 Then the tribe of Benjamin: and the captain of the sons of Benjamin *shall be* <sup>d</sup> Abidan the son of Gideon.

23 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, *were* <sup>a</sup> thirty and five thousand and four hundred.

24 All that were numbered of the camp of Ephraim *were* <sup>a</sup> an hundred

thousand and eight thousand and an hundred, throughout their armies: <sup>a</sup> and they shall go forward in the third rank.

25 ¶ The standard of the camp of Dan *shall be* on the north side by their armies: and the captain of the children of Dan *shall be* <sup>b</sup> Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.

26 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, *were* <sup>a</sup> threescore and two thousand and seven hundred.

27 And those that encamp by him *shall be* the tribe of Asher: and the captain of the children of Asher *shall be* <sup>k</sup> Pagiel the son of Ocran.

28 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, *were* <sup>a</sup> forty and one thousand and five hundred.

29 Then the tribe of Naphtali: and the captain of the children of Naphtali *shall be* <sup>m</sup> Ahira, the son of Enan.

30 And his host, and those that were numbered of them, *were* <sup>n</sup> fifty and three thousand and four hundred.

31 All they that were numbered in the camp of Dan, *were* <sup>a</sup> an hundred thousand and fifty and seven thousand and six hundred: <sup>p</sup> they shall go hindmost with their standards.

32 ¶ These *are* those which were numbered of the children of Israel, by the house of their fathers: all those that were numbered of the camps, throughout their hosts, *were* <sup>q</sup> six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty.

33 But <sup>a</sup> the Levites were not numbered among the children of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses.

34 And the children of Israel did <sup>a</sup> according to all that the LORD commanded Moses: <sup>a</sup> so they pitched by their standards, and so they set forward, every one after their families, according to the house of their fathers.

V. 17. When the people were encamped, one division of the congregation was placed at each quarter over against the sanctuary; but when they marched, two divisions went before and two after it. (Note, x. 21.)

V. 18—34. Marg. Ref.—Note, Ex. xxxviii. 26—28.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord, in his over-ruling providence, as certainly,

though with less observation, appoints the bounds of our habitation and our rank in life, as he did the encampments of Israel in the wilderness. It is therefore our duty and interest to be contented with our place, and to endeavour to occupy it in a proper manner; without attempting to desert it, or wishing to change it; without murmuring, ambition, or covetousness. And if he, "who ordereth all things after the counsel of his own will," hath allotted

## CHAP. III.

The sons of Aaron, 1—4. The Levites given to them for assistants, instead of the first-born, 5—13. The Levites numbered according to the three families of Gershon, Kohath, and Merari; and their several charges assigned them, 14—37. The charge of Moses and Aaron, 38, 39. The first-born changed for the Levites, and the redemption of the overplus, 40—51.

<sup>a</sup> Gen. ii. 4 v. 1.  
x. 1. Ex. vi. 16  
20, 26. Matt. i. 1.

<sup>b</sup> i. 1. Lev. xxv. 1.  
xxvii. 34.

<sup>c</sup> xxvii. 60. Ex. vi.  
23. xxviii. 1.  
1 Chr. vi. 3  
xxiv. 1.

<sup>d</sup> Ex. xxviii. 41.  
xl. 13, 15. Lev.  
viii. 12, 30.

<sup>e</sup> Heb. whose hand  
he filled.

<sup>f</sup> Ex. xxx. 1—37.  
Lev. viii. ix.  
Heb. vii. 28.

<sup>g</sup> xxvi. 61. Lev. x.  
1. 1 Chr. xxiv. 2.

<sup>g</sup> 1 Chr. xxiv. 1—  
6.

**THESE** also *are* the <sup>a</sup>generations of Aaron and Moses in the day *that* the LORD <sup>b</sup>spake with Moses in mount Sinai.

2 And these *are* <sup>c</sup>the names of the sons of Aaron; Nadab the first-born, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

3 These *are* the names of the sons of Aaron, <sup>d</sup>the priests which were anointed, <sup>e</sup>whom <sup>f</sup>he consecrated to minister in the priest's office.

4 And <sup>g</sup>Nadab and Abihu died before the LORD, when they offered strange fire before the LORD in the wilderness of Sinai, and they had no children: <sup>g</sup>and Eleazar and Ithamar ministered

our station near to his word and ordinances, and hath taught us to believe in the divine Redeemer, we have abundant reason to be thankful. Though in a wilderness, in a cottage, in poverty, we have no reason, and surely should have no disposition, to envy those who possess stately mansions, elegant gardens, or cultivated estates, but have no lot in Israel, nor inheritance in Canaan.—The Lord is a God of *order* and of *peace*; and he commands that all things in his church should be done “*decently*” and “*in order*,” and “*that all things be done in peace.*” It would be well if in attempting to accomplish the former purpose, according to their own idea of decency and order, all denominations of Christians had not too much lost sight of the latter injunction. It is desirable that real Christians should be of one judgment: but if that cannot be obtained, it is of great importance that they be of *one heart*; and that, like these four squadrons of Israel, they should live in harmony with one another; and in their different encampments surround the ark, as all of one family, embarked in one common interest, and marching to the same heavenly Canaan: and that they be upon their guard against the suggestions of those enemies, who would persuade them to quarrel about their different ensigns, and to draw the sword of war against their brethren; instead of being valiant for the truth, and against the common enemies of their religion. Then would the church be “*comely*, and terrible as an army with banners;” and not the less so for being divided into different squadrons, encamped or marching separately; provided each division vied with all the others, which should be most zealous for the cause of God and truth, and most careful to “*adorn*” the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.”—“*Let*” then *brotherly love continue*: and may the Lord prosper the attempts, and increase the numbers, of those who

in the priest's office in the sight of Aaron their father.

5 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

6 <sup>h</sup>Bring the tribe of Levi near, and present them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister unto him.

7 And they shall <sup>i</sup>keep his charge, and the charge of the whole congregation, before the tabernacle of the congregation, to <sup>k</sup>do the service of the tabernacle.

8 And <sup>l</sup>they shall keep all the instruments of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the charge of the children of Israel, to do the service of the tabernacle.

9 And <sup>m</sup>thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron, and to his sons; they *are* wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel.

10 And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and <sup>n</sup>they shall wait on their priest's office: <sup>o</sup>and the stranger

<sup>h</sup> i. 49—53. ii. 17.  
33. viii. 6—18.  
22—26. xvi. 9—  
11. xviii. 2—6.  
Ex. xxxii. 28—  
29. Deut. xxxiii.  
8, 9.  
<sup>i</sup> iii. 32. viii. 26.  
xxxii. 30. 1 Chr.  
xxiii. 28—32.  
xxvi. 26.  
<sup>k</sup> i. 50. viii. 11. 15.  
24—26.

<sup>l</sup> iv. 15. 28. 33. x.  
17. 21. 1 Chr.  
xxvi. 20—28.  
Ezra viii. 24—  
30. Is. liii. 11.

<sup>m</sup> viii. 19. xviii. 6.  
Eph. iv. 8. 11.

<sup>n</sup> xviii. 7. 1 Chr.  
vi. 49. Ez. xiv.  
8. Acts vi. 3, 4.  
Rom. xii. 7.  
<sup>o</sup> 1 Tim. iv. 15, 16.  
38. i. 61. xvi.  
35. 40. xviii. 3.  
1 Sam. vi. 19.  
2 Sam. vi. 7.  
2 Chr. xxvi. 16.  
—21. Heb. viii.  
4.

“endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace!” (Notes, Eph. iv. 1—6. Phil. i. 27—30. ii. 1—4.)

## NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—3. The sons of Moses are not particularly mentioned on this occasion, having no distinction conferred on them above their brethren. This was a singular instance of his disinterested moderation, and submission to the appointment of God; who, in proof of the divine legation of his servant, willed him to act in a manner so contrary to all other eminent men: for they almost universally seek the advancement of their posterity.—Aaron is here first mentioned, because the honour of the priesthood was conferred upon him and his sons; while those of Moses were only common Levites, and therefore classed among them. (1 Chr. xxiii. 14—20.—Notes, 14. xxvi. 24—27.)

V. 4. *In the sight*—] That is, according to Aaron's direction, under his eye, and in concurrence with him. Thus, by attending to his prudent counsel, they were preserved from the sin and punishment of their brethren. Their regular and reverential ministrations would doubtless afford much consolation to Aaron after his affliction.

V. 5—10. There was at this time much work to be done, and only three priests to perform it: some assistants were therefore necessary, to attend on the more ordinary services, whilst *they* sprinkled the blood, burned the fat, and offered incense, especially when the tabernacle was to be taken down, and carried with them in their marches. That no improper persons, none “*who were not called of God*,” might be employed, the tribe of Levi was on this occasion set apart for these services. To this tribe Moses and Aaron belonged: it had been signalized by its zeal

that cometh nigh shall be put to death.

11 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

<sup>p 4. viii. 16. xviii. 6.</sup> 12 And I, behold, <sup>p</sup> I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel, instead of all the first-born that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel; therefore the Levites shall be mine.

<sup>q viii. 17. xviii. 15. Ex. xiii. 2, 12. xxxiv. 19. Lev. xxvii. 26. Luke ii. 23. Heb. xii. 23.</sup> 13 Because <sup>q</sup> all the first-born *are* mine; *for* <sup>r</sup> on the day that I smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, I hallowed unto me all the first-born in Israel, both man and beast; mine they shall be: I *am* the LORD.

14 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, saying,

<sup>s 22. 28. 34. 39, 40. 41. xviii. 16. xxvi. 62.</sup> 15 Number the children of Levi, after the house of their fathers, by their families; <sup>s</sup> every male from a month old and upward shalt thou number them.

16 And Moses numbered them according to the <sup>s</sup> word of the LORD, as he was commanded.

<sup>t xxvi. 57, 58. Gen. xli. 11. Ex. vi. 16. 1 Chr. vi. 1. 2. 16—19. Ger. shom. xxiii. 6—23.</sup> 17 And <sup>t</sup> these were the sons of Levi, by their names; Gershon, and Kohath, and Merari.

18 And these *are* the names of the sons of Gershon, by their families;

<sup>u Ex. vi. 17. 1 Chr. vi. 17. 20.</sup> <sup>u</sup> Libni, and Shimei.

19 And the sons of Kohath, by their families; <sup>x</sup> Amram, and Izehar, Hebron, and Uzziel.

<sup>x Ex. vi. 18. 20. 1 Chr. vi. 18. 38. xxiii. 12, 13. 16, 19, 20. Izhar.</sup>

20 And the sons of Merari, by their families; <sup>y</sup> Mahli, and Mushi. These *are* the families of the Levites, according to the house of their fathers.

<sup>y Ex. vi. 19. 1 Chr. vi. 19. 23. 47. xxiii. 21. 23.</sup>

21 ¶ Of Gershon *was* the family <sup>z</sup> of the Libnites, and the family of the Shimites: these *are* the families of the Gershonites.

<sup>z 18.</sup>

22 Those that were numbered of them, according to the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, *even* those that were numbered of them, *were* <sup>a</sup> seven thousand and <sup>a</sup> five hundred.

23 The families of the Gershonites shall pitch <sup>b</sup> behind the tabernacle <sup>b</sup> i 53. ii. 17. westward.

24 And the chief of the house of the father of the Gershonites, *shall be* Elia-saph the son of Lael.

25 And <sup>c</sup> the charge of the sons of Gershon, in the tabernacle of the congregation, *shall be* <sup>d</sup> the tabernacle, and the tent, the covering thereof, and <sup>e</sup> the hanging for the door of the tabernacle of the congregation:

26 And <sup>f</sup> the hangings of the court, and the curtain for the door of the court, which *is* by the tabernacle, and by the altar round about, and <sup>g</sup> the cords of it, for all the service thereof.

27 ¶ And <sup>h</sup> of Kohath *was* the family of the Amramites, and the family of the Izeharites, and the family of the Hebronites, and the family of the Uzzielites: these *are* the families of the Kohathites.

28 In the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, *were* eight thousand and six hundred, <sup>i</sup> keep-<sup>i</sup> ing the charge of the sanctuary.

29 The families of the sons of Kohath shall pitch <sup>j</sup> on the side of the tabernacle southward.

30 And the chief of the house of the father of the families of the Kohathites, *shall be* Elizaphan the son of Uzziel.

31 And their charge *shall be* <sup>m</sup> the ark, and the table, and the candlestick,

against idolatry in the matter of the golden calf. (Notes, Ex. xxxiii. 27—29. Deut. xxxiii. 9.) It was by far the smallest tribe of all: and, in short, it seemed good in the sight of God to choose the Levites to approach to him, in preference to the other Israelites. (Note, Ps. lxx. 4.) Several intimations had before been given of this purpose of God, but it was now more fully and expressly declared.—The services allotted to the Levites, at this time and in subsequent ages, may be most exactly known by carefully consulting the Scriptures referred to in the margin, and the notes made on them.

V. 13. Some learned men have argued, that the first-

born of each family were the priests of the Lord by birth, before this change; but this has no scriptural ground. Indeed, the very mention of the day, and occasion of the first-born having been hallowed, proves that no such custom or notion had previously existed. (Notes, Ex. xiii. 2. 11—16. xxiv. 5.) The Levites, as substituted for the first-born, were not admitted to the priesthood; nor were they exchanged for the first-born of mature age, but for the young first-born children. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 14—19. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. vi. 14—25.

V. 25, 26. Marg. Ref.—iv. 23—28. vii. 7.

V. 27—31. Marg. Ref.—Notes, iv. 5—16. vii. 4—9.

o Ex. xxvii. 1-8  
xxx. 1-10  
xxxvii. 25-29.  
xxxviii. 1-7.  
o Ex. xxvi. 37-33.  
xxxvi. 85, 36.

and <sup>a</sup> the altars and the vessels of the sanctuary wherewith they minister, and <sup>e</sup> the hanging, and all the service thereof.

p iv. 16, 27. xx. 25  
-28. 2 Kings  
xxv. 18. 1 Chr.  
ix. 14-20. xxvi.  
20-24.

32 And <sup>p</sup> Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest *shall be* chief over the chief of the Levites, *and have* the oversight of them that keep the charge of the sanctuary.

q See on 20.-  
1 Chr. vi. 19.  
xxiii. 21.

33 ¶ Of Merari *was* <sup>a</sup> the family of the Mahlites, and the family of the Mushites: *these are* the families of Merari.

r v. 48, 44

34 And those that were numbered of them, according to the number of all the males, from a month old and upward, *were* <sup>r</sup> six thousand and two hundred.

s 23. 29

35 And the chief of the house of the father of the families of Merari *was* Zuriel, the son of Abihail: <sup>s</sup> *these* shall pitch on the side of the tabernacle northward.

\* Heb. the office  
of the charge.

t iv. 29-33. vii. 8.  
Ex. xxvi. 15-29.  
32. 37. xxvii. 9-  
49. xxxvi. 20-  
34. 38. xxxviii.  
47-20.

36 And <sup>t</sup> *under* the custody and charge of the sons of Merari, *shall be* <sup>t</sup> the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars thereof, and the pillars thereof, and the sockets thereof, and all the vessels thereof, and all that serveth thereto,

37 And the pillars of the court round about, and their sockets, and their pins, and their cords.

38 ¶ But those that encamp before

the tabernacle <sup>u</sup> toward the east, *even* <sup>u</sup> 23. 29. 35. i. 53.  
before the tabernacle of the congrega-  
tion eastward, *shall be* Moses and  
Aaron, and his sons, <sup>x</sup> keeping the  
charge of the sanctuary, <sup>y</sup> for the charge  
of the children of Israel: and the  
stranger that cometh nigh shall be put  
to death.

39 All that were numbered of the Levites, which Moses and Aaron numbered at the commandment of the LORD, throughout their families, all the males from a month old and upward, *were* <sup>x</sup> twenty and two thousand.

40 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>x</sup> Number all the first-born of the males of the children of Israel, from a month old and upward, and take the number of their names.

41 And thou shalt take the Levites for me, (I *am* the LORD,) instead of all the first-born among the children of Israel; and the cattle of the Levites, instead of all the firstlings among the cattle of the children of Israel.

42 And Moses numbered, as the LORD commanded him, all the first-born among the children of Israel.

43 And all the first-born males, by the number of names, from a month old and upward, of those that were numbered of them, <sup>b</sup> were twenty and two thousand two hundred and three-score and thirteen.

V. 32. Eleazar, who was next in succession to the high priesthood, was appointed to rule those who were placed over all the Levites, in respect of their different services, and to allot those of each family their own work. The special charge, in the constituent parts of the sanctuary, allotted to each division, may be clearly seen by examining the marginal references.

V. 36. Marg. Ref.—iv. 29—33. vii. 8.

V. 38. The three divisions of the Levites being stationed on the west, the south, and the north, of the sanctuary; the east, or fore-front, which was the most important station, was guarded by Moses and the priests, who thus were at hand to exclude all improper persons.

V. 39. The sum total of the Levites was 22,300: "of Gershon 7,500" (22): of "Kohath 8,600" (28): "of Merari 6,200" (34). But the 300 of the Levites are supposed to be the first-born of their several families, after the departure out of Egypt, who were already devoted to the Lord: and we must acknowledge a peculiar interposition of Providence in this near coincidence in the number of the Levites, and that of the first-born (43).

V. 41—43. The first-born, in any company, must in

general at least amount to one in eight or ten; whereas the number here mentioned, was scarcely one in fifty of all the males young and old: for there were above 600,000 adults, and perhaps almost as many under age. It is therefore evident, that none were numbered, but those who had been born after the destruction of the first-born of Egypt. This indeed seems the meaning of the law, which referred to the future, and not to the past; (Ex. xiii. 2;) and it is evident that the firstlings of the cattle were thus reckoned. Indeed 45,000 of both sexes, which is rather more than double the first-born males, seems a vast number of first-born children within the space of one year: but upon reflection, we shall find it by no means improbable, that among 1,200,000 persons of both sexes, who were above twenty years of age, (and many might marry much younger than that age,) there should be within that time 50,000 marriages: that is, about the twelfth part of the company of marriageable persons of each sex. Especially if we consider that multitudes might be inclined to marry, when they found they were about to enjoy liberty: and when they recollected, that the promises made to Israel peculiarly respected a very rapid increase, and that there would

44 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

45 Take <sup>c</sup> the Levites instead of all the first-born among the children of Israel, and the cattle of the Levites instead of their cattle, and the Levites shall be mine: I am the LORD.

46 And for those that are to be <sup>d</sup> redeemed, of the two hundred and threescore and thirteen of the first-born of the children of Israel, <sup>e</sup> which are more than the Levites;

47 Thou shalt even take <sup>f</sup> five shekels apiece by the poll; after <sup>g</sup> the shekel of the sanctuary shalt thou take *them*: (the shekel is twenty gerahs:)

48 And thou shalt give the money, wherewith the odd number of them is to be redeemed, unto Aaron and to his sons.

49 And Moses took the redemption-money of <sup>h</sup> them, that were over and above them that were redeemed by the Levites.

50 Of the first-born of the children of Israel took he the money; <sup>i</sup> a thou-

sand three hundred and threescore and five *shekels*, after the shekel of the sanctuary.

51 And Moses <sup>j</sup> gave the money of them that were redeemed, unto Aaron and to his sons, according to the word of the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moses.

#### CHAP. IV.

A command to number the family of Kohath from thirty to fifty years old, 1—3. The most holy things to be carried by them, having been prepared and covered by the priests, 4—15. The charge of Eleazar, 16. Moses and Aaron solemnly charged about covering the holy things, 17—20. The service and burden of the sons of Gershon, from thirty to fifty, 21—28: and of the Merarites, 29—33. The number of the Kohathites, 34—37: of the Gershonites, 38—41: and of the Merarites, 42—44. The sum total, 45—49.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

2 Take the sum of the sons of <sup>k</sup> Kohath from among the sons of Levi, after their families, by the house of their fathers,

doubtless be a very great blessing upon them in this respect.—The first-born Israelites were therefore all unfit for service on this emergency: and as they were the heirs of their several families, they probably would not have been very willing when of age, to become servants to the priests; and consequently the change would be as acceptable to the relations of those who were set aside, as to those who were substituted in their stead.—It seems, however, that the Levites and their posterity were thus dedicated to God, only in lieu of the first-born *at that time*; for the law concerning the presentation and redemption of the first-born was in force through all succeeding generations, until the days of Christ. (*Luke ii. 22, 23.*)

V. 44—51. Either it was determined by lot, who should pay the redemption-money, and for whom the Levites should be accepted; or it was paid by a common tax: or, as some think, they began with the eldest; and so the youngest, not being changed, were redeemed.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Whilst we consider Jesus, our great High Priest, appointed of the Father, and intrusted with the charge of the sanctuary and of the whole congregation, and keeping that charge with unremitting attention, and entire faithfulness, love, and power; we should recollect, that his ministers, as presented unto him and ministering before him, have a solemn charge committed to them also. They are called upon to wait in their office; to serve the Lord with reverence; to offer no strange fire; to do nothing of their own mind, or in their own spirit; and with all diligence and fidelity to follow the instructions and copy the example of

their Lord. But it is of the utmost importance that each should know his own post and duty; that no part of the work may be neglected; and that there may be no interference, and no occasion given for envy, ambition, or discontent. No service required by such a Master can be either mean or hard; for he will put honour upon the faithful in the lowest situation, and will provide assistance where the work is too laborious. Christians also, though not engaged in the ministry, have a work to do, and a charge to keep; and must remember, that as all men are the Lord's by creation, believers are his by redemption; and that, as the ministry was appointed for their benefit, they are required to strengthen the hands and to encourage the hearts of those, who minister before the Lord in their behalf.—Blessed be God, we may all at present enter even into the holiest, without danger of death, nay, with assurance of acceptance and life eternal, if we come by faith in Jesus Christ. Still however we must regret, that the Lord's people form a very small proportion of the whole multitude of mankind; and we should be reminded to pray for the sending forth of more faithful ministers: for when they are increased, it is a hopeful sign that the Lord is about to accomplish great things in increasing his church. Nor let us forget, that children, though unfit for service, were numbered as part of this holy tribe; “for of such is the kingdom of God.” But whilst we desire that our offspring should be numbered among the Lord's peculiar people, and that they should excel in holiness; let us, after the example of Moses, be indifferent about every other distinction and interest, either for them or for ourselves.

<sup>b</sup> viii. 24—26. <sup>3</sup> From <sup>b</sup> thirty years old and upward, even until fifty years old, all that enter into the host, to <sup>a</sup> do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.

<sup>c</sup> 2 Kings xi. 4—12. <sup>2</sup> Chr. xxiii. 1—11. <sup>2</sup> Cor. x. 3, 4. <sup>d</sup> Eph. vi. 10—18. <sup>1</sup> Tim. i. 18. <sup>d</sup> iii. 7, 8. xvi. 9. <sup>1</sup> Chr. vi. 48. <sup>xxiii</sup> 4, 5, 28—32. <sup>1</sup> Tim. iii. 1. <sup>24</sup> 30. <sup>iii</sup> 30, 31. <sup>Mark</sup> xiii. 34.

<sup>f</sup> ii. 16, 17. <sup>z</sup> 14. <sup>g</sup> 15. <sup>iii</sup> 27—32. <sup>d</sup> Ex. xxvi. 31—33. <sup>xxvii</sup> 35. <sup>xi</sup> 3. <sup>Matt</sup> xxvii. 51. <sup>Heb</sup> ix. 3. <sup>x</sup> 20. <sup>d</sup> Ex. xxv. 10—22. <sup>xxvii</sup> 1—9. <sup>2</sup> Sam. vi. 2—9.

<sup>k</sup> 7, 8, 11—13. <sup>Ex</sup> xxv. 19. <sup>xxix</sup> 1. <sup>41</sup>. <sup>1</sup> Chr. xxv. 14, 15. <sup>1</sup> Kings viii. 7, 8. <sup>en</sup> Ex. xxv. 23—30. <sup>xxvii</sup> 10—16. <sup>Lev</sup> xxiv. 5—8.

<sup>Or</sup> <sup>pour</sup> out. <sup>o</sup> 6, 7, 9, 11—13. <sup>o</sup> a cloth of scarlet, and cover the same with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put in the staves thereof.

<sup>p</sup> Ex. xxv. 31—39. <sup>xxvii</sup> 17—24. <sup>Ps</sup> cxix. 105. <sup>Rex</sup> i. 20. <sup>ii</sup> 1. <sup>9</sup> And they shall take a cloth of blue, and cover <sup>p</sup> the candlestick of the light, and his lamps, and his tongs, and his snuff-dishes, and all the oil-vessels

thereof, wherewith they minister unto it.

<sup>10</sup> And they shall put it, and all the vessels thereof, <sup>a</sup> within a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put <sup>it</sup> upon a bar.

<sup>11</sup> And upon <sup>r</sup> the golden altar they shall spread a cloth of blue; and cover it with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put to the staves thereof.

<sup>12</sup> And they shall take all <sup>s</sup> the instruments of ministry, wherewith they minister in the sanctuary, and put <sup>them</sup> in a cloth of blue, and cover them with a covering of badgers' skins, and shall put <sup>them</sup> on a bar.

<sup>13</sup> And they shall take away <sup>t</sup> the ashes from the altar, and spread <sup>u</sup> a purple cloth thereon:

<sup>14</sup> And they shall put upon it <sup>x</sup> all the vessels thereof, wherewith they minister about it, <sup>even</sup> the censers, the flesh-hooks, and the shovels, and the <sup>basons</sup>, all the vessels of the altar; <sup>+</sup> Or, <sup>bowls</sup>. and they shall spread upon it a covering of badgers' skins, and put to the staves of it.

<sup>15</sup> And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; <sup>y</sup> after that, the sons of Kohath

## NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 3. The people were numbered for war from twenty years of age; but the Levites were not numbered for the service of the sanctuary till thirty. This, however, had special reference to the charge and burden of removing the tabernacle: for they entered as probationers at twenty-five; (Notes, viii. 24—26;) and in David's time, when the work was more extensive, but not so heavy, they were admitted at twenty years old. (Note, 1 Chr. xxiii. 24—28.)—Jesus Christ deferred entering on his publick work till he was thirty years of age: John the Baptist seems to have begun his ministry rather earlier in life.—The Levites also had an honourable discharge from the most laborious parts of their employment, after twenty years' service, though they were still to be occupied in one way or other.—These laws are not binding in the letter of them upon the ministers of the gospel; but they may afford them much useful practical instruction.

V. 5. The law prohibiting any person, except the high priest on one day in the year, to enter into the most holy place, must have admitted of an exception, while the Israelites were continually removing in the wilderness: that exception therefore was expressly made; and the directions given relating to it must be religiously observed,

or the service could not be safely performed.—While the cloud rested on the tabernacle, the general rule was in force; but when it was removed, then the priests might enter to prepare the sacred vessels for removal.

V. 6. These coverings were intended not so much for security and decent respect, as for concealment: and they marked not only the reverence due to holy things, but the mysteriousness of the things signified by those types, and the darkness of that dispensation.—Some suppose that the cloth of blue represented the azure firmament, which interposes betwixt us and the majesty of heaven.—The covering of badgers' skins, made for the tabernacle, was carried by the Gershonites; (24, 25;) but this was one made to conceal and shelter the ark, when it was to be carried.

V. 7. Continual bread.] The Israelites might be able to procure corn enough from the adjacent countries, even when in the wilderness, to make the shew-bread, and to present the daily meat-offerings.

V. 13, 14. The embers of the sacred fire seem to have been removed in the grate, which was carried apart from the brazen altar; (Note, Ex. xxvii. 1—8;) both being covered from view by purple cloths.

V. 15. Marg. Ref. z.

<sup>a</sup> **HL. 28.** 1 Sam. vi. 19. 2 Sam. vi. 6. 7. 1 Chr. xiii. 9. 10. Heb. xii. 18—29.  
<sup>a</sup> **iii. 30, 31.**

shall come to bear *it*: but <sup>a</sup> they shall not touch *any* holy thing, lest they die. <sup>a</sup> These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation.

<sup>b</sup> **iii. 32**

<sup>c</sup> **Ps. xxxv. 6. xxvii. 20, 21. Lev. xxiv. 2.**  
<sup>d</sup> **Ex. xxx. 34—38. xxxvii. 29.**  
<sup>e</sup> **Ex. xxx. 39—41.**  
<sup>f</sup> **Ex. xxx. 23—33.**  
<sup>g</sup> **Acts xx. 23.**  
<sup>h</sup> **1 Pet. v. 2.**

16 ¶ And to <sup>b</sup> the office of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest *pertaineth* <sup>a</sup> the oil for the light, and <sup>d</sup> the sweet incense, and <sup>e</sup> the daily meat-offering, and <sup>f</sup> the anointing oil, <sup>g</sup> and the oversight of all the tabernacle, and of all that therein *is*, in the sanctuary, and in the vessels thereof.

17 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

<sup>h</sup> **xvi. 32. xvii. 16. xviii. 5. Lev. x. 2. Jer. xxxviii. 23.**

18 <sup>h</sup> Cut ye not off the tribe of the families of the Kohathites from among the Levites:

19 But thus do unto them, that they may live, and not die, when they approach unto the most holy things; Aaron and his sons shall go in, and appoint them every one to his service, and to his burden.

<sup>i</sup> **15. 19. Ex. xix. 21. 1 Sam. vi. 19. Heb. x. 19, 20. Rev. xi. 19.**

20 But <sup>i</sup> they shall not go in to see when the holy things are covered, lest they die.

21 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

<sup>k</sup> **See on iii. 18, 21.**

22 Take also <sup>k</sup> the sum of the sons of Gershon, throughout the houses of their fathers, by their families:

<sup>l</sup> **See on 3**

23 From <sup>l</sup> thirty years old and upward until fifty years old shalt thou number them; all that enter in to <sup>a</sup> perform the service, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.

<sup>m</sup> **See on iii. 26, 26.—vii. 5—7.**

24 This *is* the service of the families of the Gershonites, to serve, and for <sup>†</sup> burdens.

25 And they shall bear <sup>m</sup> the curtains of the tabernacle, and the tabernacle of the congregation, his covering, and

the covering of the badgers' skins that *is* above upon it, and the hanging for the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

26 And the hangings of the court, and the hanging for the door of the gate of the court, which *is* by the tabernacle and by the altar round about, and their cords, and all the instruments of their service, and all that is made for them; so shall they serve.

27 At the <sup>a</sup> appointment of Aaron: and his sons shall be all the service of the sons of the Gershonites, in all their burdens, and in all their service: and ye shall appoint unto them in charge all their burdens.

28 This *is* the service of the families of the sons of Gershon, in the tabernacle of the congregation: and their charge *shall be* <sup>a</sup> under the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.

29 ¶ As for <sup>a</sup> the sons of Merari, thou shalt number them after their families, by the house of their fathers:

30 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old shalt thou number them, every one that entereth into the <sup>a</sup> service, to do the work of the tabernacle of the congregation.

31 And this *is* <sup>a</sup> the charge of their burden, according to all their service in the tabernacle of the congregation; the boards of the tabernacle, and the bars thereof, and the pillars thereof, and sockets thereof,

32 And the pillars of the court round about, and their sockets, and their pins, and their cords, with all their instruments, and with all their service: and by name ye shall reckon <sup>a</sup> the instruments of the charge of their burden.

#### V. 22—26. Marg. Ref.

V. 27, 28. The Levites were under the command of the priests. Eleazar exercised this authority in general, as next in succession to Aaron: and he in particular was placed over the Kohathites; while Ithamar, his younger brother, commanded the Gershonites and Merarites (33).

V. 32. *Reckon the instruments.*] An inventory seems to have been taken of every particular, even to the pins belonging to each part; that nothing might be wanting, when the tabernacle was to be set up.

V. 16. Eleazar himself, perhaps with the other priests, was required to carry the oil for the light, the incense, and the flour for the daily meat-offering, and the holy ointment; besides superintending the Levites.—It may be supposed, that he himself carried no more of the oil than for present use. (Note, Ex. xxx. 22—33.)

V. 18. Eleazar and the priests would be chargeable with the death of the Kohathites, if they failed to give them proper cautions and directions; or permitted them to gaze irreverently or curiously upon the holy things, which they might carry, but must not see (20).

r 28. Ia. iii. 6.

33 This is the service of the families of the sons of Merari, according to all their service in the tabernacle of the congregation, 'under the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.

34 ¶ And Moses and Aaron, and the chief of the congregation, numbered the sons of the Kohathites, after their families and after the house of their fathers;

s 3. 28. 30. viii. 24.  
26 1 Chr. xxiii.  
3. 27.

35 From 'thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old, every one that entereth into the service, for the work in the tabernacle of the congregation.

t iii. 28.

36 And those that were numbered of them, by their families, were 'two thousand seven hundred and fifty.

37 These *were* they that were numbered of the families of the Kohathites, all that might do service in the tabernacle of the congregation, which Moses and Aaron did number, according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

38 And those that were numbered of the sons of Gershon, throughout their families, and by the house of their fathers;

39 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old, every one that entereth into the service, for the work in the tabernacle of the congregation;

n iii. 22.

40 Even those that were numbered of them, throughout their families, by the house of their fathers, were "two thousand and six hundred and thirty.

41 These *are* they that were numbered of the families of the sons of Gershon, of all that might do service

in the tabernacle of the congregation, whom Moses and Aaron did number, according to the commandment of the LORD.

42 And those that were numbered of the families of the sons of Merari, throughout their families, by the house of their fathers,

43 From thirty years old and upward, even unto fifty years old, every one that entereth into the service for the work in the tabernacle of the congregation;

44 Even those that were numbered of them, after their families, were 'three thousand and two hundred. x iii 34.

45 These *be* those that were numbered of the families of the sons of Merari, whom Moses and Aaron numbered, according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

46 All those that were numbered of the Levites, whom Moses and Aaron and the chief of Israel numbered, after their families, and after the house of their fathers;

47 From thirty years old and upward even unto fifty years old, 'every one that came to do the service of the ministry, and the service of the burden in the tabernacle of the congregation; y 15. 24. 37. Rom. xii. 6-8. Cor. xii. 4-31.

48 Even those that were numbered of them, 'were eight thousand and five hundred and fourscore. z iii. 39

49 According to the commandment of the LORD they were numbered by the hand of Moses, every one according to his service, and according to his burden: thus were they numbered of him, as the LORD commanded Moses.

V. 44. *Three thousand and two hundred.*] The family of Merari was smaller than either of the other families of Levi; yet there was in it a greater number of able men; and they were charged with the heaviest part of the sanctuary: and though waggons were afterwards provided for them, yet the loading and unloading of the sockets, and other things of great weight, would require much strength. (Comp. 36. 40. with iii. 22. 28. 34.) The sum total of effective Levites was very small, compared with that of the other tribes (48): yet there would be more by far than could at once be employed in this service. But they might carry by turns and ease one another, and thus do the whole expeditiously and cheerfully. They would also have their own tents to remove, and their own families to take care of.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1-3.

The minister of Christ ought not on any account to strive or war with carnal weapons, yet he must "enter into the host of the LORD;" and both in his personal conflict against sin and Satan, and in the duties of his important calling, he must boldly "fight the good fight of faith," with the appointed weapons of his warfare, sound doctrine, fervent prayer, and a holy example. Peculiar gravity, prudence, humility, ripeness of judgment, experience, meekness, and patience, are necessary, in order to a due performance of the work of the ministry, to the glory of God, the edification of the church, and the silencing of

## CHAP. V.

The lepers and unclean to be excluded from the camp, 1—4. The law of restitution enforced, 5—10. The trial to be made of a woman suspected by her husband of adultery, 11—31

**AND** the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Command the children of Israel, that they \* put out of the camp every leper, <sup>b</sup> and every one that hath an issue, \* and whosoever is defiled by the dead :

3 Both male and female shall ye put

out, <sup>d</sup> without the camp shall ye put them; that they <sup>e</sup> defile not their camps, ' in the midst whereof I dwell.

4 And the children of Israel did so, and put them out without the camp: as the LORD spake unto Moses, so did the children of Israel.

5 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

6 Speak unto the children of Israel, ' When a man or woman shall commit <sup>g</sup> any sin that men commit, to do a trespass against the LORD, and that person be guilty :

<sup>a</sup> xli. 14. Lev. xlii. 46. Deut. xxiv. 8, 9. 2 Kings vii. 3.  
<sup>b</sup> Lev. xv. 2—27.  
<sup>c</sup> ix. 6—10. xix. 11—16. xxxi. 19. Lev. xxi. 1.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Cor. v. 7—12.  
<sup>e</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 17.  
<sup>f</sup> 2 Thes. iii. 6.  
<sup>g</sup> Tit. iii. 10. Heb. xii. 15, 16. 2 John 10, 11. Rev. xxi. 27.  
<sup>h</sup> xix. 22. Hag. ii. 13, 14.  
<sup>i</sup> Lev. xxvi. 11, 12. Deut. xxiii. 14. Ps. lxxviii. 18. Is. xli. 6. 2 Cor. vi. 6. Rev. xxi. 3.

gainsayers ; and ministers are exposed to many temptations from the smiles and frowns of men, from popularity and opposition. It is therefore far more advisable for those, who are intended for this sacred service, to spend much previous time in retirement, study, meditation, and communion with God, that they may come forth well prepared and furnished for usefulness, when a proper occasion is afforded; than that they should, by an indiscreet and hurtful zeal, be allowed or encouraged to violate the apostle's rule, by prematurely entering on publick services. (Note, 1 Tim. iii. 6.) From the neglect of this caution, many mischiefs have arisen, both to individuals, and to the cause of God. When, however, men are engaged, and have health and strength, and work assigned them, they should lose no time, and miss no opportunities of usefulness; for these may be regretted, but cannot be recalled.—As the faithful servants of God grow in years, and their natural vigour abates, they must not be censured, if they in some respects moderate their labours, especially in those services which require great exertion. And if it please God to lay them quite aside by sickness and infirmity, they may still serve the church of God by their prayers, and an example of faith, patience, and obedience; and they are still entitled to respect and maintenance. They ought not indeed, and will not desire, to cease from labour whilst capable of it: but they must not murmur, if they are thus discharged, or if they see others "increase whilst they decrease." For the Lord will do his work by a succession of servants: and he will let them all see, that he can do without them; that the work is in his hand; that when he employs them, he does not need them; and that he can easily send out others in their stead, when they are no longer serviceable.

V. 4—49.

Though we are not under the comparative obscurity and severity of the Mosaick dispensation; yet we should remember that heavenly things must be treated with reverence, and not curiously, contemptuously, or presumptuously enquired into. It is very dangerous to attempt being "wise above what is written," in respect of those great mysteries which relate to the infinite God, and his works and ways; or to intrude into those things over which he hath purposely thrown a veil. And the ministers of God, and those who have attained to a superior degree of influ-

ence or authority, should caution and deter their juniors, and the people, from such intrusion. Indeed, the rule holds good in all things: we ought to prevent others from committing sin to the utmost of our ability, as far as consists with other relative duties; and we are accessary to the guilt and the ruin of those, who perish through our neglect. (Note, 1 Tim. v. 21, 22.)—But, though the Lord is great and holy, and vengeance belongeth unto him; and we are mean, polluted, and guilty creatures; we may yet approach him with safety, comfort, and confidence, in the way which he hath opened, provided we use the appointed means, and observe the directions which he has given.—In this moveable world changes await us: but, to whatever place we remove, we must be sure to take our religion with us, to prefer the house and worship of God to our temporal interests, and to serve him with the prime of our health and strength. Ere long this earthly house of our tabernacle will be taken down; but if it hath been "a habitation of God through the Spirit," this great and solemn removal will be all under the hand of Jesus, our merciful High Priest: he will give his angels a charge to convey our souls invisibly to glory; and all the constituent parts of the tabernacle shall, by his power, be brought together to heaven, and there raised up again incorruptible, immortal, and glorious; "and so shall we ever be with the Lord:" let us therefore quicken and comfort ourselves and each other with these words. (Notes, Rom. viii. 10, 11. 1 Thes. iv. 13—18.)

## NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1—4. The camps of Israel being now formed, with the sanctuary of God in the centre; orders were given, that, in honour of him who thus condescended to dwell among them, the lepers and unclean persons should be excluded from the camp, according to laws at different times given on these subjects. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xii. 14, 15. Lev. xiii. 45, 46. xv.)

V. 6. *That men commit.*] These words seem to intimate, that Adam's children are very prone to acts of fraud and dishonesty; though each of them is "a trespass against the LORD."—The expression, "and that person be guilty," does not merely refer to his actual criminality, but to his consciousness of guilt respecting it: for this case must be distinguished from that of a person detected in dishonesty, which he attempted to conceal.

<sup>b</sup> Lev. v. 6. xxvi. 40. Josh. vii. 19. Job xxxiii. 27. Ps. xxxii. 5. Prov. xxviii. 13. 1 John i. 8-10. <sup>i</sup> Lev. v. 15. vi. 4. 5. Luke xix. 8.

7 Then they shall <sup>b</sup> confess their sin which they have done; and he shall recompense his trespass <sup>a</sup> with the principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth part thereof, and give it unto him against whom he hath trespassed.

<sup>j</sup> Lev. xxv. 25, 26.

8 But if the man <sup>j</sup> have no kinsman to recompense the trespass unto, let the trespass be recompensed unto the LORD, *even* to the priest, <sup>k</sup> beside the ram of the atonement whereby an atonement shall be made for him.

<sup>\*</sup> Or, *heave offering*. xviii. 8, 9. 19. Ex. xxix. 28.

9 And every <sup>\*</sup> offering of all the holy things of the children of Israel, which they bring unto the priest, shall be his.

<sup>i</sup> Lev. vi. 17, 18. 26. vii. 6-14. x. 13. xxi. 2, 3. Deut. xviii. 3, 4. Ez. xlv. 29, 30. 1 Cor ix. 7-13.

10 And every man's <sup>i</sup> hallowed things shall be his: whatsoever any man giveth the priest, it shall be his.

11 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

<sup>m</sup> 19, 20. Prov. ii. 16, 17.

12 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, <sup>m</sup> If any man's wife go aside, and commit a trespass against him,

<sup>n</sup> Lev. xviii. 20. xx. 10. Prov. vii. 18, 19. xxx. 20.

13 And a man <sup>n</sup> lie with her carnally,

and it be hid from the eyes of her husband, and be kept close, and she be defiled, and *there be* no witness against her, neither she be taken *with the manner*;

14 And <sup>o</sup> the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be defiled; or if the spirit of jealousy come upon him, and he be jealous of his wife, and she be not defiled;

15 Then shall the man bring his wife unto the priest, and he shall bring <sup>p</sup> her offering for her, the tenth part of an ephah of barley-meal: he shall pour no oil upon it, nor put frankincense thereon: for it is an offering of jealousy, an offering of memorial, <sup>q</sup> bringing iniquity to remembrance.

16 And the priest shall bring her near, and <sup>r</sup> set her before the LORD:

17 And the priest shall take <sup>s</sup> holy water in an earthen vessel; and <sup>t</sup> of the dust that is in the floor of the tabernacle the priest shall take, and put it into the water.

<sup>o</sup> 20. Prov. vi. 34. Cant. viii. 6. 1 Cor. x. 22.

<sup>p</sup> Lev. v. 11. Hos. iii. 2.

<sup>q</sup> 1 Kings xvii. 18. Ez. xxix. 16. Heb. x. 8.

<sup>r</sup> Lev. i. 3. Jer. xvii. 10. Heb. xiii. 4. Rev. ii. 22, 23. xix. 2-9. Ez. xxx. 18. Job ii. 12. Jer. xvii. 13. Lam. iii. 29. John viii. 6, 8.

V. 7, 8. If the person injured were dead, restitution would of course be made to his heir; but if he had left no near relation, to whom the restitution might properly be made, the priest was appointed to receive it, when the criminal offered the trespass-offering.—Doubtless real poverty would excuse a man: yet this exception is not made; for men are ready enough to find out excuses for themselves, where their own interest is concerned. They therefore, who establish general scriptural rules of duty, should not be censured, though they do not mention every particular exception.—This law conclusively shews the absolute necessity of restitution, in one form or other, where actual poverty does not hinder, either to the injured person, to his relations, to the poor, or to pious uses: for, as Mr. Henry observes, ‘it is certain, while that, which is got by injustice, is knowingly retained in the hands, the guilt of the injustice remains upon the conscience, and is not purged by sacrifice or offering, prayers or tears; for it is *one and the same continued act of sin persisted in.*’ Some say, that this doctrine tends to embarrass tender consciences: but it is the doctrine of right reason, and of the word of God; and it is rather calculated to detect hypocrites, and to direct such as have tender consciences to a proper conduct, which, springing from faith in Christ, will make way for inward peace.

V. 9, 10. This law tended to encourage the priests in constant attendance on their work: for what any priest received of the people, in private sacrifices or oblations, belonged to him, and was not divided with his brethren.

V. 12. The remarkable law, which follows, was no doubt intended to fortify the minds of the Israelitish women

in the hour of temptation, when opportunity, importunity, and secrecy were combined; and to render them watchful against all occasions of exciting suspicion in the breasts of their husbands. On the other hand, it was calculated to prevent the cruel treatment from husbands, which such suspicions might produce, “through the hardness of their hearts,” when the crime could not be proved, or the rage of jealousy allayed; and it would also lessen the number of hasty divorces. If properly regarded, the guilty could hardly escape, or the innocent remain under injurious suspicions; and in many ways it would subserve the interests of purity and of domestick peace, both by constantly holding out a salutary warning, and by the alarm which would be raised whenever it was carried into execution.

V. 13, 14. God had commanded that the adulterer and adulteress should be put to death, if detected and the fact proved: (Lev. xx. 10:) but when the husband entertained suspicions on some probable grounds, and could not bring proof; he was allowed to make this solemn appeal to a heart-searching God, and to put his wife on the awful trial. If not grossly criminal, it must be supposed she had been too regardless of appearances. (2 Cor. viii. 21. 1 Thes. v. 22.)

V. 15. This coarse offering, without oil or frankincense, implied the baseness of the crime of which the woman was suspected, and the mournful state of the family. It was not an atoning sacrifice, but an oblation for a memorial, as solemnly referring the decision to the Lord, and calling upon him to bring the iniquity to remembrance, and to punish it in case the accused was guilty. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 16, 17. As this process could not be carried on, ex-

18 And the priest shall set the woman before the LORD, and <sup>u</sup>uncover the woman's head, <sup>v</sup>and put the offering of memorial in her hands, which is the jealousy-offering: and the priest shall have in his hand <sup>x</sup>the bitter water that causeth the curse.

19 And the priest shall <sup>y</sup>charge her by an oath, and say unto the woman, If no man have lain with thee, and if thou hast not gone aside to uncleanness <sup>\*</sup>with another instead of thy husband, be thou free from this bitter water that causeth the curse:

20 But if thou hast gone aside to another instead of thy husband, and if thou be defiled, and some man hath lain with thee beside thine husband;

21 Then the priest shall charge the woman with <sup>\*</sup>an oath of cursing: and the priest shall say unto the woman, <sup>a</sup>The LORD make thee a curse and an oath among thy people, when the LORD doth make thy thigh to <sup>b</sup>rot, and thy belly to swell:

22 And this water that causeth the curse shall <sup>b</sup>go into thy bowels, to make <sup>c</sup>thy belly to swell, and <sup>c</sup>thy thigh to rot. And <sup>d</sup>the woman shall say, Amen, amen.

23 And the priest shall <sup>e</sup>write these

curse in a book, and he shall <sup>f</sup>blot them out with the bitter water;

24 And he shall cause the woman to drink the bitter water that causeth the curse: <sup>g</sup>and the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter.

25 Then the priest <sup>h</sup>shall take the jealousy-offering out of the woman's hand, and shall <sup>i</sup>wave the offering before the LORD, and offer it upon the altar.

26 And the priest shall take an handful of the offering, <sup>k</sup>even <sup>k</sup>the memorial thereof, and burn it upon the altar, and afterward shall cause the woman to drink the water.

27 And when he hath made her to drink the water, then it shall come to pass, <sup>l</sup>that <sup>l</sup>if she be defiled, and have done trespass against her husband, that the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her, and become bitter, and her belly shall swell, and her thigh shall rot: and the woman <sup>m</sup>shall be a curse among her people.

28 And <sup>n</sup>if the woman be not defiled, but be clean; then she shall be free, and shall conceive seed.

29 This is <sup>o</sup>the law of jealousies, <sup>p</sup>when a wife goeth aside to another instead of her husband, and is defiled;

cept at the sanctuary; the trouble and expense attending it would render men cautious, how they instituted it without some urgent reason. It is generally supposed, that the water of the laver in the court of the tabernacle is meant; being called *holy* because of its separation from ordinary uses. This was put into a mean and brittle vessel, and dust from the floor of the tabernacle was cast into it for the woman to drink: all this implied the disgrace which she lay under, the shame to which she would be exposed if guilty, and the punishment that she would justly endure; in which every thing relating to the worship of a holy God, would as it were, combine together for her destruction.—This water was called the *bitter* water, from the bitter effects which would follow, when drunk by a guilty person. (18, 19.—Note, 27.)

V. 19. *Instead of thy husband.*] Or, “being under the power of thy husband;” that is, a married woman, which was marked as the grand aggravation of the crime charged on her. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 22. *Amen, amen.*] This two-fold solemn consent of the woman to the awful appeal to God, referring to both parts of it, implied a hearty desire to be dealt with according to her innocence or guilt; and an acknowledgment of the justice of God, in inflicting his dreadful

vengeance upon such as were guilty. This appeal could not be made by a person who was consciously guilty, without the most entire hardness of heart and presumptuous defiance of God, and even atheistical unbelief: and every circumstance was suited to warn and alarm the woman, that, if guilty, she might rather confess her crime, than venture the terrible consequences. The Jewish writers say, that if she refused this oath, and confessed her guilt, she was not put to death, but only divorced without a dowry.

V. 23. The words of the oath or curse were written on a piece of parchment, which was called a *book* at that time; and the writing was washed off into the water, as if the curse had been infused in it, that the woman might drink it.

V. 27. The water, by its natural efficacy, could not harm an innocent person. But if any woman added to the crime of adultery the awful guilt of such a deliberate perjury, God would supernaturally thus punish her.—The Jews have a tradition that the adulterer also would die of a similar disease at the same time; which probably was not altogether unlike that loathsome distemper, with which God has in these latter ages shewn his abhorrence of lewdness: yet it was far more immediate in its effects.

30 Or when the spirit of jealousy cometh upon him, and he be jealous over his wife, and shall set the woman before the LORD, and the priest shall execute upon her all this law:

31 Then shall the man <sup>a</sup> be guiltless from iniquity, and this woman shall <sup>b</sup> bear her iniquity.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. xxxvii 6

<sup>b</sup> ix. 13. Lev. xx  
10. 17—20. Ez.  
xviii. 4. Rom.  
ii. 9. 9.

### CHAP. VI.

The Nazarite's vow, 1—8. His rule, in case he

V. 31. Even when the husband's jealousy was groundless, he would not be accounted guilty, if he took this method of clearing up the matter: but otherwise it would lead him to do those things which would bring guilt upon him. This law is a singular proof of the divine legation of Moses. No mere politician would have thought of such a law, which at first sight, generally appears harsh and strange: yet the effect, when carried into execution, must have been in all respects most salutary, and worthy of the divine wisdom. Again, it could not be carried into execution, without a miracle: and no legislator, pretending to be sent by God, would have committed himself, by an institution which might at any time disprove his claim.

### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

#### V. 1—10.

The people of God should separate from such as are unclean by impenitent iniquity, and exclude them, as far as they are able, from their fellowship: and then if, under the mask of hypocrisy, they affront the Lord and profane his holy ordinances by an unhallowed intrusion, they do it at their peril. But assuredly such shall never... "that" holy city, where the tabernacle of God shall be with "men, and he will dwell with them;" but will be left without, "where is weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth." In this miserable company, will most certainly be found those *unrighteous* persons, who have *unjustly* obtained, and as *unjustly* keep possession of, their neighbour's property: and he who pretends to piety, and thus encourages himself in dishonesty by a professed dependence on the atonement of Christ, as grossly affronts him, as that man does, who substitutes his own honesty or morality in the stead of His merits and sacrifice, at the price of his acceptance with God! Indeed the confession, the restitution, and the trespass-offering, must always go together.—It is the will of God, not only that his ministers should be provided for, but that the most diligent and zealous should receive the greatest encouragement; though alas! this is seldom attended to, as far as these concerns fall under the management of men.

#### V. 11—31.

The Lord's abhorrence of adultery, and his vengeance against it, appear conspicuous in this chapter: and though we have neither a law of a jealousy-offering to detect adulterers, and adulteresses, nor any method of bringing them to condign punishment; so that they may either conceal or glory in their shame, and the impunity with which they transgress: yet assuredly their sin will at last find

VOL. I.

unavoidably contracted uncleanness, 9—12. His sacrifices and observances at the expiration of his vow, 13—21. The blessing which the priests were to pronounce on the people, 22—27.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, <sup>a</sup> saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, "When either man <sup>b</sup> or woman shall separate *themselves* <sup>c</sup> to vow a vow of a Nazarite, \*to separate *themselves* unto the LORD;

<sup>a</sup> 5, 6. Ex. xxxviii.  
16. Lev. xx. 26.  
Prov. xviii. 1.  
Rom. i. 1. 2 Cor.  
vi. 17. Gal. i. 15.  
Heb. vii. 26.  
<sup>b</sup> Lev. xxvii. 2.  
1 Sam. i. 28. Am.  
ii. 11, 12. Luke  
i. 16. Acts xxi.  
24.  
<sup>c</sup> Or, to make  
themselves Na-  
zarites.

them out; for God himself will detect the most secret offenders, and confound the most daring. Indeed, his providence often stamps infamy upon sinners of this description, by those dreadful diseases with which he visits them, and with which they infect, plague, and curse one another in this world; and his word denounces the severest vengeance against them in the world to come. But all approaches to this horrid crime must be studiously avoided: and married persons especially should act in such a manner as to inspire mutual confidence in each other; and each of them should avoid every intimacy, and every word and look, which may excite uneasiness in the other's breast. For conjugal affection is prone to jealousy, and Satan delights in exciting "a spirit of jealousy" in the hearts of husbands and wives; knowing that it is alike tormenting to suspect and to be suspected. He knows also that such suspicions subvert domestick peace, set aside family-religion and the pious education of children, and expose both parties to manifold temptations: so that what begun with heedless imprudence and groundless jealousy, often terminates in deep criminality and the most fatal consequences. We should "abstain from all appearance of evil;" and watch and pray continually, that we may neither excite nor indulge such dire suspicions. If, however, we have a clear conscience and a true faith, we may be calm under the most injurious aspersions; and God in due time will clear up our characters, and convert our affliction into a blessing.—But how should men tremble at the thoughts of appealing to God, when their own hearts condemn them! "for God is greater than their hearts, and knoweth all things," and he will be sure at length tremendously to revenge such a daring affront.—Sensual lusts will certainly end in bitterness; and they who delight in cursing shall be filled with it.—Finally, such as allow iniquity in their hearts, under a profession of faith, will find that all the doctrines of God's word, (by which the true believer becomes joyful and fruitful in the works of righteousness,) all the ordinances of his house, and all the dispensations of his providence, concur to increase their guilt, obduracy, and condemnation.

### NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 2. The word "Nazarite" signifies *one who is separated*. The Lord himself set apart Samson and John the Baptist before their birth, to be Nazarites all their days: Samuel was devoted by his mother to be a perpetual Nazarite, when he was "asked of the LORD:" and the family of the Rechabites were a sort of Nazarites from one generation to another, by the injunction of Jo-  
3 H

<sup>e</sup> Lev. x. 9. Judg. xiii. 14. Prov. xxxi. 4. 5. Jer. xxxv. 6—8. Luke vii. 33, 34. xxi. 24. Eph. v. 18. 1 Thes. v. 22. 1 Tim. v. 23.

3 He shall separate *himself* \* from wine, and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink: neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried.

<sup>g</sup> Or, Nazarite-ship.

4 All the days of his \* separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the <sup>h</sup> vine-tree, from the kernels even to the husk.

<sup>d</sup> Judg. xiii. 5. xvi. 17. 1 Sam. i. 11. Lam. iv. 7. 8. 1 Cor. xi. 10—15.

5 All the days of the vow of his separation, there shall no <sup>d</sup> razor come upon his head; until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth *himself* unto the LORD, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.

<sup>e</sup> xix. 11—15. Lev. xix. 28. Jer. xvi. 5, 6. Ez. xiv. 16—18. Matt. viii. 21, 22. Luke ix. 59, 60. 2 Cor. v. 16.

6 All the days that he separateth *himself* unto the LORD, \* he shall come at no dead body.

<sup>f</sup> ix. 6. Lev. xxi. 1, 2. 10—12. Ez. xiv. 25.

7 He shall not make himself 'unclean for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when

they die; because the \* consecration of: Heb. separation his God *is* upon his head.

8 All the days of his separation he *is* holy unto the LORD.

9 And if any man die very suddenly by him, \* and he hath defiled the head <sup>g</sup> xix. 14—19 of his consecration; then he shall <sup>h</sup> shave his head in the day of his cleansing, on the seventh day shall he shave it.

10 And <sup>i</sup> on the eighth day he shall <sup>i</sup> Lev. v. 7—10. xiv. 22, 23. xv. 14, 20. bring two turtles, or two young pigeons, to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

11 And the priest shall <sup>j</sup> offer the; <sup>j</sup> Lev. v. 8—10. xiv. 30, 31. one for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt-offering, and make an atonement for him, for that he sinned by the dead, <sup>k</sup> and shall hallow his head that <sup>k</sup> same day.

12 And he shall consecrate unto the LORD the days of his separation, and shall bring a lamb of the first year for

nadab their progenitor. (Notes, Jer. xxxv.) But in general the Nazarites became such by a voluntary vow, which any person might make, of peculiar separation from the world and devotedness to the exercises of religion, for a limited time, and under certain regulations. (Notes, xxx.)—Among the distinguishing favours which God conferred on Israel, it is stated that "he raised up of their young men for "Nazarites;" whence we may infer, that their prayers, examples, and instructions, were considered as a public blessing. (Am. ii. 11, 12.) The Jews say, that this vow could not be made for less than thirty days, but St. Paul seems to have taken it for no more than seven days. (Acts xxi. 24—27.)

To separate themselves.] נָזַר, inf. hiph. from נָזַר, to be separate: whence נָזִיר, a Nazarite. Hence the word is rendered in the margin, 'to make themselves Nazarites.' The word (נָזַר) rendered "separate themselves," in the first clause, is the same as is used concerning the making of a singular vow; (Lev. xxvii. 2;) and seems to convey the idea of a person's acting from an extraordinary zeal for God and religion.—This use of the two distinct words seems to imply, that the singular vow, and the vow of the Nazarite, were in some things of a similar nature. (Note, Lev. xxvii. 2—8.)

V. 3, 4. "Drinking wine," or strong drink of any sort, is an emblem, both in its nature and effects, of the intoxicating pleasures of sin and sense; and from this, in every form, and from all approaches to it, the Nazarites were commanded most scrupulously to abstain.—There is nothing in Scripture, which bears the most remote affinity to the religious orders of the church of Rome, except these Nazarites: but mark the difference, or rather the opposition! The religious in that church are forbidden to marry; but no such restriction was laid upon the Nazarites. They are commanded to abstain from meats; but the Nazarites might eat any food allowed to other Israel-

ites. They are not generally prohibited wine, even on fasting days; but the Nazarites might not drink it at any time. Their vow is perpetual to the end of their lives; but the Nazarite's vow was only for a limited time, at his own discretion; and in certain cases not unless allowed by husbands or parents. A similar contrast may often be discerned, between the rules of men's invention, for fasting and for extraordinary sanctity, and the precepts of Scripture.

V. 5. This inattention to the hair, by which it was left to grow and to hang neglected, would give the Nazarites a singular appearance of mortification to the world, and disregard to the body. It might also denote their peculiar subjection to the Lord; (Note, 1 Cor. xi. 2—16;) and it served to distinguish them from other men, as they passed through the streets.

V. 6, 7. The Nazarites were not allowed to attend the funerals of their nearest relations; by which they were represented as more "holy to the LORD" than the ordinary priests, and in this particular ranked with the high priests. (Notes, Lev. xxi. 1—5. 10—15.)

V. 9—12. No penalty was appointed for those, who wilfully violated their vow of being Nazarites, nor any sacrifice required of them; they must answer for such profane trifling with the Lord another day. But if, by the very sudden death of any person near them, they contracted uncleanness, they would not only be unclean seven days, and require purifying as other Israelites did; but they must offer sacrifices of atonement at the tabernacle or temple, lose all the past time, and begin over again to consecrate their appointed season of separation to the Lord. And how often soever this might take place, in every renewed instance, the whole time which had been vowed, must be entered upon again.—Though the pollution contracted was involuntary, yet it was a transgression of the

<sup>1</sup> Lev. v. 6. xiv. <sup>1</sup> a trespass-offering: "but the days that were before shall \*be lost, because his separation was defiled.

<sup>13</sup> ¶ And this *is* the law of the Nazarite: when the days of his separation <sup>a</sup> are fulfilled, he shall be brought unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation;

<sup>14</sup> And he shall offer his offering unto the LORD, <sup>o</sup> one he-lamb of the first year without blemish for a burnt-offering, and <sup>p</sup> one ewe-lamb of the first year without blemish for a sin-offering, and <sup>q</sup> one ram without blemish for peace-offerings,

<sup>15</sup> And <sup>r</sup> a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, and wafers of unleavened bread <sup>s</sup> anointed with oil, and their meat-offering, and their <sup>t</sup> drink-offerings.

<sup>16</sup> And the priest shall bring *them* before the LORD, and shall offer his sin-offering, and his burnt-offering.

<sup>17</sup> And he shall offer the ram *for* a sacrifice of peace-offerings unto the LORD, with a basket of unleavened bread: the priest shall offer also his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.

<sup>18</sup> And the Nazarite shall <sup>u</sup> shave

the head of his separation *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation; and shall take the hair of the head of his separation, <sup>v</sup> and put *it* in the fire which *is* under the sacrifice of the peace-offerings.

<sup>19</sup> And the priest shall take the <sup>x</sup> sodden shoulder of the ram, and one unleavened cake out of the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and shall <sup>y</sup> put *them* upon the hands of the Nazarite, after *the hair of* his separation is shaven.

<sup>20</sup> And <sup>z</sup> the priest shall wave *them* for a wave-offering before the LORD: this *is* holy for the priest, <sup>a</sup> with the wave-breast, and heave-shoulder: and <sup>b</sup> after that, the Nazarite may drink wine.

<sup>21</sup> This *is* <sup>c</sup> the law of the Nazarite who hath vowed, *and of* his offering unto the LORD for his separation, <sup>d</sup> besides *that* that his hand shall get: according to the vow which he vowed, so he must do after the law of his separation.

<sup>22</sup> ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

<sup>23</sup> Speak unto Aaron, and unto his

ceremonial law, and as such required expiation; and, in some instances, due care might not be taken. In one way or another, however, a degree of *sin* would doubtless be committed; and therefore the Nazarite must appear before God as a sinner, with the offerings required of a man who had been unclean by a running issue and was healed, and with a trespass-offering. (Lev. xv. 13—15.) This was suited to render the Nazarites very circumspect in their whole conduct.—No ceremonial uncleanness caused this interruption, except the touch of the dead body of man; for death came in by sin, and was thus accounted unclean, till the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, as it were, sanctified death and the grave to his people. But the soul dead in sin, and the dead works attending that state, are still as polluted and polluting as ever.

V. 13—20. By these sacrifices and ceremonies, at the expiration of his term, the Nazarite was taught to confess, that his performance of the vow needed atonement and forgiveness, being mixed with sin; to acknowledge that the honour of all which was done well belonged to the Lord; and that, though he was no longer a Nazarite, he was still by duty and choice the devoted servant of the Lord, and considered communion with a reconciled God as the delight of his soul. The hair was shaven off, as a token that the vow was accomplished; and was burnt, not *on the altar*, as if he could make atonement, but *under the peace-offerings*, implying the gracious acceptance of such

services by a God of peace and love. The left shoulder, when boiled, was given by the Nazarites to the priests, in addition to their portion out of the peace-offerings. (Note, Lev. vii. 29—34.)

V. 21. *Besides that, &c.*] If the Nazarite were poor, he would be accepted in simply performing what his vow required; but if he had it in his power, it would be proper to offer free-will offerings also. It seems the pious friends of the Nazarites sometimes were at charges with them on these occasions; and that they feasted together on the sacrifices, having probably taken the vow upon them for a few days beforehand. (Note, Acts xxi. 22—26.)

V. 23. The priests, in this action, typified the Lord Jesus, who came to bless us; "and who, while he was "blessing his disciples, was parted from them, and was "taken up into heaven." As the ministers of the Lord, the priests very solemnly prayed for the people, and pronounced a blessing upon them: the apostolical epistles are most of them begun or closed with a similar benediction: and it has been a common and very proper custom, for the minister, in Christian assemblies, to dismiss the congregation in the same manner; both as expressing his affectionate good-will to them, and his fervent prayers for them; and as assuring them in the name of God, that a blessing will attend on those, who are indeed the Lord's believing people: for hypocrites can have no share in these special benefits.

Gen. xiv. 19, 20. sons, saying, On this wise \* ye shall bless the children of Israel, saying unto them,

24 'The LORD bless thee, and \* keep thee;

25 The LORD <sup>b</sup> make his face shine

7. xi. 20, 21. 1 Pet. i. 2. 2 Pet. i. 2, 3. 2 John 3. f Ruth ii. 4. Ps. cxxxiv. 3. 1 Cor. xiv. 16. Eph. vi. 24. Phil. iv. 23. Rev. i. 4, 5. g Ps. xci. 11. cxlii. 4—7. Is. xxvii. 3. xlii. 6. John xvii. 11. Phil. iv. 7. 1 Thes. v. 23. 1 Pet. i. 5. Jude 24. h Ps. xxi. 6. xxxi. 16. lxvii. 1. lxxx. 1—3. 7. 19. cxix. 135. Dan. ix. 17.

upon thee, and be 'gracious unto thee;

26 The LORD <sup>k</sup> lift up his countenance upon thee, and <sup>l</sup> give thee peace.

27 And they shall <sup>m</sup> put my name upon the children of Israel, and <sup>n</sup> I will bless them.

—1\* vi. 23. Phil. iv. 7. 2 Thes. iii. 16. m Ex. iii. 13—15 vi. 3. xxxiv. 5—7. Deut. xxviii. 10. 2 Chr. vii. 14. Is. xlii. 7. Jer. xiv. 9. Dan. ix. 18, 19. Matt. xxviii. 19. n Gen. xli. 2, 3. xxxii. 26, 29. 1 Chr. iv. 10. Ps. lxxvii. 7. cxv. 12. Eph. i. 3.

V. 24—26. The word **JEHOVAH** is three times solemnly repeated in this benediction, and the Jews themselves have supposed that there is some great mystery contained in that repetition. When we compare it with the form of Christian baptism, "*Into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;*" with the blessing that St. Paul pronounced on the Corinthians, which is in common use in our places of worship; and with John's salutation of the churches; (*Notes, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. Rev. i. 4—6:*) we can be at no loss to determine what that mystery is. When sinners repent and believe, they are blessed with all spiritual blessings by the triune God of salvation, the Father who chose, the Son who redeemed, and the Holy Spirit who sanctifies and comforts all the elect people of God.—To abide, in body and soul, under the almighty protection of God our Saviour; and to enjoy his favour, as the smile of a loving Father, or as the enlightening, cheering beams of the sun; while he mercifully forgives our sins, pities our sorrows, supplies our wants, satisfies our desires, and communicates sweet peace to the conscience and consolation to the heart; and whilst he graciously accepts our persons and services, and prepares us for eternal glory:—these things form the substance of this blessing, and the sum total of all blessings; and in such a rich inventory, worldly joys are not deemed worthy to be mentioned. The texts referred to in the margin, throw great light on the several words here used. The nation of Israel collectively seems to have been especially intended; and the Lord will assuredly bless his people Israel, and all who are Israelites indeed.—Can any man, after carefully considering the words of this blessing, help being astonished, to hear learned divines seriously maintain, that the Israelites were taught in the law to expect only temporal advantages, and that the precepts were enforced only by temporal promises and threatenings?

V. 27. *Put my name, &c.* That is, 'They shall bless them in my name, as my people; as such pray for them; and direct them to expect and ask all blessings from me: and so doing they shall not be disappointed; for my *Name*, by which they are called, shall be their honour, security, confidence, and comfort.'

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—21.

While we rejoice in Christ Jesus, as persevering in the work for which he had *separated* and *sanctified* himself, without contracting any defilement, or shrinking from self-denial or suffering, till he had completed it, and arrived with honour and glory unspeakable "at the joy set before him;" let us not forget, that he is our Example, as well as our Surety. For his sake we must renounce worldly

pleasures. "abstain from fleshly lusts," separate from sinners, touch no unclean thing, be indifferent about the indulgence or adorning of our bodies, be intent about the feeding and adorning of our souls, make an open profession of our faith, moderate natural affections, be abstracted from worldly cares, be spiritually minded and devoted to God's service, zealous for his glory, and desirous to be an example and a blessing to his people, and to all around us.—If after profession of faith in Christ, any wilfully and finally apostatize and return to wickedness, "there remains no other sacrifice; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation." (*Note, Heb. x. 26, 27.*) While we judge that the true Nazarite never thus entirely renounces his vow of separation, we should also remember that he may and will inadvertently commit sin and contract defilement; and then he must renew his repentance, exercise faith in Christ, and begin all over again, as when he first "fled for refuge to the hope set before him." And when the Christian is finishing his course of faith and holiness, of self-denial and bearing the cross, and is about to close his eyes in death, and open them in the realms of uninterrupted joy; he will still acknowledge that he has nothing to trust to but the blood of Christ, since the best which he hath done has been mixed with sin, and needs forgiveness; he will give the glory to the Lord of all that he hath done in any measure well; he will value reconciliation and communion with God as his only comfort, and depart with thankful acknowledgments for the past; perhaps with joyful, at least with peaceful, expectations for the future, to go and drink the new wine of the kingdom with his beloved Redeemer in the realms of bliss.

##### V. 22—27.

Blessings at all times, and of every kind, will certainly be bestowed on all true believers; but when they shall have finished their course and kept the faith to the end of their days, their great High Priest will especially pronounce them blessed in the name of the triune **JEHOVAH**, which is put upon them: then will he shine and smile upon them ineffable joys; then will he wipe all tears from their eyes, and be gracious to them for ever. In hopes of this immortal crown, let us here cheerfully endure the cross: let us fear nothing but dishonouring our profession: let us ever be prepared for the approach of death, which often comes "very suddenly." Let us be very watchful in a world so full of pollutions: let us remember, that the higher we stand in the profession of holiness, the slighter inadvertency will disgrace us, and dishonour our God. (And may the Lord keep, and bless, and comfort in life, and at death, and for ever, with all the blessings of salvation, the writer and every reader of these remarks, Amen!)

## CHAP. VII.

The princes of Israel present, at the dedication of the sanctuary, six covered waggons and twelve oxen, which the Lord directs to be given to the Levites, 1—9. Each of the twelve princes, on twelve succeeding days, brings oblations and sacrifices, 10—38. The Lord speaks to Moses from the mercy-seat, 39.

**AND** it came to pass on the day that Moses <sup>a</sup> had fully set up the tabernacle, and had <sup>b</sup> anointed it, and sanctified it, and all the instruments thereof, both the altar, and all the vessels thereof; and had anointed them, and <sup>c</sup> sanctified them;

2 That <sup>d</sup> the princes of Israel, heads of the house of their fathers (who were the princes of the tribes, <sup>e</sup> and were over them that were numbered,) <sup>f</sup> offered:

3 And they brought their offering before the Lord, six covered waggons, and twelve oxen; a waggon for two of the princes, and for each one an ox: and they brought them before the tabernacle.

4 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

5 Take it of them, that they may

be to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; and thou shalt give them unto the Levites, to every man according to his service.

6 And Moses took the waggons and the oxen, and gave them unto the Levites.

7 <sup>g</sup> Two waggons and four oxen he gave unto the sons of Gershon, according to their service.

8 And <sup>h</sup> four waggons and eight oxen he gave unto the sons of Merari, according unto their service, under the hand of Ithamar, the son of Aaron, the priest.

9 But unto the sons of Kohath he gave none; <sup>i</sup> because the service of the sanctuary belonging unto them was that they should bear upon their shoulders.

10 ¶ And the princes offered for <sup>k</sup> dedicating of the altar, in the day that it was anointed, even the princes offered their offering before the altar.

11 And the Lord said unto Moses, <sup>l</sup> They shall offer their offering, each prince on his day, for the dedicating of the altar.

<sup>a</sup> Ex xl. 17—19

<sup>b</sup> Ex. xxx. 23—30.  
Lev. viii. 10, 11

<sup>c</sup> Gen. ii. 3. Ex. xiii. 2. 1 Kings viii. 64. Matt. xxiii. 19.

<sup>d</sup> See on i. 4—16.

<sup>e</sup> Heb. who stood.

<sup>f</sup> Ex. xxxv. 27.  
1 Chr. xxix. 6—8.  
2 Chr. xxxv. 8. Ezra ii. 68, 69  
Neh. vii. 70—72.

<sup>g</sup> iii. 26, 26. iv. 24—26.

<sup>h</sup> iii. 36, 37. iv. 38—33.

<sup>i</sup> iii. 31. iv. 5—16.  
2 Sam. vi. 6. 13.  
1 Chr. xv. 3. 13.  
—xxiii. 26.

<sup>k</sup> Dent. xx. 5.  
1 Kings viii. 63.  
2 Chr. vii. 5. 9.  
Ezra vi. 16. Neh. xii. 27. Ps. xxx. title. John x. 22.

<sup>l</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 33. 40.

## NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1—3. Those things which had been expressly commanded, were first performed: for it is evident that the tabernacle was erected, the priests consecrated, the people numbered, the camp formed, the Levites appointed to their services, and all things put into a regular train for carrying on the service of the sanctuary, before these voluntary oblations were made by the princes. Indeed, this supposes that more time had elapsed, since Moses had begun to set up the tabernacle, than was employed in anointing and dedicating it, and in consecrating the priests: but perhaps the language used was intended to take in likewise the arrangements made concerning the encampment of the tribes around the sanctuary, and the charge of it assigned to the priests and Levites. As, however, the princes are the same as presided over the numbering of the people; and as they afterwards offered in the order of their encampments, not in that of the seniority; (which is shewn by comparing this chapter with the second;) we must conclude that these regulations had previously been made.—The waggons are supposed to have been neat carriages, such as were then used to ride in; yet made very strong: and some think they were richly decorated, as well as covered to keep out the wet or dust.

V. 4—9. It seems that Moses hesitated on the propriety of receiving this oblation, and about the disposal of it, till he had consulted the Lord. The sockets of silver and brass alone are computed to have weighed more than

eight tons, which would be fully sufficient to load four strong waggons: so that the sons of Merari would still have much to carry upon their shoulders; as probably the sons of Gershon also had. The Kohathites had in all only a moderate weight; and in reverence to the sacred things, they were expressly ordered to carry them at all times upon their shoulders. As the priests were of this family, they often assisted in this service. The neglect of this rule was David's first and chief mistake, when Uzzah was smitten. (Notes, 2 Sam. vi. 3. 12, 13.)

V. 10. It is probable that there was some difference of rank and possessions among the Israelites even in Egypt: and consequently at their departure, the chief men would obtain a larger portion of the spoil; by which means they were enabled to present these oblations. Yet some persons conjecture, that the princes offered not only *in the behalf*, but *at the expense*, of their several tribes.

V. 11. As the princes were preparing to bring their oblations all at once, the Lord ordered, that they should present them separately; both to prevent confusion, to increase the solemnity, that the priests might not be overburdened with work, and that they might have leisure to grow more expert by daily practice. And, as a large proportion of the sacrifices was feasted upon, both by the priests and people, it would also prevent excess or waste, and promote hospitality, to have only one oblation at a time. Though one tribe was more numerous and wealthy than another, they all presented exactly the same oblations and sacrifices; for they were all equally interested in

12 And he that offered his offering the first day, was <sup>a</sup> Nahshon the son of Amminadab, of the tribe of Judah.

13 And his offering *was* one silver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after <sup>o</sup> the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them *were* full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a <sup>p</sup> meat-offering:

14 One <sup>a</sup> spoon of ten *shekels* of gold, full of <sup>r</sup> incense:

15 <sup>a</sup> One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering:

16 One kid of the goats for <sup>a</sup> sin-offering:

17 And for a sacrifice of <sup>a</sup> peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. This *was* the offering of Nahshon the son of Amminadab.

18 ¶ On the second day <sup>a</sup> Nethaneel the son of Zuar, prince of Issachar, did offer.

19 He <sup>r</sup> offered for his offering one silver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering:

21 One spoon of gold of ten *shekels*, full of incense:

21 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for <sup>a</sup> burnt-offering:

22 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering:

23 And for a sacrifice of <sup>a</sup> peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. This

*was* the offering of Nethaneel the son of Zuar.

24 ¶ On the third day <sup>b</sup> Eliab the son of Helon, prince of the children of Zebulun, *did offer*.

25 His offering *was* one silver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering:

26 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of incense:

27 One <sup>a</sup> young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering:

28 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering:

29 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. This *was* the offering of Eliab the son of Helon.

30 ¶ On the fourth day <sup>d</sup> Elizur the son of Shedeur, prince of the children of Reuben, *did offer*.

31 His offering *was* one silver charger, of the weight of an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering:

32 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of <sup>a</sup> incense:

33 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering:

34 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering:

35 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-

the sanctuary and worship of God, and were all willing to express an equal affection for them. Every one's offering is nevertheless particularly mentioned; for the Lord takes pleasure in recording the willing services of his people.

V. 12. Nahshon is the only one, who is not called a *prince*, in the history of this transaction. Some suppose that this was a humiliating circumstance, intended to counterbalance his pre-eminence; others conjecture, that this title was omitted, because it was reserved for Christ, who was to descend from this tribe: but perhaps it was

considered as needless, seeing he was the principal person in the whole company.

V. 13, 14. The silver chargers, or dishes, might be useful for the meat-offerings, and to contain the flesh of the sacrifices when the priests feasted upon it. The silver bowls would be useful for the drink-offerings, and to receive the blood for sprinkling; and the golden spoons were suited to the service of the altar of incense. (Note, Ex. xxv. 23—30.) Probably, the princes had noticed, that the furniture for the tabernacle was not, in these particulars, suited to the rest, or was not sufficient for the purpose.

goats; five lambs of the first year. This *was* the offering of Elizur the son of Shedeur.

i. G. ii. 12.

36 ¶ On the fifth day <sup>1</sup>Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai, prince of the children of Simeon, *did offer*.

37 His offering *was* one silver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering:

38 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of incense:

39 One young bullock, one ram, <sup>2</sup>one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering:

g Ex. xii. 5. John i. 29. Acts viii. 32. 1 Pet. i. 19. Rev. v. 6.

40 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering:

41 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. This *was* the offering of Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.

h i. 14. ii. 14 Son of Reuel.

42 ¶ On the sixth day <sup>h</sup>Eliasaph the son of Deuel, prince of the children of Gad, *offered*.

43 His offering *was* one silver charger, of the weight of an hundred and thirty *shekels*, a silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour <sup>1</sup>mingled with oil, for a meat-offering:

i Lev. ii. 5. xiv. 10. Heb. i. 9. 1 John ii. 27.

44 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of incense:

45 One <sup>k</sup>young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering:

k Ps. xli. 6. Is. llii. a. 2 Cor. v. 21.

46 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering:

47 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. This *was* the offering of Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

l i. 10. ii. 18.

48 ¶ On the seventh day <sup>1</sup>Elishama the son of Ammihud, prince of the children of Ephraim, *offered*.

49 His offering *was* one silver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the she-

kel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering:

50 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of incense:

51 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering:

52 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering.

53 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. This *was* the offering of Elishama the son of Ammihud.

54 ¶ On the eighth day *offered* <sup>m</sup>Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur, prince of the children of Manasseh.

m l. 10. ii. 20.

55 His offering *was* one silver charger, of the weight of an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering:

56 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of incense:

57 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering:

58 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering:

59 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. This *was* the offering of Gamaliel the son of Pedahzur.

60 ¶ On the ninth day <sup>n</sup>Abidan the son of Gideoni, prince of the children of Benjamin, *offered*.

n l. 11. ii. 22.

61 His offering *was* one silver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, a silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering.

62 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of <sup>o</sup>incense:

63 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering:

64 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering:

o Ps. cxlii. 2. Is. lxxvi. 20. Dan. ix. 27. Rom. xv. 16. Phil. iv. 18. Heb. xiii. 16.

65 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. This *was* the offering of Abidan the son of Gideoni.

p l. 15. ii. 74.

66 ¶ On the tenth day <sup>p</sup> Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai, prince of the children of Dan, *offered*.

67 His offering *was* one silver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering :

68 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of incense :

69 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering :

70 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering :

71 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. This *was* the offering of Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.

q l. 13. ii. 27.

72 ¶ On the eleventh day <sup>q</sup> Pagiel the son of Ocran, prince of the children of Asher, *offered*.

73 His offering *was* one silver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering :

74 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of incense :

75 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering :

76 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering :

77 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. This *was* the offering of Pagiel the son of Ocran.

r l. 15. ii. 29.

78 ¶ On the twelfth day <sup>r</sup> Ahira the

son of Enan, prince of the children of Naphtali, *offered*.

79 His offering *was* one silver charger, the weight whereof *was* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, one silver bowl of seventy shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, both of them full of fine flour mingled with oil, for a meat-offering :

80 One golden spoon of ten *shekels*, full of incense :

81 One young bullock, one ram, one lamb of the first year, for a burnt-offering :

82 One kid of the goats for a sin-offering :

83 And for a sacrifice of peace-offerings, two oxen, five rams, five he-goats, five lambs of the first year. This *was* the offering of Ahira the son of Enan.

84 ¶ This *was* 'the dedication of the altar, in the day when it was anointed by the 'princes of Israel: twelve chargers of silver, twelve silver bowls, twelve spoons of gold ;

85 Each charger of silver *weighing* an hundred and thirty *shekels*, each bowl seventy: all the silver vessels *weighed* <sup>u</sup> two thousand and four hundred *shekels*, <sup>v</sup> after the shekel of the sanctuary.

86 The golden spoons *were* twelve, full of incense, *weighing* ten *shekels* a piece, after the shekel of the sanctuary: all the gold of the spoons *was* an hundred and twenty *shekels*.

87 All the oxen for the burnt-offering *were* twelve bullocks, the rams twelve, the lambs of the first year twelve, with their meat-offering: and the kids of the goats, for sin-offering, twelve.

88 And all the oxen for the sacrifice of the peace-offerings *were* twenty and four bullocks, the rams sixty, the he-goats sixty, the lambs of the first year sixty. This *was* the dedication of the altar, after <sup>x</sup> that it was anoint-

See on 10. 1 Chr xxix. 6-8. Ezra ii. 68, 69. Neh. vii. 70-72. 1s. lx. 6-10. Heb. xiii. 10. Rev. xxi. 14. Judg. v. 9. Neh. iii. 9.

u 1 Chr xxii. 14. xxix. 4. 7. Ezra viii. 25, 26. v See on 13.

x 1. 10. 84.

V. 83. *Offering.*] *Korban*, here and in all the other places, where it thus occurs in this chapter. (Mark vii. 11.)

V. 84. Probably, the term *dedication* was used for this

solemn publick oblation of the princes, as representatives of their tribes, to the service of the altar; and not for its first consecration by Moses.

89 ¶ And when Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with <sup>a</sup>him, then <sup>b</sup>he heard the voice of one speaking unto him from off the mercy-seat that *was* upon the ark of testimony, from between the <sup>c</sup>two cherubims: and he spake unto him.

### CHAP. VIII.

The lamps of the candlestick lighted, 1—4. The Levites consecrated, 5—22. Their age and time of service, 23—26.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto Aaron, and say unto him, When thou <sup>a</sup>lightest the lamps, the seven lamps shall give light over against the candlestick.

3 And Aaron did so: he lighted the lamps thereof over against the can-

dlestick; as the LORD commanded Moses.

4 And <sup>b</sup>this work of the candlestick *was of* beaten gold; unto the shaft thereof, unto the flowers thereof, *was* <sup>c</sup>beaten work: according unto <sup>d</sup>the pattern which the LORD had shewed Moses, so he made the candlestick.

5 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

6 Take the Levites from among the children of Israel, and <sup>e</sup>cleanse them.

7 And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: <sup>f</sup>'Sprinkle <sup>g</sup>water of purifying upon them, and <sup>h</sup>'let them shave all their flesh, and let them <sup>i</sup>wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean.

8 Then let them take <sup>j</sup>'a young bullock with <sup>k</sup>'his meat-offering, *even* fine flour mingled with oil, and <sup>l</sup>'another

b Ex. xxv. 31—39  
xxxvii. 17—24.  
c Ex. xxv. 8.  
xxxvii. 7. 17 22  
d Ex. xxv. 9. 40.  
1 Chr. xxviii. 11  
—19. Heb. viii.  
5. ix. 23.  
e Ex. xix. 15.  
2 Cor. vii. 1.  
Jam. iv. 8.  
f Lev. viii. 6. xiv.  
7. 1s. lii. 15. Ez.  
xxxvi. 25. Heb.  
ix. 10.  
g xix. 9. 10. 13. 18.  
19. Ps. li. 7. Heb.  
ix. 13.  
\* Heb. let them  
cause a razor to  
pass over, &c.  
Lev. xiv. 8, 9.  
h xix. 7. 8. 10. 19  
xxxi. 20. Gen.  
xxxv. 2. Ex. xix.  
10. Lev. xv. 6.  
10. 11. 27. xvi.  
28. Ps. li. 2. Jer.  
iv. 14. Matt.  
xxiii. 25, 26.  
Jam. iv. 8. 1 Pet.  
iii. 21. Rev. vii.  
14.  
i Ex. xxxix. 1. 3.  
Lev. i. 3. viii. 2.  
k xv. 8, 9. Lev. ii.  
1.  
l Lev. iv. 8. 14.  
xvi. 3. 1s. liii. 10.  
Rom. viii. 3.  
2 Cor. v. 21.

V. 89. The Lord spake to Moses in an audible voice on this occasion, as he had often before done; and as he probably spake to the high priests afterwards, when they enquired of him by Urim and Thummim. (Note, Ex. xxviii. 30.)—This audible articulate voice from God, which was 'perceived by human ears, represented God as if he were 'incorporate, and may well be looked upon as an earnest 'of that great Mystery, "God manifest in the flesh," 'who in the fulness of time became a man, and spake to 'the Jews familiarly in their own language.' Bp. Patrick.

### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They whom Providence distinguishes as princes, nobles, or wealthy persons, should take the lead and set the example in every good work, with liberal hearts devising "liberal things;" for this is the proper improvement of their talents. But a liberal mind should be under the direction of prudence and discretion: and the circumstances of the times, the state of the church and its ministers, and the necessities of those around them should be considered; that nothing may be wasted in useless expense, but all wisely directed to the substantial benefit of those who need it.—The servants of God have no occasion to be discouraged in the prospect either of heavy services, or of fiery trials: for he can send them seasonable and unexpected relief whenever he pleases; and will be sure to proportion his assistance to their necessities.—Every thing in the worship of God should be "done decently and in order," and as may best promote edification. On some occasions it may be proper to employ a great deal of time, and to expend much money, in his immediate worship: and the growing Christian will not be weary or complain of this; but will account it his gain, his pleasure, and his honour. All our works of piety and charity must be accompanied with a humble acknowledgment of our sinfulness, and a believing dependence on the sacrifice of Christ; they must spring from love to God,

gratitude to him for the blessings of redemption, an unreserved surrender of ourselves to his service, and a disposition to delight in doing his will, and in rendering him all the praise. Such good works are "spiritual sacrifices, "acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." The Lord delights to honour those who thus honour him. He remembers and records their expressions of faith and love. In this world he communes with his disciples from his mercy-seat, by answering their prayers, and counselling and comforting their hearts: and he will at the day of judgment publish to the assembled universe, distinctly and particularly, the fruits of holiness, which by his grace they produced on earth; as *evinced* them to be the heirs of the "kingdom prepared for his people, from before the foundation of the world." (Notes, and P. O. Matt. xxv. 31—46.)

### NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 2—4. The shaft of the candlestick was all in one piece; but the seven lamps were formed separate, and might be taken off, or fixed upon it, as occasion required. (Note, Ex. xxv. 31—39.)—It is a tradition of the Jews, that the middle lamp was lighted from the altar of burnt-offering, and the other lamps from it, which being done, each lamp gave light to the part of the sanctuary, "over against it."—Pattern. (4) Notes, Ex. xxv. 9. 40.

V. 6—8. The Levites were not distinguished from the other Israelites, by any prescribed garments; nor were they washed or anointed, after the manner in which the priests had been: but though they were set apart with less solemnity, to mark the inferiority of their office, and because they were not so *expressly* typical of Christ as the priests were; (Notes, Lev. viii. ix;) yet there was equally a remembrance of sin, both in its guilt and defilement, and of the need of atonement and sanctification, in the separation of them to their office. Their clothes were washed; they were sprinkled with the water of purifying;

young bullock shalt thou take for a sin-offering.

<sup>m</sup> Ex. xxix. 4. xl. 12.  
<sup>n</sup> Lev. viii. 3.  
9 And <sup>m</sup> thou shalt bring the Levites before the tabernacle of the congregation: and thou <sup>n</sup> shalt gather the whole assembly of the children of Israel together.

<sup>o</sup> iii. 45. Acts vi. 6. xiii. 2. 3. 1 Tim. iv. 14. v. 22.  
10 And thou shalt bring the Levites before the LORD, and <sup>o</sup> the children of Israel shall put their hands upon the Levites:

<sup>p</sup> Heb. ix. 10.  
<sup>q</sup> Heb. wave-offering. vi. 20. Ex. xxix. 24. Lev. vii. 30. viii. 27. 29.  
<sup>r</sup> Heb. they may be to execute, &c.  
11 And Aaron shall <sup>r</sup> offer the Levites before the LORD, <sup>q</sup> for an offering of the children of Israel, that <sup>r</sup> they may <sup>r</sup> execute the service of the LORD.

<sup>q</sup> Ex. xxix. 10. Lev. i. 4. viii. 14. xvi. 21.  
<sup>r</sup> 8. vi. 14. 16. Lev. v. 7. 9. 10. viii. 14. 18. ix. 7. xiv. 19. 20. 22. Heb. x. 4—10.  
12 And the <sup>q</sup> Levites shall lay their hands upon the heads of the bullocks: and thou shalt offer <sup>r</sup> the one <sup>q</sup> for a sin-offering, and the other <sup>q</sup> for a burnt-offering, unto the LORD, to make an <sup>r</sup> atonement for the Levites.

<sup>r</sup> Lev. i. 4. iv. 20. 35. viii. 34. xvi. 6. 11. 16—19. Heb. ix. 22.  
13 And thou shalt set the Levites before Aaron, and before his sons, <sup>r</sup> and offer them <sup>q</sup> for an offering unto the LORD.

<sup>u</sup> vi. 2. Deut. x. 8. Rom. i. 1. Gal. i. 15. Heb. vii. 26.  
<sup>x</sup> 17. iii. 45. xvi. 9. 10. xviii. 6. Mal. iii. 17.  
14 Thus shalt thou <sup>r</sup> separate the Levites from among the children of Israel; <sup>r</sup> and the Levites shall be mine.

<sup>y</sup> 11. iii. 23—37. iv. 3—32. 1 Chr. xxix. xxv. xxvi.  
<sup>z</sup> See on 11. 13—iii. 12.  
15 And after that shall the Levites <sup>r</sup> go in to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation: and thou shalt cleanse them, <sup>r</sup> and offer them <sup>q</sup> for an offering.

<sup>a</sup> iii. 12. 45.  
16 For they <sup>r</sup> are wholly given unto me from among the children of Israel; <sup>r</sup> instead of such as open every womb, <sup>r</sup> even instead of the first-born of all the

children of Israel, have I taken them unto me.

<sup>b</sup> Ex. xiii. 2. 12. 13. Luke ii. 23.  
17 For <sup>b</sup> all the first-born of the children of Israel <sup>r</sup> are mine, <sup>r</sup> both man and beast: <sup>o</sup> on the day that I smote every first-born in the land of Egypt, <sup>r</sup> I sanctified them for myself.

<sup>c</sup> Ex. xii. 29. Ps. lxxviii. 61. cv. 36. cxxxv. 8. Heb. xi. 28.  
<sup>d</sup> Ex. xiii. 14. 15. xxix. 44. 1. Lev. xxvii. 14. 15. 25. Ez. xii. 12. John x. 36. xvii. 19. Heb. x. 29. Jam. i. 18.  
18 And I have taken the Levites for all the first-born of the children of Israel.

<sup>e</sup> iii. 6—9. xviii. 2—6. 1 Chr. xxiii. 28—32. Ez. xlii. 11—14. Heb. x. 29.  
19 And <sup>r</sup> I have given the Levites <sup>q</sup> as <sup>r</sup> a gift to Aaron, and to his sons, from among the children of Israel; to do the service of the children of Israel in the tabernacle of the congregation, and to make an atonement for the children of Israel: <sup>r</sup> that there be no plague among the children of Israel, when the children of Israel come nigh unto the sanctuary.

<sup>f</sup> 1. 63. xvi. 45. xviii. 3. 1 Sam. vi. 19. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16—20.  
20 And Moses, and Aaron, and all the congregation of the children of Israel, did to the Levites according unto all that the LORD commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so did the children of Israel unto them.

<sup>g</sup> See on 7.—xix. 12. 19.  
21 And the Levites <sup>r</sup> were purified, and they washed their clothes; and Aaron <sup>b</sup> offered them <sup>q</sup> as an offering before the LORD; <sup>r</sup> and Aaron made an atonement for them to cleanse them.

<sup>h</sup> See on 11. 14. 15. 12.  
22 And <sup>r</sup> after that went the Levites in, to do their service in the tabernacle of the congregation before Aaron, and before his sons: as the LORD had commanded Moses concerning the Levites, so did they unto them.

<sup>i</sup> 15. 2 Chr. xxx. 15—17. 27. xxxi. 2. xxxv. 8—16.  
23 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

(Notes, xix;) a sin-offering and a burnt-offering were sacrificed in their behalf; and they shaved all their flesh, according to the ceremony of the leper's purification. (Note, Lev. xiv. 8, 9.) This might denote "the laying apart all filthiness, and superfluity of naughtiness;" the mortification of natural depravity, and the renouncing of unnecessary worldly avocations and employments, that they might more entirely devote their time and attention to the services assigned them.

V. 9—11. The words translated "the whole assembly," often signify, the elders or principal persons in the several tribes; who, as the representatives of the whole congregation, laid their hands on the heads of the Levites: thus expressing their ready consent to the substitution of them in the stead of the first-born, and their surrender of them to the Lord for the purpose of serving at the sanctuary:

and then Aaron, by some significant action, offered them as a wave-offering to the Lord. (11. marg.)

V. 12. Notes, Ex. xxix. 10, 11. Lev. i. 4. xvi. 20—22. V. 14—18. Marg. Ref.—Notes, iii. 41—43. Ex. xiii. 2. 11—16.

V. 19. When Aaron had offered the Levites as an offering unto the Lord, the Lord gave them back to Aaron, who might now with comfort make use of their assistance, "in, or at, the tabernacle;" that is, in the court; or "about the tabernacle," when it was removed. They likewise assisted in offering those sacrifices, by which atonement was made. This and the other services allotted them being duly performed, without any unallowed intrusion of the other tribes, would preserve the people from those terrible effects of the divine displeasure, which they might otherwise apprehend.

24 This is it that *belongeth* unto the Levites; <sup>1</sup>from twenty and five years old and upward they shall go in to

\*wait upon the service of the tabernacle of the congregation:

25 And from the age of fifty years they shall <sup>†</sup>cease waiting upon the service *thereof*, and shall serve no more;

26 But shall minister with their brethren in the tabernacle of the congregation, <sup>‡</sup>to keep the charge, and shall do no service. Thus shalt thou do unto the Levites touching their charge.

1 iv. 3. 23. 1 Chr. xxviii. 3. 24-27. xxviii. 12, 13.  
• Heb. war the warfare of, &c.  
1 Cor. ix. 7  
2 Cor. x. 4  
1 Tim. i. 18. vi. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 3-6.  
† Heb. return from the warfare of, &c. iv. 23. 2 Tim. iv. 7.

m i. 53. iii. 32. xviii. 4. xxxi. 30.  
1 Chr. xxiii. 32. xxvi. 20-29. Ez. xlii. 8. 11.

V. 24. At the age of twenty-five the Levites began to attend upon the ordinary services of the tabernacle: but they were neither required, nor allowed, to assist in its removal, till they were thirty years old. Probably, at the age of twenty-five the Levites were, in after ages, solemnly admitted to their office, according to the prescribed order of this chapter.

V. 25, 26. The Levites, above fifty years of age, might superintend and assist their junior brethren in the ordinary offices; and give them and the people counsel and instruction: but they were exempted from carrying the tabernacle, and from other laborious services. (Note, iv. 3.)—It is remarkable, that no law was made concerning the age at which the priests should begin to officiate; and though various blemishes disqualified them for the service of the sanctuary, yet they continued their ministrations till death, if capable. On the other hand, nothing is said concerning any bodily defects or blemishes disqualifying the Levites; but the time of their service is expressly settled. Their work was far more laborious than that of the priests; it is probable that, without necessity, the priests would not begin very early to officiate; and the wisdom and experience of age would increase, rather than diminish, their fitness for the sacred duties of their office.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Jesus Christ is the only Light of this dark world; in virtue of his atonement he diffuses, by his holy word and Holy Spirit, divine light around; and all that is called illumination, but is not derived from that source, is but the greater and more dangerous darkness. (Notes, Is. viii. 20. Matt. vi. 22, 23.)—Faithful and able ministers in searching the Scriptures, comparing one part with another, and with what they observe and experience; and imparting knowledge by preaching the gospel, and by various other methods, are, in their several places, “burning and shining lights,” communicating the light received from Christ to those over against them, in their congregations and neighbourhoods: and private Christians do the same in their several connexions, when their knowledge and profession of the truth are accompanied with the ornament of a holy and exemplary conversation. In this way, one is enlightened from another, and truth and righteousness will be diffused ere long through all the nations of the earth.—But so polluted is every one born of Adam’s fallen race, that none can approach or serve God, except as a humble

#### CHAP. IX.

The observance of the passover enforced, 1—5. The case of some who were unclean, 6—8. The passover to be observed in the second month, by such as could not keep it in its season, 9—14. The cloud directs the removals and encampments of Israel, 15—23.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, <sup>a</sup>in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying,

2 Let the children of Israel also

penitent he plead guilty, depend upon the Saviour’s atoning blood, and be sanctified by his Holy Spirit. And if the heart be cleansed by divine grace, the outward conduct and conversation will be clean likewise.—The Lord himself hath provided and appointed the method and means of our cleansing, and given us “exceeding great and precious promises” for our encouragement: but, “having these promises,” we are exhorted to “cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God;” (Note, 2 Cor. vii. 1;) and to lay aside and put off our sinful pursuits and indulgences, that we may glorify God “with our bodies and our spirits, which are his,” as “bought with a price.” Every real Christian is thus cleansed from sin, separated from the world, and presented to the Lord, “as a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to him:” but the ministers of Christ especially. When these are regularly appointed to the sacred office, with the approbation of their brethren and of the church of God; and when faithful and diligent in their work; so far from being considered as a useless part of the community, (as they are often profanely represented,) they may fairly be shewn to be the most useful members of society, by their examples, labours, and prayers, in repressing sin which ruineth, and in promoting righteousness which exalteth any people; and in making known that great atonement by which the wrath of God is averted from our guilty souls, and from guilty nations. Let persons of another stamp, called ministers, plead for themselves as they can: but those who act up to this character should never be deserted by men, and will never be forsaken by the Lord, in their old age; they may still be useful by their counsel and influence; and “when the chief Shepherd shall appear, they shall receive a crown of glory which fadeth not away.” (Note, 1 Pet. v. 1—4.)

#### NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1—5. This passage is dated before any other of the events recorded in this book; namely, in the first month of the second year, or the next year after Israel left Egypt. (i. 1. Note, Ex. xl. 2.)—It is generally thought, that the Passover was no more celebrated after this time, till the people arrived in Canaan. (Notes, Josh. v. 2—10.) The difficulty of procuring flour, during their frequent removals, might be one reason, that the observance was no more required in the desert; and this renewed command would make way for the more regular celebra-

b Ex. xii. 2, 3, &c. c xxviii. 16. Ex. xii. 6. 14. Lev. xxiii. 5. Deut. xvi. 1. 2. Josh. v. 10. 2 Chr. xxxv. 1. Ezra vi. 19. Mark xiv. 12. Luke xii. 7. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.

\* keep the passover at \* his appointed season.  
3 In the fourteenth day of this month \* at even ye shall keep it in his appointed season: \* according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it.

4 And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the passover.

5 And they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even, in the wilderness of Sinai: \* according to all that the LORD commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel.

6 ¶ And there were certain men, who were \* defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day; and \* they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day.

7 And those men said unto him, We are defiled by the dead body of a man; wherefore are we kept back, that \* we may not offer an offering of the LORD in his appointed season among the children of Israel?

8 And Moses said unto them, \* Stand still, and \* I will hear what the LORD will command concerning you.

9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

tion of it in Canaan. This interruption however intimated, that these ordinances were only a shadow of good things to come, and not intended for perpetuity in the church. (Notes, and P. O. Ex. xii.)

V. 6—8. The laws respecting ceremonial defilement had not at this time been explicitly given: yet several intimations had been made, which created scruples in the consciences of these persons, who probably had been under the necessity of attending the funeral of some relation. They counted it their duty and privilege to eat the passover, but feared to eat it with their uncleanness upon them; they therefore desired to know what they ought to do, and very properly referred the case to the decision of Moses, who applied for direction to the Lord. This seems to have occurred at the time, when the rest of the congregation were about to celebrate the passover.—The passover is here called “the offering of the LORD;” being a solemn sacrifice, though no part of it was burnt on the altar.

V. 10—14. The appointment of a passover in the second month, for those who were defiled at the regular season, implied a prohibition of its being eaten by any person ceremonially unclean. It must be supposed, that they who were at a great distance on a journey, had a

10 Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If any man of you, or of your posterity, shall \* be unclean by reason of a dead body, or \* be in a journey afar off, \* yet he shall keep the passover unto the LORD.

11 The \* fourteenth day of the second month at even they shall keep it, \* and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

12 They \* shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor \* break any bone of it: \* according to all the ordinances of the passover they shall keep it.

13 But the man that is clean, and is not in a journey, and \* forbeareth to keep the passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people; \* because he brought not the offering of the LORD in his appointed season, that man shall \* bear his sin.

14 And \* if a stranger shall sojourn among you, and will keep the passover unto the LORD; according to the ordinance of the passover, and according to the manner thereof, so shall he do: ye shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger, and for him that was born in the land.

15 ¶ And \* on the day that the tabernacle was reared up, \* the cloud covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony: and at even there

good reason for being from home at that season, and could not reach the place of the tabernacle in due time. The feast of unleavened bread might be observed at a distance from the sanctuary, and even by the ceremonially unclean: it is therefore thought by many, that it was not kept after the passover in the second month; yet Hezekiah, when he celebrated the passover in the second month, observed the feast of unleavened bread, and that during fourteen days. (Notes, 2 Chr. xxx. 2—4. 21—25.) Women and children, and such as were not required to go up to the sanctuary at the three great feasts, were not particularly concerned in the law; at least not in the annexed denunciation, against such as wilfully neglected the passover, and who might expect to be visited by some divine judgment.—They, who were unclean or at a distance in the second month, were not allowed to keep the passover in any subsequent month.—Strangers, renouncing idolatry, might live among the Israelites: but if they desired to keep the passover, they and the males of their households must be circumcised; and in all things they must conform to the law concerning it; and then they would be, in that respect, partakers of the privileges enjoyed by those who were Israelites by birth. (Marg. Ref.—Note, Ex. xii. 48, 49.)

V. 15. “The tent of the testimony” was the west end

was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of fire until the morning.

<sup>a</sup> Ex. xiii. 21, 22. 16 So it was <sup>a</sup> alway: the cloud covered it *by day*, and the appearance of fire by night.

<sup>b</sup> x. 11. 33, 34. 17 And <sup>b</sup> when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then after that the children of Israel journeyed: <sup>c</sup> and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents.

18 At the commandment of the LORD the children of Israel journeyed: <sup>d</sup> and at the commandment of the LORD they pitched: as long as the cloud abode upon the tabernacle they rested in their tents.

<sup>e</sup> Heb. prolonged. 19 And when the cloud <sup>e</sup> tarried long upon the tabernacle many days, then the children of Israel <sup>e</sup> kept the charge of the LORD, and journeyed not.

20 And *so* it was when the cloud

of the tabernacle over the most holy place, where the ark of the covenant with the tables of the law was placed, which testified Israel to be the Lord's people, and him to be their God. (Notes, Ex. xxv. 10—22.)

V. 16—23. (Notes, Ex. xiii. 21, 22. xl. 36—38.) The moving or abiding of the cloud, as the signal of Israel's marching, or continuing in their encampments, would doubtless often try the patience of the people, and be very inconvenient to them: yet we do not find, amidst all their rebellions, that they ventured to act in direct opposition to these intimations of the divine will, except in one instance. (xiv. 40—45.)—Onkelos, an old Jewish commentator, in many places paraphrases the words rendered, "at the commandment of the LORD," *at the mouth of the Word of the LORD*. This shews that the ancient Jews had some knowledge of the doctrine, with which the apostle John sublimely opens his gospel.—The case of two or three millions of people, shut up in a dreary wilderness, for almost forty years, without ever seeing house, or garden, or corn-field; and that as completely, as if the highest walls, garrisoned by the most valiant troops, had surrounded them; when compared with their rebellions in other things, and their submission in this respect, most strikingly shews, that they were convinced beyond the possibility of doubt, that resistance must be unavailing: yet nothing short of having witnessed the miracles recorded in these books, could have induced this strong conviction.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We are so immersed in the things of time and sense, that the most pure minds have need to be repeatedly "stirred up, by way of remembrance," to such duties as they have before been instructed in. (Notes, 2 Pet. i. 12—15. iii. 1—4.)—Alas! in what a sad dilemma are multitudes of professed Christians! They are *habitually unclean*,

was a few days upon the tabernacle: according to the commandment of the LORD they abode in their tents, and according to the commandment of the LORD they journeyed.

21 And *so* it was when the cloud <sup>†</sup> abode from even unto the morning, <sup>†</sup> Heb. was. and *that* the cloud was taken up in the morning, then they journeyed: whether *it was* by day or by night that the cloud was taken up, they journeyed.

22 Or *whether it were* two days, or a month, or a year, that the cloud tarried upon the tabernacle, remaining thereon, the children of Israel <sup>f</sup> abode in their tents, and journeyed not: but when it was taken up they journeyed.

23 At the commandment of the LORD they rested in their tents, and at the commandment of the LORD they journeyed: <sup>g</sup> they kept the charge of the LORD, at the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

through indulged lusts and unrepented sins, and cannot approach the Lord's table without a presumptuous profanation: yet in staying away they neglect "their bounden duty and service;" and virtually confess that they have no part in Christ, but are liable to bear the heavy load of their own iniquity, and to be cut off by the righteous judgment of God; not so much for disregarding this outward sign, as for neglecting the great salvation itself. When, however, this becomes their burden, and they sincerely enquire what they must do, considering the ordinances of God as their duty and privilege, and every impediment as their affliction; their case then becomes hopeful. For they are directed to the "Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness;" and having been "washed and sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God," they may approach with comfort to partake of that sacred feast. But men should reflect, that if they are not prepared for the Lord's table, they are not fit for death and judgment; and that it is very ungrateful for Christians to neglect the command of him who loved us, and gave himself for our sins, and, as with his dying lips, said to his disciples, "Do this in remembrance of me."—Under difficulties and distress of conscience it is proper to consult pious and faithful ministers, and plainly to state the case unto them. And it becomes them to be accessible to such enquirers; and not only to offer them the best counsel they can, but in doubtful cases to take time for deliberation, and consulting the word of God, and prayer, in order to give them a satisfactory solution: and as the Lord makes a difference between occasional defeilements and presumptuous disobedience, they should do the same. (Note, 2 Chr. xxx. 16—20.)—We may often, without our own fault, be deprived of the opportunity of attending on divine ordinances; but in that case we shall not lose the blessing: and when thus kept away at one

## CHAP. X.

Directions for making and using the silver trumpets, 1—10 The Israelites journey from Sinai to Paran, 11—13; and the order in which they marched, 14—28. Moses intreats Hobab to continue with them, 29—32. His prayer at the removing, and the resting, of the ark, 33—36.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Make thee <sup>a</sup>two trumpets of silver; <sup>b</sup>of a whole piece shalt thou make them, that thou mayest use them for <sup>c</sup>the calling of the assembly, and for the journeying of the camps.

3 And when <sup>d</sup>they shall blow with them, all the assembly shall assemble themselves to thee, at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

4 And if they blow *but* with one trumpet, then the princes, *which are* <sup>e</sup>heads of the thousands of Israel, shall gather themselves unto thee.

5 When ye <sup>f</sup>blow an alarm, then <sup>g</sup>the camps that lie on the east parts shall go forward.

6 When ye blow an alarm the second time, then <sup>h</sup>the camps that lie on the south side shall take their journey:

they shall blow an alarm for their journeys.

7 But when the congregation is to be gathered together, <sup>i</sup>ye shall blow, <sup>j</sup>but ye shall not sound an alarm.

8 And <sup>k</sup>the sons of Aaron the priests shall blow with the trumpets: and they shall be to you for an ordinance for ever throughout your generations.

9 And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that <sup>l</sup>oppresseth you, <sup>m</sup>then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets: and ye shall be <sup>n</sup>remembered before the LORD your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies.

10 Also <sup>o</sup>in the day of your gladness, and in your solemn days, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt-offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings; that they may be to you for <sup>p</sup>a memorial before your God: I *am* the LORD your God.

11 ¶ And it came to pass, <sup>q</sup>on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that <sup>r</sup>the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony.

12 And the children of Israel <sup>s</sup>took

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings xii. 13  
<sup>b</sup> Ex. xxv. 18. 31  
Eph. iv. 5.

<sup>c</sup> 7. Ps. lxxxi. 8.  
lxxxix. 15. Is. i.  
13. Hos. viii. 1.  
Joel i. 14.

<sup>d</sup> Jer. iv. 5. Joel  
ii. 15, 16.

<sup>e</sup> See on i. 4—16.  
—vii. 2. Ex.  
xviii. 21. Deut.  
i. 15.

<sup>f</sup> 6, 7. Is. lviii. 1.  
Joel ii. 1.  
<sup>g</sup> ii. 3—9

<sup>h</sup> ii. 10—16.

<sup>k</sup> xxxi. 6. Josh. vi.  
4—16. 1 Chr. xv  
24. xvi. 6. 2 Chr  
xiii. 12—15.

<sup>l</sup> Judg. ii. 18. iii.  
27. iv. 2. vi. 9.  
34. vii. 16—21.  
x. 8. 12. 1 Sam.  
x. 18. Ps. cvi.  
42.

<sup>m</sup> Is. xviii. 3.  
lviii. 1. Jer. iv.  
5. 19. 21. vi. 1.  
17. Ez. vii. 14.  
xxxiii. 3—6.  
Hos. v. 8. Am.  
iii. 6. Zeph. i.  
16. 1 Cor. xiv. 8.  
<sup>n</sup> Gen. xxi. 1. Ps.  
cvi. 4. cxxvi.  
23. Luke i. 72—  
74.

<sup>o</sup> xxxix. 1. Lev.  
xxiii. 24. xxv. 9.  
10. 1 Chr. xv. 28.  
xvi. 42. 2 Chr.  
v. 12. 13. vii. 6.  
xxxix. 26. 28. Ezra  
iii. 10. Neh. xii.  
35. Ps. lxxxi. 3.  
lxxxix. 15. xlviii.  
6. cl. 3. Is.  
xxviii. 13. iv. 1—  
4. Matt. xi. 28.  
1 Cor. xv. 52.  
1 Thes. iv. 16.  
18. Rev. xxii. 17.

<sup>p</sup> Ex. xxviii. 29.  
xxx. 16. Josh.  
iv. 7. 1 Cor. xi.  
24—26.  
<sup>q</sup> i. 1. ix. 1. 5. 11.  
Ex. xl. 2.  
<sup>r</sup> See on ix. 17—  
23.

<sup>s</sup> xxxiii. 16. Ex.  
xiii. 20. xl. 36.  
Deut. i. 19.

time, we should be doubly careful to improve the next opportunity.—Blessed be God, that we strangers of the Gentiles are admitted to participate in the blessings of “Christ our Passover, who was sacrificed for us:” but let us be careful to celebrate the sacred feast after the prescribed manner; as true penitents and spiritual pilgrims, with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. (Note, 1 Cor. v. 6—8.)—Though we are not under the miraculous direction of the cloud; yet the providence of God appoints the bounds of our habitation, and his word is the perfect and sufficient rule of our conduct. Wherever our lot is cast, let us study contentment. Whenever called upon to remove, let us be careful that we act according to the commandment of our God, and in dependence on his promises, in the patience of hope, and quietly waiting for his salvation: and when we pass through temptation and tribulation, or the gloomy vale of death, if his presence go with us, we must be safe and shall be happy. Let us beg of him, therefore, to choose for us our places of abode in this world, our time of removal out of it, and our everlasting inheritance; for he never chose to the final disadvantage of those, who were enabled to refer all their concerns to his decision.

## NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 2—10. These silver trumpets were evidently intended to typify the preaching of the gospel. (Notes, Lev. xxiii. 24, 25. Ps. lxxxix. 15—18. Is. xxvii.

12, 13.) The priests alone were allowed to blow them; and as there were at that time but two priests, the sons of Aaron the high priest, only two trumpets were made: but we read afterwards “of one hundred and twenty priests “sounding with trumpets.” (2 Chr. v. 12.) In allusion to the uses assigned to them, in this place, and in others referred to in the margin, and which do not seem to require explanation; (Marg. Ref. e—p;) we may observe, that the gospel sounds the alarm to sinners; calls them to repentance; proclaims liberty to captives and slaves; collects the spiritual worshippers of God, in all ages and nations, to keep their solemn fasts of godly sorrow, and feasts of holy joy; summons them to become strangers and pilgrims upon earth; directs and encourages their heavenly journey; excites them to combat against Satan, the world, and sin; animates them with the assurance of victory; calls their attention to the sacrifice of Christ; explains it, and tends suitably to affect them with it; and is a constant memorial of the Lord’s gracious presence with them, for their encouragement and protection, and for a terror and dismay to all their enemies. (2 Chr. xiii. 12.)—The distinct ways of sounding the trumpets were doubtless well understood both by priests and people: and this might imply, that the word of God should be rendered as plain as possible to every description of those who hear it. (Note, 1 Cor. xiv. 6—12.)

V. 11—13. After the Israelites had continued nearly a year at mount Sinai, (Ex. xix. 1,) to settle every thing re-

t i. 1. ix. 1. xxxiii  
15. Ex. xix. 1, 2  
u xii. 16. xiii. 3.  
26. Gen. xxi. 21.  
Deut. i. l. xxxiii.  
2. 1 Sam. xxv.  
1. Hab. iii. 3.  
v ix. 22.

their journeys 'out of the wilderness of Sinai; and the cloud rested in "the wilderness of Paran.

13 And they first \*took their journey, according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

y ii. 3—9. xxvi. 19  
—27. Gen. xlix.  
8.

14 ¶ In 'the first place went the standard of the camp of the children of Judah, according to their armies: and over his host was 'Nahshon the son of Amminadab.

z See on i. 7. vii. 12.

15 And over the host of the tribe of the children of 'Issachar, was Nethaneel the son of Zuar.

u i. 8. vii. 18.

16 And over the host of the tribe of the children of 'Zebulun, was Eliab the son of Helon.

b i. 9. vii. 24.

17 And \*the tabernacle was taken down: and 'the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari set forward, bearing the tabernacle.

c i. 51. Heb. ix. 11. xii. 28. 2 Pet. i. 14.  
d iii. 25, 26, 28, 37. iv. 24—33. vii. 6—8.

18 ¶ And the standard of \*the camp of Reuben set forward, according to their armies: and over his host was 'Elizur the son of Shedeur.

e ii. 10—16. xxvi. 8—18.

19 And over the host of the tribe of the children of 'Simeon, was Shelumiel the son of Zurishaddai.

f i. 5. vii. 30.

20 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Gad, was 'Eliasaph the son of Deuel.

g i. 6. vii. 36.

21 And 'the Kohathites set forward, bearing the sanctuary; and \*the other did set up the tabernacle against they came.

h i. 14. 5. 14. non of Reuel. vii. 42.

22 ¶ And the standard of \*the camp of the children of Ephraim set forward, according to their armies: and over his host was 'Elishama the son of Ammihud.

i i. 10. vii. 48.

23 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Manasseh, was <sup>m</sup>Gama-liel the son of Pedahzur.

24 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, was <sup>n</sup>Abidan the son of Gideon.

25 ¶ And the standard of 'the camp of the children of Dan set forward, which was 'the rearward of all the camps throughout their hosts: and over his host was <sup>q</sup>Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai.

26 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Asher, was 'Pagiel the son of Ocran.

27 And over the host of the tribe of the children of Naphtali, was 'Ahira the son of Enan.

28 'Thus were the journeyings of the children of Israel, 'according to their armies, when they set forward.

29 ¶ And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of 'Raguel the Midianite, Moses's father-in-law, We are journeying unto the place of which 'the LORD said, I will give it you: 'come thou with us, and we will do thee good; 'for the LORD hath spoken good concerning Israel.

30 And he said unto him, I will not go; but I \*will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred.

31 And he said, Leave us not, I pray thee; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us 'instead of eyes.

32 And it shall be, if thou go with

specting their future worship, they began their march to Canaan; whither they might speedily have arrived, had they not renewed their rebellions. This may typically teach us, that though true religion begins with the knowledge of the holy law, and humiliation for sin; yet we should also press forward, and "go on towards perfection," in an acquaintance with Christ and his gospel, and those effectual encouragements, motives, and assistances to holiness, which it proposes.—Previously to the removal of the cloud, the people seem to have had an express command to set out on their journey. (Note, Deut. i. 6—8.) In consequence of this we may suppose, that they had got all ready for their march, when the removing of the cloud gave the signal for their actually setting off; and that, in general, they had time allowed for these purposes.

V. 21. The Gershonites and Merarites, who marched before the Kohathites for that purpose (17), set up the tabernacle, to receive the sacred things when the Kohathites arrived with them.

V. 25. This division not only brought up the rear of Israel, but also gathered under it such as were left behind through weariness, and the mixed multitude which followed them, and those who, being unclean, were excluded from the camp.

V. 29. It is most probable, that Jethro was the same person as Reuel, or Raguel; and that Hobab was his son, and Moses's brother-in-law, who had remained with Moses and Israel when his father departed from them; or had come to them afterwards.

V. 31, 32. Though the people were under the immediate direction of God in their march; yet, in respect of

c Judges i. 16. 1 John i. 3.  
d Ex. iii. 1. xix. 3, xxiv. 17. 18.  
e Deut. ix. 9. xxxi. 26. Josh. iv. 7. Judg. xx. 27. 1 Sam. iv. 3. Jer. iii. 16. Heb. xiii. 20.  
f Ex. xxxiii. 14. 15. Deut. i. 33. Josh. iii. 2-6. 11-17. Jer. xxxi. 8, 9.  
g Ps. xcv. 11. Is. xxviii. 12. lxi. 1. Jer. vi. 16. Matt. xi. 28-30. Heb. iv. 3-11.  
h Ex. xiii. 21, 22. Neh. ix. 12. 19. Ps. cv. 39.

us, yea, it shall be, that <sup>a</sup> what goodness the LORD shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee.

33 ¶ And they departed from <sup>d</sup> the mount of the LORD three days' journey: and <sup>e</sup> the ark of the covenant of the LORD <sup>f</sup> went before them in the three days' journey, to search out <sup>g</sup> a resting place for them.

34 And <sup>h</sup> the cloud of the LORD *was*

upon them by day, when they went out of the camp.

35 And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said, <sup>i</sup> 'Rise up, LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee.

36 And when it rested, he said, <sup>k</sup> 'Return, O LORD, unto the <sup>l</sup> many thou-

Ps. lxxviii. 1, 2  
cxxxiii. 8. Is. li. 9.

Ps. xc. 13-17.  
Heb. ten thousand thousands.  
Gen. xxiv. 60.

the conveniences or inconveniences of the places through which they passed, they might receive profitable cautions and instructions from a person acquainted with the desert.—Some however translate the words rendered, "thou mayest be unto us instead of eyes," in the past tense, and interpret it as a thankful acknowledgment of the advantages which Israel had derived from Hobab's counsel and direction; for which they could make him no amends, except he would go with them, and share the kindness, which the Lord had in reserve for them in the promised land, whither they reasonably expected soon to arrive. But others interpret the words to signify, that, (like his father Jethro,) he might be very useful to Moses by his advice, and should be admitted among his select counselors, if he would continue in the camp. We may suppose, that Hobab was withdrawn from his first purpose, and accompanied them. We shall hereafter read of his posterity: and it is probable, that an inheritance was assigned them in Canaan. The whole passage implies that Hobab, like his father, was a wise and pious man, a devoted worshipper of the God of Israel; and that, on the supposition that he "returned to his kindred" (30), he did not return to idolatry. (*Notes, Ruth i. 11-17.*)

V. 33, 34. It is doubtful, whether on this occasion the ark was carried separately before the camp, or with the other sacred things in the midst of it. The cloud however, (which *above* was diffused as a canopy over the heads of the people in the day, and afforded light to them by night,) rested beneath upon the ark in such a manner, that in directing their march, the ark on which it rested might very properly be said to *go before them*, to single out the particular spot on which they were to halt for refreshment; and after three days, the spot on which they were to encamp.

V. 35, 36. Moses, as the leader, though Aaron was the high priest, solemnly addressed the Lord in this emphatical prayer, the former part of which David used, probably on a similar occasion. (*Note, Ps. lxxviii. 1-3.*) The expression, "the many thousands of Israel," is in the original, *the ten thousand thousands of Israel*, among whom Moses thus besought the Lord again to manifest his presence, and to take up his residence.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1-10.

The trumpet of the gospel, being God's appointed ordinance, demands the serious attention of all to whom it is sent. Let our character, situation, trials, or duty, be what they may, this trumpet, when skilfully used by the minis-

ters of Christ, will give such a distinct sound, as at one time or another exactly to suit our case; and to afford us that warning, direction, encouragement, or exhortation, of which we stand in need: and *in this manner* we should expect to be counselled and comforted by the Lord. But they who sound this trumpet ought to be very skilful, faithful, and affectionate, and observant both of the word of God, of their own hearts, and of the situations of the people; lest they give false alarms, or neglect to give the alarm when necessary; lest by an uncertain sound they encourage such as need reproof, or discourage the hearts of such as should be comforted; or in any other way defeat those ends for which the preaching of the word is intended.—"Blessed is the people who know the joyful sound," and clearly understand its meaning whether it call them to watch and pray, to weep or rejoice, to attack their enemies or to resist their assaults, to march forwards with alacrity or to endure the labours of the way with patient perseverance; and who so understand its sound, as to pay it that prompt obedience, which the disciplined soldier pays to the sound of the trumpet. Such persons will never be left destitute of encouragement, instruction, or counsel, through the whole of their journey. Though they "have here no continuing city," but are always removing from one wilderness to another: yet, by hearkening to the word of God, they will follow the ark in all their removals, and be taught habitually to depend on the promises and perfections of God and the mediation of his Son, to obey his commands, and imitate his example, in their proper place and station; and ever to abide under the care of his providence, enjoy the comforts of his Spirit, and have fellowship with him in his ordinances.

##### V. 11-36.

The Lord himself goes before his believing people, to find them out resting-places from time to time by the way: he will give them rest to their souls on earth, until he bring them to his heavenly felicity; he will arise to scatter his and their enemies, and "all that hate him shall flee before him;" and he will abide with every individual, and with all the thousands and millions of Israel, "always even unto the end of the world:" for he has promised, that he will "never leave them nor forsake them," and this is the substance of all their prayers and desires—While we are thus journeying to the place, of which the Lord hath spoken to us, and hath engaged to give us; we should endeavour, by our general good behaviour and tranquil cheerfulness, by special acts of kindness, and by pressing exhortations and persuasions, to induce our relatives,

## CHAP. XI.

a x 31. xx. 2-3.

xxi. 5. Ex. xv.

23. 24. xvi. 2, 3.

7. 9. xvii. 2, 3.

Lam. iii. 39.

1 Cor. x. 10

Jude 16.

• Or, were as it

were complain-

ers.

† Heb. it was evil

in the ears of the

LORD. Gen.

xxxviii. 10.

2 Sam. xi. 27.

Marg. Jam. v. 4.

b xvi. 35. Lev. x.

2. Deut. xxxii.

22. 2 Kings i. 12.

Job i. 16. Ps.

lxxviii. 21. cvi.

18. Is. xxx. 33.

xxxiii. 14. Nah.

i. 5. Mark ix. 43

—49. Heb. xii.

iii.

c Deut. xxv. 18.

d xxi. 7. Ps. lxxviii.

34. 35. Jer.

xxviii. 3. xlii.

2. Acts viii. 24.

e xiv. 13—20. Gen.

xviii. 23—33. Ex.

xxxii. 10—14.

31. 32. xxxiv. 9.

Deut. ix. 19, 20.

Ps. cvi. 23. Is.

xxxvii. 4. Jer.

xv. 1. Am. vii. 2.

—6. Jam. v. 16.

1 John v. 16.

f xvi. 45—48.

Heb. vii. 28.

1 John ii. 1, 2.

z Heb. sunk.

The people complain, and the fire of the Lord burns among them, but is quenched through Moses's prayer, 1, 2; the place is called Taberah, 3. They grow weary of manna, and lust for flesh, 4—9. Moses complains, 10—15. God promises to give him seventy assistants; and flesh to the people for a month, 16—20. Moses's faith is staggered, 21—23. God gives of his Spirit to seventy elders, 24, 25. Two prophesy in the camp: Joshua would forbid them; but Moses reproves him, 26—30. The quails are sent in vast abundance, but in wrath, 31—35.

AND <sup>a</sup> when the people <sup>a</sup> complained, <sup>†</sup> it displeased the LORD: and the LORD heard <sup>it</sup>; and his anger was kindled: and <sup>b</sup> the fire of the LORD burnt among them, and consumed <sup>them that were</sup> in <sup>c</sup> the uttermost parts of the camp.

2 And the people <sup>d</sup> cried unto Moses; and when Moses <sup>e</sup> prayed unto the LORD, <sup>f</sup> the fire <sup>z</sup> was quenched.

friends, and neighbours to attend us; aiming to convince them, that the Lord is with us, that he hath spoken good concerning us; that he hath good in reserve for us, and that it is for their true advantage to accompany us; frankly proposing to them a participation in all our privileges and comforts, and assuring them of all the kindness which God shall enable us to do unto them. (Note, 1 John i. 3, 4.) By persevering attempts of this kind, and by fervent prayers, we may frequently overcome the reluctance of those, who at first were unwilling to renounce the pleasures of sin, or the interests of the world, or who were loth to encounter the hardships of the journey, or who valued not the promised inheritance.—Though in every thing our dependence must be ultimately placed upon the Lord, yet we may use the services of men as instruments of good to us, and should in our turn aim to do them good; and thus we may be as eyes and ears and hands to each other, for our mutual comfort, and to the glory of our common Lord. We should also be careful, that we begin every undertaking, especially those in which the church of God is concerned, with earnest prayer for direction, assistance, and success: and not only ministers, but magistrates and priuices also, should be men of prayer, as well as of activity, integrity, and ability; for whatever talents and instruments are employed, the Lord alone sends prosperity. Finally, in all our supplications at the throne of grace, the many thousands of Israel should without fail be remembered by us.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XL V. 1—3. "The people were as it were *"complainers;"* (marg.) that is, they murmured against Moses, and against the Lord.—When we consider the wonderful works wrought for Israel before their eyes; the excellent laws which they had received; the mild government under which they lived; the manner in which their camp was victualled, watered, guarded, and guided; and

3 And he called the name of the place 'Taberah; because the fire of the LORD burnt among them.

4 ¶ And <sup>a</sup> the mixed multitude that <sup>g</sup> was among them <sup>h</sup> fell a lusting: and <sup>h</sup> the children of Israel also <sup>h</sup> wept again, and said, 'Who shall give us flesh to eat?

5 We remember <sup>k</sup> the fish which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick:

6 But now <sup>l</sup> our soul is dried away: <sup>l</sup> there is nothing at all, besides this manna, <sup>before</sup> our eyes.

7 And <sup>m</sup> the manna was as coriander-seed, and the <sup>n</sup> colour thereof as the colour of <sup>n</sup> bdellium.

8 And <sup>o</sup> the people went about, and gathered <sup>o</sup> it, and ground <sup>o</sup> it in mills, or beat <sup>o</sup> it in a mortar, and <sup>p</sup> baked <sup>o</sup> it in

That is, *A burning.* Deut. ix. 22.

Ex. xii. 38. Lev. xxiv. 10, 11.

Neh. xiii. 3.

Heb. *lusted a lust.*

h 1 Cor. xv. 33.

Heb. *returned and wept.*

1 Ps. lxxviii. 18—

20. cvi. 14. Rom.

xiii. 14. 1 Cor.

x. 6.

k Ex. xvi. 8. Ps.

xvii. 14. Phil. iii.

19.

l xxi. 5 2 Sam.

xiii. 4

m Ex. xvi. 14, 15.

31. 1 Cor. i. 23.

24. Rev. ii. 17.

Heb. *eye of it*

as the eye of

n Gen. ii. 12.

o Ex. xvi. 16—18.

John vi. 27. 33

—58.

p Ex. xvi. 23.

the tokens which they enjoyed of the Lord's special presence and favour; we are apt to enquire, what grounds of complaint they could have. But some would be dissatisfied, that they and their friends were excluded from the government, and from the priesthood; some would murmur at being kept so long in the wilderness; others would be weary with marching three days together without resting, except merely to take present refreshment; and various occasions of discontent would be found among so large a multitude. Since the sin committed in respect of the golden calf, the people had appeared obedient and tractable, and the rulers liberal and cheerful in affording assistance; but their evil dispositions, though overawed, were not slain: they therefore speedily revived, and produced more fatal effects than ever. The Lord being thus provoked, made them sensible of the power of his fiery indignation. Probably, some of them were destroyed, as Nadab and Abihu had been, by fire from the Lord, or by flashes of lightning, perhaps from the fiery pillar. Though they had several times before murmured, they had not been thus punished: for, not having known so much of the Lord's will, nor seen so much of his glory, nor experienced so much of his kindness, they were before more excusable than at this time.—Yet even now the fire seems only to have consumed some of those, who resorted to the uttermost parts of the camp, to associate with the mixed multitude (4): and when Moses, at the request of the people, prayed, it was at once quenched. The place, however acquired a new name from this fire that consumed the criminals.—*Taberah.*] *A burning.* (Marg.)

V. 4—9. This *lusting* for other food than manna began among the mixed multitude; but it seems to have rapidly spread among the Israelites, and to have anew excited their impatient lamentations and murmurings. They were not, on this occasion, merely guilty of discontent, and an inordinate desire of flesh to eat; but they limited the power of God, as if it were impossible for him to give

pans, and made cakes of it: and the  
q *Ex. xvi. 31.* <sup>1</sup>taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil.

<sup>7</sup> *Ex. xvi. 13, 14* <sup>9</sup> And when 'the dew fell upon the  
Deut. xxxiii. 2.  
Ps. lxxviii. 25—  
26. cv. 40.  
camp in the night, the manna fell  
upon it.

<sup>10</sup> ¶ Then Moses heard the people  
xiv. 1, 2. xvi. 27. <sup>1</sup>weep throughout their families, every  
xxi. 5. Ps. cvi.  
25.  
Deut. xxxiii. 22.  
Ps. lxxviii. 21  
59. Is. v. 25. Jer.  
xviii. 4.  
u <sup>xii. 3. xx. 10—</sup> <sup>1</sup>Moses also was displeased.  
13. Ps. cvi. 32.  
33. Mark iii. 5.  
x. 14.

<sup>11</sup> And Moses said unto the LORD,  
v <sup>15. Ex. xvii. 4.</sup> <sup>1</sup>Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy ser-  
Deut. i. 12. Jer.  
xv. 10. 18. xx.  
7—9. 14—18.  
Mal. iii. 14.  
2 Cor. xi. 28.  
x <sup>Job x. 2. Ps.</sup> <sup>1</sup>the burden of all this people upon me?  
xxxv. 3. cxliii.  
2. Lam. iii. 22,  
23. 39. 40.

<sup>12</sup> Have I conceived all this people?  
have I begotten them, that thou should-  
y <sup>Is. xl. 11. Ez.</sup> <sup>1</sup>est say unto me, <sup>1</sup>Carry them in thy  
xxxiv. 23. John  
x. 11  
z <sup>Is. xlix. 15. 28.</sup> <sup>1</sup>bosom ('as a nursing-father beareth  
Gal. iv. 19.  
1 Thes. ii. 7.  
a <sup>Gen. xxii. 16.</sup> <sup>1</sup>the sucking child,) unto 'the land  
17. xxvi. 8. L.  
24 Ex. xiii. 8.  
b <sup>Matt. xv. 83.</sup> <sup>1</sup>which thou swarest unto their fa-  
Mark viii. 4 ix.  
23.  
thers?

<sup>13</sup> <sup>b</sup>Whence should I have flesh to

give unto all this people? for they  
weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh,  
that we may eat.

<sup>14</sup> I am 'not able to bear all this  
people alone, because *it is too heavy*  
for me.

<sup>15</sup> And if thou deal thus with me,  
<sup>1</sup>'kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I  
have found favour in thy sight; and  
<sup>1</sup>'let me not see my wretchedness.

<sup>16</sup> And the LORD said unto Moses,  
Gather unto me 'seventy men of the  
elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to  
be the elders of the people, and <sup>1</sup>'offi-  
cers over them; and bring them unto  
the tabernacle of the congregation, that  
they may stand there with thee.

<sup>17</sup> And <sup>b</sup>I will come down, and <sup>1</sup>talk  
with thee there; and <sup>b</sup>I will take of  
the Spirit which *is* upon thee, and will  
put *it* upon them: and <sup>1</sup>they shall bear  
the burden of the people with thee,  
that thou bear *it* not thyself alone.

them it in their present circumstances. The subsequent particulars are mentioned concerning the manna, in order to illustrate the goodness of the Lord to Israel, in giving them, without trouble or expense, so suitable, nourishing, and palatable a food; and which afforded them variety also, by the different ways in which it might be prepared. (*Notes, Ex. xvi. 22—27. 31.*) Thus the ingratitude and unreasonableness of the people in their *lustings* were strongly marked.—It is no where intimated that they were sickly or feeble, in consequence of feeding continually upon manna; though the greediness of their appetite for other food drank up their spirits, and caused "their soul to dry away."—It would not indeed have been proper for them to have slain all their numerous flocks and herds, nor would the whole have satisfied their *lustings*: yet, had they not been too covetous, or too desirous of dainty meats, they might from time to time have feasted upon flesh, by presenting peace-offerings to the Lord. But to their dissatisfied mind every thing appeared worthless, in comparison of the Egyptian diet, which they speak of particularly, and with great regret; though probably it was nothing better than the most ordinary food of the very poorest of the people! (*Note, Ex. xvi. 1—3.*)

V. 10. The former complaining seems to have been only a secret discontent; but this broke out into an open and general dissatisfaction, and portended a revolt. It was therefore extremely provoking to God; "*it was evil also in the eyes of Moses.*" (*Heb.*)

V. 11—15. Moses had indeed a very difficult and burdensome service: and the expressive similitude which he used would be better understood by the Israelites, than it is by us; being taken from the circumstance of the *fathers* carrying the young children, during their long marches in the wilderness, for which the *mothers* were generally unable. (*Marg. Ref. y, z.*) He cannot however be excused

in imitating the people, by murmuring against the Lord; in complaining of the honours and favours bestowed upon him; in expostulating with God as if he dealt unkindly and unjustly with him; in magnifying his own services, and speaking as if he were required to supply the people with flesh; and above all, in begging for immediate death, as his only possible relief, and as the greatest instance of favour which the Lord could shew him. (*Marg. Ref. d.—Note, Jer. xx. 14—18.*)

V. 16. *Whom thou knowest, &c.*] Moses had said, that "he was not able to bear all the people alone" (14): the Lord therefore graciously condescended to assign him helpers, whom he might choose for himself, out of such persons, as he knew to be *elders*, not only in respect of years, but in wisdom and ability; and in the influence and authority, which they possessed in their several tribes and divisions. It is most probable, that in consequence of Jethro's advice, (*Notes, Ex. xviii. 17—26.*) Moses before this had assistants in the administration of justice, and in the affairs of civil government: but it had been reserved to him "to be for the people to God-ward." In this department the Lord, on this occasion, appointed him co-adjutors, endued with special wisdom and grace for that service; whose assistance, counsel, and authority he might use, in allaying the tumults, quieting the minds, or opposing the violence of the people. The Sanhedrim, or council of seventy persons, in the after-ages of the Jewish nation, seems to have been a continuance, or imitation, of this council assigned to Moses. The number is supposed to have been taken from the number of persons who went down into Egypt. (*Marg. Ref. f.*)

V. 17. Moses would not on this account have less of the influences of the Spirit of truth, wisdom, boldness, power, and holiness: but the elders would be endued with a measure of the same Spirit, that they might be enabled

18 And say thou unto the people, <sup>m</sup> Sanctify yourselves against to-morrow, and ye shall eat flesh: for <sup>n</sup> ye have wept in the ears of the LORD, saying, Who shall give us flesh to eat? for <sup>o</sup> it was well with us in Egypt: therefore the LORD will give you flesh, and ye shall eat.

19 Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days;

20 But even a <sup>a</sup> whole month, until it come out at your nostrils, <sup>b</sup> and it be loathsome unto you: because that ye have <sup>c</sup> despised the LORD which is among you, and have wept before him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt?

21 And Moses said, The people among whom I am, are <sup>d</sup> six hundred thousand footmen; and thou hast said, I will give them flesh, that they may eat a whole month.

22 Shall <sup>e</sup> the flocks and the herds be slain for them, to suffice them? or shall all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to suffice them?

23 And the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>f</sup> Is the LORD's hand waxed short? <sup>g</sup> thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass unto thee, or not.

24 ¶ And Moses went out, and told the people the words of the LORD, and <sup>h</sup> gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle.

25 And the LORD <sup>i</sup> came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and <sup>j</sup> took of the Spirit that was upon him, and <sup>k</sup> gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass <sup>l</sup> that, when the Spirit rested upon them, <sup>m</sup> they prophesied, and did not cease.

26 But there remained two of the men in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad: and the Spirit rested upon them, (and they were of them that were written, but <sup>n</sup> went not out unto the tabernacle,) and they prophesied in the camp.

27 And there ran a young man, and told Moses, and said, Eldad and Medad do prophesy in the camp.

28 And <sup>o</sup> Joshua the son of Nun, the

and disposed cordially to concur with him in salutary measures, for the people's good: as lamps are lighted one from another, without any diminution of the light of the lamps from which they are lighted. (Notes, 25. 2 Kings ii. 9, 10. Is. lix. 20, 21.)

V. 18. The people were about to witness an extraordinary manifestation of the divine power, in sending them flesh to eat: but as they had greatly displeased the Lord, by lusting for it, with bitter complaints against him and contempt of him, they might expect likewise a display of his righteous indignation; except they humbled themselves, sought forgiveness, and were found in a better frame of spirit; and thus endeavoured to avert the impending storm.

V. 19, 20. About a year before this, the people had for one day been thus feasted: (Ex. xvi. 13:) but now such plenty was about to be afforded them, for a whole month, and they would use it so greedily, that at last they would entirely loathe the food, which they had so inordinately craved.

V. 21—23. Some suppose that Moses only expressed his admiration; or enquired into the method how this wonderful provision was to be furnished. (Note, Luke i. 34—38.) But the Lord's answer implies that there was also a measure of unbelief; which was the more criminal, after he had seen such effects of the divine power in Egypt and at the Red Sea; nor could he suppose that the Lord's hand was shortened. Moses seems however to have been

fully satisfied with the further assurance given him, without any other information.

V. 25. The persons selected on this occasion, being endued with the Holy Spirit, either praised God with such fervency and in such exalted strains; or they spake in so fluent and edifying a manner, in exhorting the people, and were so raised above themselves in wisdom and utterance; that all around them were sensible they spake by a divine influence: perhaps they likewise foretold future events. (Marg. Ref. a.) These gifts were a divine sanction to their appointment, as assistants to Moses in governing the nation.—The words (עָזְרוּ) rendered "did not cease," may be translated *added no further*. They prophesied on that occasion, but not afterwards; for they were designed to be magistrates, not prophets: or they prophesied only when "the Spirit rested upon them." It is evident that the Lord continued to them the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge, to fit them for the office, to which he thus sealed their commission by the gift of prophecy. (Note, 17.)

V. 26. Some suppose, that these two persons were ceremonially unclean; but others think that they humbly declined so arduous an office, or were reluctant to engage in it, and therefore did not go forth to Moses at the tabernacle. The Spirit of God however singled them out in the camp, and there they prophesied.

V. 28, 29. Joshua would have had Eldad and Medad silenced, lest they should occasion a schism, or rival Moses: but Moses was not in the least afraid of such effects from

servant of Moses, *one* of his young men, answered, and said, 'My lord Moses, forbid them.

<sup>d</sup> Mark ix. 38, 39.  
Luke ix. 49, 50.  
John iii. 26.

29 And Moses said unto him, 'Enviest thou for my sake? 'Would God that all the LORD's people were prophets, *and* 'that the LORD would put his Spirit upon them.

<sup>e</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 8, 21.  
xiii. 4. Phil. ii.  
3. Jam. iii. 14.  
16. iv. 5. v. 9.  
1 Pet. ii. 1.  
<sup>f</sup> Acts xxvi. 29.  
1 Cor. xiv. 5.  
Phil. i. 18—18.  
<sup>g</sup> Matt. ix. 37, 38.  
Luke x. 2.

30 And Moses gat him into the camp, he and the elders of Israel.

31 ¶ And there went forth <sup>a</sup> a wind from the LORD, <sup>1</sup> and brought quails from the sea, and let *them* fall by the camp, as it were <sup>a</sup> a day's journey on this side, and as it were a day's journey on the other side, round about the camp, and as it were two cubits *high* upon the face of the earth.

<sup>b</sup> Ex. x. 13, 19.  
xv. 10. Ps. cxxxv.  
7.

<sup>1</sup> Ex. xvi. 13. Ps.  
lxxviii. 26—28.  
cv. 40.

<sup>c</sup> Heb. *the way of a day*

32 And the people stood up all that day, and all *that* night, and all the next day, and they gathered the quails: he that gathered least gathered ten <sup>a</sup> homers; and they spread *them* all abroad for themselves round about the camp.

<sup>h</sup> Ex. xvi. 26. Ex.  
xiv. 11.

33 And <sup>1</sup> while the flesh *was* yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people; and the LORD <sup>m</sup> smote the people with a very great plague.

<sup>i</sup> Pa. lxxviii. 30.  
31. cvi. 14, 15.

<sup>m</sup> xvi. 40. xxv. 9.  
Deut. xxviii. 27.

34 And he called the name of that place <sup>a</sup> Kibroth-hattaavah: because there they buried the people that lusted.

<sup>†</sup> That is, *The graves of lust.*  
xxiii. 16. Deut.  
ix. 22. 1 Cor. x.  
6.

35 And the people <sup>a</sup> journeyed from Kibroth-hattaavah <sup>o</sup> unto Hazeroth; and <sup>a</sup> abode at Hazeroth.

<sup>o</sup> xxi. 16. Deut. i.  
1.  
<sup>‡</sup> Heb. *they were in, &c.*

that Spirit, which God had put upon him and them; and he did not in the least seek his own glory, but the glory of God, and the advantage of his people. (*Note, Mark ix. 38—40. John iii. 25, 26.*)—'The gift of prophecy was 'a distinct thing from the gift of government: for he did 'not wish they might all be made rulers; than which 'nothing could have been more absurd.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 31, 32. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Ex. xvi. 13.*) By a most astonishing miracle, an immense multitude of *quails* (some kind of wild fowl,) was collected, and driven on with a vehement wind, till wearied out with their flight, they settled round the camp of Israel; and for about twenty miles on every side, they lay above a yard deep on the ground, incapable of flying away; so that the Israelites in general spent thirty-six hours in taking them, without much intermission. And afterwards, what they did not eat at this time, they dried, by spreading them round the camp, so that they were able to keep them during the remainder of the month.—A homer was an ass's load, or almost eight bushels. Ten homers was an immense quantity for every individual, or even for every head of a family: but the whole was evidently intended to illustrate the power of God, and the eagerness with which the people seized upon this provision.

V. 33, 34. The sin of the people did not consist in desiring suitable food, or in eating such as the Lord sent them; but in eagerly craving unnecessary indulgence, and intemperately gratifying their appetites. The Lord therefore, having shewn his power by sending this immense supply, punished their discontent, ingratitude, and lusting, and by a pestilence executed immediate vengeance on the ringleaders of the rebellion. (*Ps. lxxviii. 26—31.*)—What multitudes are there in all places, who shorten their lives by excess of one kind or other; and whose sepulchres might justly be called "Kibroth-hattaavah, because there "they buried the people that lusted!"

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

##### V. 1—17.

Fallen man is a discontented creature: for having forsaken his proper rest, he feels himself uneasy and wretched

how much soever he is prospered or distinguished. Ambition, sensuality, covetousness, and malice, are diseases of the soul, which are not abated, but increased, by indulgence; and they who are under the power of them, like persons in a fever, are continually desirous of changing their place or posture; as if *that* were the cause of the disquietude, which indeed springs merely from distemper! While this is the case, every appointment of God must excite secret or open complaint: and though discontent has its abatements and paroxysms; yet there is no cure, till the soul return to its rest, in the knowledge, love, and favour of God, and in a cordial reliance on his wisdom, truth, and power, and in acquiescence in his will. But the Lord sees and hears, and is displeased at our murmurs, though concealed from men: the greater kindness we have received from him, the severer correction we may expect when we thus offend: and they who escape his chastening rod, will at length experience the dreadful effects of his fiery indignation.—It should be well considered, that sinners are far more indebted to their pious friends, than they are aware of; and many will cry to them to advise them and pray for them in their distresses and dangers, who despised and hated them before: nor should they ever on any account refuse such requests. But it is especially happy for us, that Jesus ever liveth to make intercession for us; when in our troubles we cry unto him to help us, and to quench the fire of divine wrath which our sins have kindled. Yet alas! how soon do we forget the smart and terror of our chastisements, and relapse into our former offences with still deeper aggravation! nay, when we are surrounded with mercies, we are capable of overlooking them all, and of deeming one slight inconvenience an intolerable grievance! On the other hand, forgetting the anguish under which we have groaned in some former situation, from which we are now delivered, (*Ex. i. 14. ii. 23, 24. iii. 7—9;*) we can murmur and fret at the absence of one imaginary or worthless advantage, which we then possessed: and scarcely any of our repinings arise from the want of what is really needful and proper for us; but relate to such things, as are in one way or other fuel to our lusts. Nay, the choicest blessing which God can be-

## CHAP. XII.

Miriam and Aaron speak against Moses, 1, 2. His singular meekness, 3. God vindicates Moses, and punishes Miriam with a leprosy, 4—10. Aaron submits, and Moses intercedes for Miriam, 11—13. The Lord directs that she should be shut out of the camp

stow, even the very gospel of salvation, is slighted and despised by us, if we have not every thing exactly to our mind, when we are under the influence of this evil disease! We can readily blame and express our astonishment at the perverseness of the Israelites: but their conduct is only a picture of our hearts, a fair specimen of human nature; and we have every one of us murmured and complained, before now, with as little reason, and with as much folly and ingratitude, as they did. Let us then watch our own hearts; let us repress the first emotions of discontent and inordinate desire; let us consider frequently how many unmerited mercies we worthless sinners enjoy; let us pray earnestly for grace, "to be satisfied with such things as we have;" and to refer to the wisdom, love, and faithfulness of God, the choice of what kind our temporal supplies shall be, with the measure of them, and the time and manner of receiving them. This is the more requisite, because we are constantly reminded, that the most eminent saints were sometimes evidently defective, in the very graces by which they were most distinguished: so that Moses himself expressed a distrust, an impatience, and a peevishness, which cannot be excused, and must not be imitated. We have therefore nothing to trust in but the mercy of God and the merits of Christ; and we are taught to watch and pray continually lest we enter into temptation.—It is also worth noting, that we seldom wish for death, but when we are fretful and impatient, and consequently unfit to meet it comfortably and properly.—As eminent stations are confessedly attended with weighty cares and burdens, to all those especially who study to fill them in such a manner as to be nursing-fathers to the people; (and they who do not must have an awful account to render of their abused talents;) we may learn to be contented with a more obscure situation, and cheerfully to bear our lighter afflictions.—But the Lord is very gracious to his servants; he considers their trials and weakness; and both forgives their sins, sends them help in difficulties, affords them comfort in communion with him, and exceeds their largest expectations. He can also easily multiply either good magistrates or ministers, or improve the qualifications of those already raised up, by "the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ;" and this should excite us to pray earnestly to him for these important blessings.

V. 18—35.

In general, the Lord sees it best for those whom he loves, to be poor, to fare hardly, and to receive their supply from day to day. And whatever the world may think, an inheritance in heaven, and a provision by the way, though mean and scanty, if sought by daily prayer, and received with gratitude from our heavenly Father's love, is "better than the riches of many wicked;" and has in it more sweetness, and less vexation and temptation. (Note, Ps. xxxvii. 16, 17.) But if he sometimes surrounds his people with plenty, it is not for an occasion of excess, but

seven days; and afterwards the people march to the wilderness of Paran, 14—16.

AND \*Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses, because of the \*Ethiopian woman whom he had †married: †

a Matt. x. 36. xii. 48. John vii. 5. xv. 20. Gal. iv. 16. Or, Cushite. Ex. ii. 16, 21. Heb. taken.

for a trial of their temperance and moderation, and that they may have a sufficiency for every good work: and to abuse abundance shews a sensual mind, and will expose a man to the heavy wrath of God. (Notes, Luke xvi. 19—26.) Against such luxury and excess every true Christian should, by his example *at least*, enter a protest: but alas! too many are more apt to catch the infection of lusting and self-indulgence from the world, or from the more worthless kind of professed believers, than to manifest a decided disapprobation of it: and numbers who would be thought Christians, though surrounded with far greater variety than the Israelites were, are ready to complain, that they are out-done, in wealth, splendour, and the pride of life, by their neighbours: and perhaps at some times are ready even to grow weary of their religion; to think that it was well with them in Egypt; to allow a hankering after forsaken pleasures, almost to covet their former bondage, and to enquire why they came forth thence. If we are conscious that this hath been the secret thought of our heart, let us repent without delay, and intreat God that it may be forgiven; lest he send us the things which we have inordinately desired, and by his heavy indignation render them a curse to us. For it is not from want of power or love, that he doth not at all times indulge the desires of his people; but because his wisdom sees that those things, which they desire as a blessing, would be injurious to them: and if they do not acquiesce in his appointments, he will perhaps be induced to convince them by bitter experience.—Even while the Lord is evidently giving helpers to his faithful servants, by answering our prayers for the pouring out of his Spirit from on high; "the spirit, which" *naturally* "is in us, lusteth to envy," in behalf of our friends and our party, or ourselves; and disposes us to wish to silence those who follow not with us. Yet the Lord gives more grace, and they who are wisely zealous for his glory, and truly love the souls of men, will rejoice in the increase of useful instruments, though they should rival and eclipse them, or their beloved and revered pastors. Indeed, if all the present number of the Lord's people were rendered real, able, authorized ministers of Christ; the world is wide enough; and there might be work enough for them, in calling sinners to "repentance towards God and faith towards the Lord Jesus," and in feeding and edifying his church.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1, 2. Moses had at this time been so long married to Zipporah, that there is some difficulty in understanding, how his conduct in that respect should at length give occasion to Miriam and Aaron to oppose him: yet there is no intimation that Zipporah was dead or divorced, or that he had married another woman; and it is utterly incredible, that after the giving of so great a part of the law, he should himself take to wife a stranger, or one of another nation; or that the Lord should unreserv-

b Gen. xxiv. 3. 37. b for he had married an Ethiopian woman.

2 And they said, 'Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? 'hath he not spoken also by us? And 'the LORD heard it.

3 (Now the man Moses was 'very meek, 'above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)

4 And 'the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, 'Come out, ye three, unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out.

5 And the LORD came down 'in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.

edly sanction what he had done. (*Ex. xxxiv. 16.*) No intimation is any where given, that Moses ever had any other wife than Zipporah; or, that he acted at all improperly in this respect. The word rendered "an Ethiopian woman," signifies a *Cushite*, which properly means a descendant of *Cush*; (*Gen. x. 6—8*;) but it is used with some latitude; and it is generally supposed to include other tribes, besides the posterity of *Cush*, either in Asia, or Africa. It is probable, that Zipporah was a descendant of Abraham by Keturah; (*Note, Ex. ii. 16*;) now the different tribes, which sprang from Abraham by her, inhabited some parts of Arabia, and were greatly blended with the Ishmaelites, and perhaps also with some of the race of *Cush*. (*Note, Gen. xxv. 1—4.*) In this large sense, Zipporah might be called a *Cushite*: and though this was said of her at first contemptuously; yet not being altogether erroneous, according to the common way of speaking, Moses did not contradict it.—Miriam seems to be mentioned first, as the leader in this opposition. It appears that the Lord had on some occasions spoken, not only by Aaron, but also by her: and probably it was thought that Zipporah and her relations had too much influence with Moses. The name of Aaron had not been mentioned in the appointment of the seventy elders; and this might give umbrage to him and Miriam. Perhaps there had been some private jar between Miriam and Zipporah; though no blame at all is laid on the latter in the narrative. But probably it was a general opinion, that Moses's wife, being a foreigner, was a disgrace to him and the people; and that he ought to put her away, and marry an Israelitish woman.

V. 3. Moses, writing as moved by the Holy Spirit, impartially records his own faults, and unreservedly speaks of the grace of God bestowed upon him. Meekness is here contrasted with pride, wrath, and resentment. Moses, notwithstanding the extraordinary honours put upon him, was exceedingly humble, modest, unassuming, patient of contradiction, forbearing, and ready to forgive: and the whole history, especially that in this chapter, proves this testimony to be true.—Several of the sacred writers have spoken

6 And he said, Hear now my words: If there be 'a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him 'in a vision, and will speak unto him in 'a dream.

7 My servant 'Moses is not so, who is 'faithful in all mine house.

8 With him will I speak 'mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in 'dark speeches; and the 'similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then 'were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

9 And 'the anger of the LORD was kindled against them, and he departed:

10 And 'the cloud departed from off

Matt. xiii. 35. John xv. 15. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. s Ex. xxiv. 10, 11. xxxiii. 23. xxxiv. 5—7. Deut. iv. 15. Is. xl. 18, xlv. 5. John i. 18. xiv. 7—10. xv. 24. 2 Cor. iii. 18. iv. 4—6. Col. i. 15. Heb. i. 3. t Ex. xxxiv. 30. Luke x. 16. 1 Thes. iv. 8. 2 Pet. ii. 10. Jude 8. u xi. 1. Hos. v. 16. x Ex. xxxiii. 7—10. Ez. x. 4, 5, 18, 19. Hos. ix. 12. Matt. xxv. 41.

of themselves, as enabled by divine grace to act with great integrity and holiness in most trying circumstances, yet without any vain glory or ostentation: and our Lord says of himself, "I am meek and lowly in heart." It is therefore a senseless cavil to adduce this declaration, as a proof that Moses was not the author of this book, in opposition to the unanimous tradition of antiquity, and the testimony of Christ and his apostles in the New Testament.—As Moses was so meek, he took no notice of the affair, to resent it, or to punish any persons for their misconduct; and it was therefore the more necessary that the Lord himself should plead his cause.

V. 4—8. Aaron and Miriam, with Moses, were summoned to the tabernacle, probably by an audible voice from the cloud; where the Lord expostulated with them. He made himself known in dreams and visions to other prophets, when their bodily senses were locked up, (*Marg. Ref. m, n*;) or by dark signs and obscure parables, which they often did not well understand. But to his faithful servant Moses he spake openly; when he was fully awake; in the clearest and most intelligible language imaginable; and constantly, almost from day to day, as a man converses with his friend. He also was admitted to "behold 'the similitude of the LORD;" the "express image of his 'person," even his eternal Son appearing in visible glory. This, Aaron and Miriam knew, and could not deny: and seeing Moses had been honoured and favoured so far above them, they should have been afraid of opposing him; as Aaron had feared to approach him, when his face shone, on his descending from Sinai. (*Ex. xxxiv. 30.*)

V. 9, 10. The removal of the cloud, which seems to have entirely disappeared till after Miriam was readmitted into the camp, expressed the Lord's displeasure; and Miriam, as the ringleader, directly became leprous. Aaron was spared in honour of the priesthood: yet he was severely rebuked in the punishment of Miriam, and in being the priest appointed to examine her, and pronounce her unclean; which is implied when it is said, "Aaron looked 'upon Miriam." (*Lev. xiii. 2. 12.*)

y Deut. xxiv. 9. the tabernacle; and, 'behold, Miriam  
 z Lev. xiii. 2, 3. became 'leprous, white as snow: and  
 &c. 2 Kings v. Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, be-  
 27. xv. 5. 2 Chr. hold, she was leprous.  
 xxvi. 19, 20.

a Ex. xii. 32. 1 Sam. 11. 30. xii. 19. xv. 24. 25. 1 Kings  
 xiii. 6. Jer. xiii. 2 Acts viii. 24.  
 Rev. iii. 9. 11 And Aaron said unto Moses,  
 b 2 Sam. xix. 19. Alas! my lord, 'I beseech thee, 'lay  
 xxiv. 10. 2 Chr. not the sin upon us, wherein we have  
 xvi. 9. Ps. done foolishly, and wherein we have  
 xxxviii. 1—5. sinned.

c Prov. xxx. 32. 12 Let her not be 'as one dead, 'd of  
 Pa. lxxxviii. 4. whom the flesh is half consumed, when  
 5. Eph. ii. 1—6. he cometh out of his mother's womb.  
 Col. ii. 13. 1 Tim. v. 6.

d Job iii. 16. Pa. 17. 18. 1 Cor. xv. 8.  
 e xiv. 2. 13—20. 13 And Moses 'cried unto the LORD,  
 xvi. 41. 46—50. saying, Heal her now, O God, I be-  
 Ex. xxxii. 10 seech thee.  
 —14. 1 Sam. xii. 23. xv. 11. Matt.  
 v. 44. 45. Luke vi. 28. xxiii. 34.

f Deut. xxv. 9. 14 And the LORD said unto Moses,  
 Job xxx. 10. Is. 1. 6. Matt. xxvi. 67. Heb. xii. 9.  
 g v. 2, 3. Lev. xiii. 45, 46. xiv. 8. 15 Let her be shut out from the camp  
 2 Chr. xxvi. 20, seven days, and after that let her be  
 21. received in again.

V. 11—13. Aaron submitted to God and to Moses: yet his confession was by no means so ingenuous and unreserved, as might have been expected. The doleful condition of Miriam, and the disgusting appearance which she made, are very strongly marked in the similitudes here used; which also may help us to conceive something of the loathsomeness of that disease, which is the special emblem of our sinfulness.

V. 14, 15. If Miriam had provoked her father to disgrace her by some marked expression of anger, she would have shewn her sorrow and shame by a temporary solitude, and not at once come again before him. A similar conduct under the divine rebuke was therefore prescribed her. When she honoured God in leading the praises of Israel, (Note, Ex. xv. 20, 21,) she was honoured as one of the chief ornaments of the nation: but now for her contempt of God she was lightly esteemed, and expelled the camp as if she were a disgrace to it!—Her leprosy seems to have been cleansed directly, in answer to the prayer of Moses: and after seven days' purification, we may suppose the legal sacrifices were offered. In the mean time the people waited for her; both as a rebuke to them, who were disposed to join in opposition to Moses and to the Lord; and as a decent respect to her.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They who are especially honoured of God must expect the severest and most repeated trials from men; and even from those whom they most love, and to whom they have been most useful.—The contentions among brethren, and among believers, are not only the effects of remaining pride, ambition, envy, and selfishness; but should be traced back to the malicious policy of Satan, who thus devises to disgrace the gospel, and weaken the hands and discourage the hearts of its best friends: and when the mind is disposed for contests, the most frivolous and groundless pretences will suffice to excite or to vindicate them. They

15 And Miriam was 'shut out from h Deut. xxiv. 8, 9. the camp seven days: 'and the people i Gen. ix. 21—23. journeyed not, 'till Miriam was brought k Ex. xx. 12. in again. l Lam. iii. 32.  
 Mic. vi. 4. vii. 6.  
 9. Hab. iii. 2.

16 And 'afterward the people re- 1 xi. 36. xxxiii. 18. moved from Hazeroth, and pitched in the m wilderness of Paran. n x. 12. xiii. 3. 26.  
 Gen. xxi. 21.  
 1 Sam. xxv. 1.  
 Hab. iii. 2.

#### CHAP. XIII.

Moses sends twelve men to search the land, 1—16. He instructs them, 17—20. They return after forty days; and ten of them bring a discouraging report, from which Caleb and Joshua dissent, 21—33.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 'Send thou men, that they may a Deut. i. 22—25. search the land of Canaan, which I Josh. ii. give unto the children of Israel: 'b of b i. 4. xxxiv. 18. every tribe of their fathers shall ye c xi. 16. Ex xviii. send a man, every one 'a ruler among 25 Deut. i. 15. them.

who are exposed to such provocations need much meekness, and, waiting simply upon the Lord, will from him receive it: while the less anxious we are to justify or revenge ourselves, the more certainly will he plead our cause, and clear our character from every unjust aspersion.—If it was so criminal and dangerous to oppose the faithful and honoured servant of the Lord; how dreadful will be their doom, who dishonour, despise, or oppose "his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased!" (Note, Heb. iii. 1—4.)—They who exalt themselves will be abased, and fall into disgrace, if not into destruction: and they who speak against the Lord's servants, may soon be constrained to make the most humiliating submission and supplications to them, and to confer on them the most honourable titles and commendations. (Note, Rev. iii. 8, 9.) But it is well when rebukes produce penitent confessions: for those offenders, with whom this is the case, though corrected and disgraced, shall be pardoned; their brethren, even though they have been deeply affronted or injured by their misconduct, will earnestly pray for them; Jesus himself will intercede for them; and they shall in due time be restored to comfortable fellowship with God and his church, and with renewed strength pursue their heavenly pilgrimage. But it was happy for Aaron, and it is well for us, that the church of God has "such a High Priest as became us, who is holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." (Notes, Heb. vii. 26—28. viii. 1, 2.)

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 2. The Israelites had now by several stages arrived at the southern border of Canaan; and they might have gone up and taken immediate possession, had no breach intervened. We find elsewhere, that the people first proposed to Moses this design of searching the land; who, not suspecting the distrust and unbelief which had suggested it, approved the proposal, and asked counsel of

3 And Moses, by the commandment of the LORD, sent them <sup>d</sup> from the wilderness of Paran: all those men *were* heads of the children of Israel.

4 And these *were* their names; Of the tribe of Reuben; Shammua, the son of Zaccur.

5 Of the tribe of Simeon; Shaphat, the son of Hori.

6 Of the tribe of Judah; <sup>e</sup> Caleb, the son of Jephunneh.

7 Of the tribe of Issachar; Igal, the son of Joseph.

8 Of the tribe of Ephraim; <sup>f</sup> Oshea, the son of Nun.

9 Of the tribe of Benjamin; Palti, the son of Raphu.

10 Of the tribe of Zebulun; Gad-diel, the son of Sodi.

11 Of the tribe of Joseph, *namely*, of the tribe of Manasseh; Gaddi, the son of Susi.

12 Of the tribe of Dan; Ammiel, the son of Gemalli.

13 Of the tribe of Asher; Sethur, the son of Michael.

14 Of the tribe of Naphtali; Nahbi, the son of Vophsi.

15 Of the tribe of Gad; Geuel, the son of Machi.

16 These *are* the names of the men

which Moses sent to spy out the land.

And Moses called <sup>g</sup> Oshea the son of Nun, <sup>h</sup> Jehoshua.

17 And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, Get you up this *way* <sup>i</sup> southward, and go up into <sup>j</sup> the mountain;

18 And see <sup>k</sup> the land what it *is*; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they *be* strong or weak, few or many;

19 And what the land *is* that they dwell in, whether it *be* good or bad; and what cities *they be* that they dwell in, whether in tents, or in strong-holds;

20 And what the land *is*, <sup>l</sup> whether it *be* fat or lean, whether there be wood therein or not: and be ye of <sup>m</sup> good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time *was* the time of <sup>n</sup> the first-ripe grapes.

21 ¶ So they went up, and searched the land <sup>o</sup> from the wilderness of Zin unto <sup>p</sup> Rehob, as men come to <sup>q</sup> Hamath.

22 And they ascended by the south, and came unto Hebron, where <sup>r</sup> Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the children of Anak, *were*. (Now <sup>s</sup> Hebron was built seven years before <sup>t</sup> Zoan in Egypt.)

<sup>d</sup> See on xii. 16.—xxxii. 8 Deut. 19. ix. 23.

<sup>e</sup> 30. xiv. 6. 24. 30. 38. xxi. 63. xxxiv. 19. Josh. xiv. 6—15. xv. 13—19. Judg. i. 10—15. i Chr. iv. 15.

<sup>f</sup> 16. Jehoshua. xi. 23. xxvii. 18. 22. Ex. xvii. 9—13. xxiv. 13. xxxii. 17. Deut. xxxi. 7, 8, 14. 23. xxxiv. 9. Josh. i. 1—9. 16. Joshua.

<sup>g</sup> Hos. i. i. Rom ix. 25.

<sup>h</sup> See on 9.—Matt i. 21—23. Acts vii. 45. Heb. iv. 8. Jesus.

<sup>i</sup> 21. Gen. xii. 9 xiii. 1. Josh. xv. 3. Judg. i. 15. <sup>j</sup> xiv. 40. Gen. xiv. 10. Deut. i. 44. Judg. i. 8. 19. <sup>k</sup> Ex. iii. 8 Ez. xxxiv. 14.

<sup>l</sup> Neh ix. 25. 35.

<sup>m</sup> 30. 31. Deut. xxxi. 6—8. 23. Josh. i. 6. 9. ii. 3. 22. 23. i Chr. xxii. 11. Heb. xiii. 6.

<sup>n</sup> 23. 24. Mic. vii. 1.

<sup>o</sup> xx. i. xxvii. 14. xxxiii. 36. xxxiv. 3, 4. Deut. xxxii. 51. Josh. xv. 1.

<sup>p</sup> Josh. xix. 28. <sup>q</sup> 2 Sam. viii. 9. Am. vi. 2.

<sup>r</sup> Josh. xi. 21. 22. xv. 13. 14. Judg. i. 10.

<sup>s</sup> Gen. xiii. 19. xxxiii. 2. Josh. xiv. 13—15. xxi. 13. 2 Sam. ii. 11.

<sup>t</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 12. 43. Is. xix. 11. xxx. 4.

the Lord. He, having been provoked by their former rebellions, permitted it, and gave directions accordingly; in order to a further discovery of their wickedness, the display of his own glory, and for the instruction of his church in all ages. (Note, Deut. i. 22—28.) There was indeed no urgent necessity to search a land which the Lord had chosen for them, and into which he had undertaken to lead them; but there was no evil in the thing itself: and had it not been for the unbelief and rebellion of most of the persons concerned, the consequent report might have served greatly to encourage their faith and hope. The number and rank of the spies, had they all been like Caleb and Joshua, might have had very good effect on the people.

V. 16. *Oshea* may signify, *Save thou*, being a prayer for salvation: *Jehoshua* may signify, *He will save*, being an assurance of salvation in answer to prayer. But very able critics seem conclusively to support the opinion, that the former name denotes *salvation*; the latter, (with the addition of part of the name JEHOVAH,) signifies *the LORD Salvation*. The change of Joshua's name on this occasion, (for the mention of him before by this name, may be considered as an anticipation of the historian, for the sake of perspicuity,) seems to have been intended as an encouragement to him and his associates, confidently

to expect protection and safety from the Lord. It is well known that Jesus is the same name, formed to a Greek termination; and he is the LORD our Salvation, of whom Joshua was an eminent type. (Marg. Ref.—Note, Matt. i. 20, 21.)

V. 20. *Good courage*.] The service, in which the spies were employed, required great courage; for they could expect no favour from the Canaanites, in case they were detected and apprehended, and they must therefore go forth at the hazard of their lives. It would likewise be necessary for them, in order that by their example and report they might encourage the people. This courage, in *their circumstances*, could only spring from strong faith, which Caleb and Joshua possessed, but the rest did not.

V. 21, 22. Entering at the southern border, the spies surveyed the whole land even to the northern extremities; and returned back by Hebron, which was then called Kirjath-arba, and was possessed by a family of gigantic stature.—The decided and explicit manner in which Moses declares exactly how long Hebron was built before Zoan, (though probably no other author gives the least account, when either of them was founded,) shews a consciousness of authentic information, and a freedom from all fear or being contradicted, even by the Egyptians, who were proud

\* Or, valley. 24.  
xxii. 9. Deut  
1. 24.

23 And they came unto the \*brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff: and *they brought* of the pomegranates, and of the figs.

† Or, valley. 23.

24 The place was called the †brook of Eshcol, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence.

‡ That is, a cluster of grapes.

25 And they returned from searching of the land after <sup>u</sup>forty days.

u xiv. 33. 34. Ex  
xxiv. 18. xxxiv.  
28.

26 ¶ And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to <sup>x</sup>Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land.

x xx. 1. 16. xxxii.  
4. xxxiii. 36  
Deut. i. 19 Josh.  
xiv. 6.

27 And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely <sup>y</sup>it floweth with milk and honey: and this *is* the fruit of it.

y xiv. 8. Ex. iii. 8.  
17. xiii. 5. xxxiii.  
8. Lev. xx. 24.  
Deut. i. 25. vi. 3.  
xi. 9. xxvi. 9. 11.  
15. xxvii. 3. xxxi.  
20. Josh. v. 6.  
Jer. xl. 5. xxxii.  
22. Ez. xx. 6. 15.  
z Deut. i. 28. ii.  
10. 11. 21. iii. 5.  
ix. 1. 2.

28 Nevertheless, the people *be* <sup>a</sup>strong that dwell in the land, and the cities *are* walled, and very great: and moreover we <sup>a</sup>saw the children of Anak there.

a 22. 23 Josh. xi.  
22. xv. 14 Judg.  
i. 20.

of their antiquity; and may well be considered as an internal evidence that the history is genuine.

V. 23, 24. In some spot near the borders of the land, the spies met with an extraordinary bunch of grapes, which they cut off, with the branch on which it grew, and carried to their brethren: this was an apt emblem of the earnestness of heavenly joys, which believers receive on earth in the consolations of the Holy Spirit. (Notes, 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. Eph. i. 13, 14.) Some suppose that Caleb and Joshua alone brought this cluster; the others not being so favourably disposed towards Canaan, or willing to labour in order to recommend it. From this event, the place was afterwards called, "The Brook," or the valley, "of Eshcol;" Eshcol signifying a cluster.

V. 26—29. The spies could not deny that the land was rich and fruitful; but it is evident they meant to insinuate, that this was of no consequence, as the inhabitants were exceedingly powerful. The Amalekites would assault them, if they attempted to pass them in entering the country; and the situation, wealth, or gigantick stature of the other nations, rendered them invincible.

V. 30. Caleb may signify *all heart*: and he was evidently a man of true courage, stedfastly facing danger in the path of duty, in the exercise of vigorous faith, and entire dependence on God. When the report of the other spies, by a misrepresentation of the truth, had excited a tumult among the people against Moses, Caleb stood forth to still them, doubtless with the concurrence of Joshua. He did not say, "Let us go, and attack the Canaanites;" but "Let us go up at once, and possess the land:" as if he

VOL. I.

29 The <sup>b</sup>Amalekites dwell in the land of the south; and <sup>c</sup>the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains; and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

b xiv. 43. xxiv. 20.  
Gen. xiv. 7. Ex.  
xvii. 8—16 Judg.  
vi. 3. 1 Sam. xiv.  
49. xv. 8. &c.  
xxx. 1. Pa.  
lxxxiii. 7.  
c See on Gen. xv.  
19—21. Ex. iii.  
8. 17.

30 And <sup>d</sup>Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.

d xiv. 6—9. 24.  
Josh. xiv. 6. 7.  
Pa. xxvii. 1. 2.  
ix. 12. cxviii. 10.  
11. is. xli. 10—  
16. Rom. viii.  
31. Phil. iv. 13.  
Heb. xi. 33.

31 But the men that went up with him said, <sup>e</sup>We be not able to go up against the people; for they *are* stronger than we.

e xxxvii. 9. Deut. i.  
28. Josh. xiv. 8.  
Heb. iii. 19.

32 And they <sup>f</sup>brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched, unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, *is* a <sup>g</sup>land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof: and all the people that we saw in it *are* <sup>h</sup>men of a great stature.

f xiv. 86. 37.  
Matt. xxiii. 13.

g See on 28.—Ez.  
xxxvi. 13. Am.  
ii. 9.

h Heb. men of  
statures. 2 Sam.  
xxi. 20. Heb.  
i Chr. xxx. 6.  
Marg.

33 And there we saw <sup>i</sup>the giants, the sons of Anak, *which come* of the giants: and <sup>i</sup>we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.

i Deut. i. 28. ii.  
10. iii. 11. ix. 2.  
1 Sam. xvii. 4—  
7. 2 Sam. xxi.  
20—22. 1 Chr.  
xi. 23.  
i 1 Sam. xvii. 42  
Is. xl. 22.

thought the forty days spent in searching the land had been too long a delay, and was impatient to take possession of the country which God had given them. (Note, Josh. xiv. 6—15.)

V. 31. These persons were deficient in *courage*, in thus fearing the Canaanites, when such a multitude were all engaged to fight for themselves, and their families: but when we consider the mighty works of the Lord, which they had witnessed in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness, even to that present day, their *unbelief* appears the more surprising. Had the Canaanites been a thousand times stronger than Israel, they could not be stronger than Israel's God, as Pharaoh had found to his cost.

V. 32. Some suppose that there was a great mortality in the land just at the time, by which the Lord was weakening his enemies, and fighting for Israel; but which the spies perversely ascribed to an unwholesome climate. At the same time that they represented the country fruitful and populous, and all the people of great stature, and powerful, and prosperous; they inconsistently speak of the land as eating up its inhabitants!

V. 33. *As grasshoppers.*] That is, 'They despised us as puny creatures; and we, conscious of our insignificance and feebleness, trembled before them.'—It seems they passed as travellers, and were not suspected by the inhabitants.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The righteous Lord frequently gives up to their own devices, such persons as confide in their own wisdom and policy, in preference, or in opposition to his express

## CHAP. XIV.

The people murmur, and propose returning to Egypt; and threaten to stone Caleb and Joshua, while they in vain attempt to pacify them, 1—10. God threatens to destroy them at once, but Moses intercedes, and prevails for their rescue; yet that generation is doomed to fall in the wilderness, Caleb and Joshua excepted, 11—35. The men who raised the evil report, die by the plague, 36—38. The people attempt to march to Canaan; but are warned by Moses, and smitten by their enemies, 39—45.

<sup>a</sup> xi. 1—4. Deut. i. 45.

**AND** all the congregation <sup>a</sup>lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night.

<sup>b</sup> xvi. 41. Ex. xv. 24. xvi. 2. 5. xvii. 3. Deut. i. 27. Ps. cvi. 25. 1 Cor. x. 10. Phil. ii. 14, 15. Jude 16. c 28, 29. xi. 15. 1 Kings xix. 4. Job iii. 11. vii. 15, 16. Jon. iv. 8. 8.

2 And all the children of Israel <sup>b</sup>murmured against Moses, and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, <sup>c</sup>Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!

word of promise: and even obedience to his commandments, if formal and hypocritical, may prove an occasion of men's falling into delusion, sin, and misery. (*Notes*, 2 *Chr.* xxv. 6—10. 13.) We should therefore, take heed both what we do, and in what manner and with what spirit we do it; as the same action may spring from contrary motives, and will certainly be productive of contrary effects to ourselves, according to the intention and disposition of our hearts.—Of the numbers whose names crowd the page of history, nay even of those whose names are written in the Scriptures, the greater part are recorded to their perpetual disgrace! Happy they, and they only, whose names are written in the book of life, in the registers of eternity, as the people of the “**LORD OUR SALVATION.**”—In the exercise of faith and hope, and by careful investigation of the sacred word, we may profitably search out the heavenly country, and hear a good report concerning it; and take encouragement to go up in the strength of the Lord and possess it at once. But carnal sense, and carnal preachers and professors, are not to be trusted in this business: and unbelief overlooks the promises and power of God, magnifies every danger and difficulty, and fills the heart with overwhelming discouragement.—May God help us to believe, and we shall then find all things possible! Faith will still the tumult of our passions, and inform us far beyond the report of either sense or reason; whilst earnestness of heavenly joys will form a “witness within ourselves,” that will confute the false testimony of those who deny the reality or the excellence of spiritual blessings; and will animate us in “seeking those things which are above,” nay, render us willing to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better than all things here below.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1. The people in general vented their discontent and despondency, as children are apt to do, in clamorous lamentations and wailings.

3 And wherefore hath <sup>d</sup>the LORD brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that <sup>e</sup>our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return into Egypt?

4 And they said one to another, <sup>f</sup>Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.

5 Then Moses and Aaron <sup>g</sup>fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel.

6 And <sup>h</sup>Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, <sup>i</sup>which were of them that searched the land, <sup>j</sup>rent their clothes.

7 And they spake unto all the company of the children of Israel, saying, The land, which we passed through to search it, <sup>k</sup>is an exceeding good land.

8 If the LORD <sup>l</sup>delight in us, then he

<sup>d</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 40. Jer. ix. 3. <sup>e</sup> 81, 82. <sup>f</sup> Deut. xvii. 16. xxviii. 68. Neh. ix. 16, 17. Luke xvii. 32. Acts vii. 39. Heb. x. 38, 39. xi. 16. 2 Pet. ii. 21, 22. <sup>g</sup> Gen. xvi. 4. 22. 45. <sup>h</sup> Lev. ix. 24. Josh. v. 14. vii. 10. 1 Kings xviii. 39. 1 Chr. xxi. 16. Ez. ix. 8. Dan. x. 9. Matt. xxvii. 39. Rev. iv. 10. v. 14. vii. 11. 24. 30. 38. xiii. 6. 8. 30. <sup>i</sup> Gen. xxxvii. 29. 34. xlv. 13. <sup>j</sup> Josh. vii. 6. Judg. xi. 85. 2 Sam. iii. 31. 2 Kings xviii. 37. Job i. 20. Joel ii. 12, 13. Matt. xxvi. 65. <sup>k</sup> xiii. 27. Deut. i. 28. vi. 10, 11. viii. 7—9. <sup>l</sup> Deut. x. 15. 2 Sam. xv. 25. 26. xxii. 20. 1 Kings x. 9. Ps. xxii. 8. cxlviii. 10, 11. Is. lxvii. 4. Jer. xxii. 41. Zeph. iii. 17. Rom. viii. 31.

V. 2—4. Nothing can be conceived more absurd, as well as rebellious, than the whole conduct of Israel on this occasion. Surely it would have been at least as eligible to fall soldier-like, sword in hand, in attempting to conquer Canaan, as to die slaves in Egypt, or by famine or pestilence in the wilderness! Had it been possible for them to reach Egypt, they might have expected much more severe treatment, than that which had formerly extorted their doleful groans. But that must have been absolutely impracticable; for could they expect to be miraculously guided, victualled, and watered in their rebellious retrograde march? Yet without this, such a company could never have traversed that waste howling wilderness; but, without any immediate judgment from God, must inevitably have perished. The whole was a strong indication of the most horrible ingratitude, blasphemy, and rebellion. The Lord was directly charged with an intention of bringing them out of Egypt, by alluring them with the most encouraging promises, on purpose to destroy them and their families: and the whole present government of his express appointment, was to be set aside, and a new leader chosen, in opposition to him, and in defiance of him; nay, it seems one was actually appointed. (*Neh.* ix. 17.) Such is human nature! and such counsellors are discontent and passion!

V. 5. Moses and Aaron, being shocked at the blasphemy and rebellion of the people, expecting some terrible judgment upon them, perhaps intreating them to desist from their fatal purposes, fell down before them on their faces, to deprecate the divine displeasure by their prayers.

V. 6. *Rent their clothes.*] This was a common expression of intense grief, or deep abhorrence. (*Marg. Ref.* i.)

V. 7—9. Caleb and Joshua, with great intrepidity, and in the most energetick language, contradicted the evil report of the other spies. The land was *exceedingly good!* and if the Lord *delighted* in Israel, as they had every reason

will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey.

9 Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land: for they <sup>m</sup>are bread for us; their defence is departed from them, and the LORD <sup>is</sup> with us; fear them not.

10 But <sup>o</sup>all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And <sup>r</sup>the glory of the LORD appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation, before all the children of Israel.

11 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, How long will this people <sup>r</sup>provoke me? and how long will it be ere they <sup>q</sup>believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them?

12 I will <sup>o</sup>smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and <sup>r</sup>will make of thee a greater nation, and mightier than they.

13 And Moses said unto the LORD, Then the Egyptians shall hear <sup>it</sup>, (for thou broughtest up this people in thy might from among them;)

14 And they will tell <sup>it</sup> to the inhabitants of this land: for <sup>r</sup>they have

heard that thou, LORD, <sup>art</sup> among this people; that thou, LORD, <sup>art</sup> seen face to face; and <sup>that</sup> <sup>a</sup>thy cloud standeth over them; and <sup>that</sup> thou goest before them, by day-time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night.

15 Now <sup>if</sup> thou shalt kill <sup>all</sup> this people <sup>b</sup>as one man, then the nations, which have heard the fame of thee, will speak, saying,

16 Because <sup>o</sup>the LORD was not able to bring this people into the land which he sware unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness.

17 And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken, saying,

18 The LORD <sup>is</sup> <sup>a</sup>long-suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing <sup>the guilty</sup>; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation:

19 Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, <sup>a</sup>according unto the greatness of thy mercy, <sup>a</sup>and as thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt even <sup>†</sup>until now.

to expect he would, unless they forfeited his favour by their sin; he would bring them into this most desirable land, by the same power which had rescued them from Egypt. They had indeed great reason to fear rebelling against the LORD; otherwise they had nothing to dread from their enemies; who, having filled up the measure of their iniquity, were deprived of the providential defence of God, and exposed to his holy indignation.—The expression, “they are bread for us,” denoted that the wealth and prosperity of the Canaanites would afford Israel the more abundant present support and future accommodation.

V. 10. Perhaps the other spies, counting this language a reproach of their conduct and a charge of direct falsehood, or else the rulers of the tribes and families, first gave the word: and it soon became the general outcry through the whole multitude, that they who were nearest should immediately stone them; that is, not only Caleb and Joshua, but Moses and Aaron also, as it seems probable from the narration. And now dreadful deeds would have been done, had not the Lord interposed to calm this tumult of the people by a visible display of his glory, probably like the fire on the top of Sinai, which intimidated them for the moment.

V. 11, 12. This is the abrupt language of astonishment and indignation. The Israelites had been tried and spared so long to no purpose, and still proceeded in their unbelief and provocations, to such a degree, that it was in vain to bear with them any longer. (Matt. xvii. 17. Mark ix. 19.) The Lord therefore declared <sup>their</sup> <sup>deservings</sup>, in

his threatening to destroy them at once; and his <sup>faithful-</sup>ness, in renewing his proposal of fulfilling his promises to the posterity of Moses. (Note, Ex. xxxii. 7—10.)

V. 13—19. In this earnest prayer, Moses does not in the least excuse the sin of Israel, or object to the justice of the awful sentence, or argue that such a conduct would not consist with the divine truth and goodness: but he pleads the <sup>appearance</sup> which it would have, and the construction which the Egyptians and neighbouring nations would put upon it, in their communications with each other. They had witnessed, or heard of, the miracles which God had wrought for Israel, and the promises which he had made to the nation; and would never think of ascribing their destruction to the true cause, but conclude that JEHOVAH was unable to fulfil his engagements. He therefore prays that the Lord would shew his great power; not in their immediate destruction, but in sparing them, and in performing his promises to them. He further pleads THE NAME OF THE LORD, which had been proclaimed before him; and the examples of his former forgivenesses, from the departure of Israel out of Egypt to that day: thus he argues, that consistently with his character God could do it; and that former experience encouraged him still to expect it. (Note, Ex. xxxiv. 5—7.) Moses referred to the very words, in which the NAME of the Lord had been proclaimed; though some expressions might seem unsuitable to his purpose. But it is probable, he did not expect to prevail so entirely, as that all, even the most guilty, should be exempted from punishment;

20 And the Lord said, I have pardoned, according to thy word:

21 But, <sup>a</sup>as truly as I live, <sup>1</sup>all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.

22 Because all those men <sup>k</sup>which have seen my glory, and my miracles which I did in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and have <sup>1</sup>tempted me now these <sup>m</sup>ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice;

23 <sup>a</sup>Surely <sup>a</sup>they shall not see the land which I swore unto their fathers; neither shall any of them that provoked me see it;

24 But <sup>o</sup>my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath <sup>p</sup>followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereunto he went; and his seed shall possess it.

25 (Now <sup>q</sup>the Amalekites, and the

Canaanites dwelt in the valley.) To-morrow <sup>r</sup>turn you, and get you into the wilderness, by the way of the Red sea.

26 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, and unto Aaron, saying,

27 <sup>s</sup>How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? <sup>t</sup>I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me.

28 Say unto them, <sup>u</sup>As truly as I live, saith the LORD, <sup>v</sup>as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you:

29 Your <sup>y</sup>carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and <sup>z</sup>all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me.

30 Doubtless ye shall not come into

or that the nation should not be visited with lighter judgments, descending even to their posterity; but only, that they should not all be consumed in a moment, or the nation entirely disinherited. No doubt Moses was convinced, that the glory of the justice and holiness of God was concerned; and that it was necessary to shew by some decisive measure, that he would not suffer his commandments to be trampled upon, his promises despised, or his threatenings disregarded: yet he pleaded, that the honour of his power and faithfulness, in the view of the nations, required him to mitigate or defer the punishment of Israel; and that he could magnify his mercy without dishonouring his justice. (Notes, Ex. xxxii. 11—14. Deut. xxxii. 26, 27.)

V. 20, 21. The Lord granted the prayer of Moses, and did not immediately destroy the whole congregation: but he declared, that he would also take occasion, from the rebellions of Israel, and by his dealings with them, to make known his glory to all the nations of the earth. (Note, Ex. xxxii. 34, 35.) This he confirmed by an ir-reversible oath; and accordingly, wherever the Scriptures have been made known, men of every age and nation have learned the glorious perfections of God, and his means of governing his rational creatures, from the history of Israel, in which these particulars are most strikingly illustrated: and in process of time all nations shall be filled with his glory in the same manner.

V. 22, 23. After all the displays of the power, and all the experience of the goodness and truth, of God, with which the Israelites had been favoured; they had again and again put these perfections of JEHOVAH to a new trial, by their murmurs, and proved his patience by their disobedience. He therefore most solemnly protested, that not one of that perverse generation, who had thus provoked him, should inherit the promised land.—Ten times, signifies many times, a definite number being used for an indefinite. (Marg. Ref. m.)

V. 24. Caleb perhaps took the more active part on this occasion: and as Joshua was designed to be the successor of Moses, Caleb is the more frequently spoken of, though Joshua was evidently included (30). Caleb had “another spirit with him,” even a spirit of faith and holiness: (Note, 2 Cor. iv. 13—18:) he therefore “followed the LORD fully;” (literally, *fulfilled after me*;) that is, he had faithfully discharged the service to which he had been called, and was ready for any service, however perilous or self-denying, to which the Lord should call him; for he simply believed his word, embraced his promises, observed his directions, obeyed his commandments, depended on his faithfulness, power, and goodness; and confidently expected that matters would eventually take place exactly as he had said, notwithstanding difficulties or improbabilities. This he did with perseverance and courage, though influence, example, terrors, and sufferings, combined to divert him from his course: and he was willing to venture or endure whatever was necessary in so doing. In consequence, he at first met with hatred, reproaches, and dangers: but he survived his enemies and their opposition, and at length had honour from God and man, much comfort, and a valuable recompence. (Note, Josh. xiv. 6—15.)—The posterity of the rebels inherited Canaan; but Caleb and his posterity inherited Hebron, where the Anakims dwelt, whom he and the other spies had seen; but they were discouraged, and he was not.

V. 25. “The Amalekites and Canaanites dwell in the valley; to-morrow, &c.” Thus the passage may be read without a parenthesis. If the people went forward, they would fall into the hands of their enemies who were waiting for them; and the Lord would not protect them. Nay, he commanded them to return into the howling wilderness, which they had passed, as if about to go back to the Red Sea and Egypt. This command must have been inexpressibly mortifying.

V. 27—30. Probably some new murmurs arose, which

\* Heb. *lifted up my hand*. Gen. xiv. 22.  
 a 8d. xxvi. 65. xxxii. 12. Deut. i. 36—38.

the land concerning which I <sup>a</sup>sware to make you dwell therein, <sup>a</sup>save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.

b xxvi. 4. 64. Deut. i. 39.  
 c 3.

31 But your <sup>b</sup>little ones, which <sup>c</sup>ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know <sup>d</sup>the land which ye have despised.

d Gen. xxv. 34. Ps. cvi. 24. Prov. i. 25. 30. Matt. xxii. 5. Acts xiii. 41. Heb. xii. 16, 17.  
 e See on 29.

32 But *as for* you, <sup>e</sup>your carcases, they shall fall in this wilderness.

f xxxii. 13. Josh. xiv. 10. Ps. cvii. 4. 40.  
 † Or, *feed*.  
 g xxxiii. 38. Deut. i. 3. ii. 14.  
 h v. 31. Ez. xxiii. 35. 45—49.  
 i xiii. 25. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 21.

33 And your children <sup>f</sup>shall <sup>g</sup>wander in the wilderness <sup>h</sup>forty years, and <sup>i</sup>bear your whoredoms, until your carcases be wasted in the wilderness.

k Ps. xcv. 10. Ez. iv. 6. Dan. ix. 24. Rev. xi. 3.  
 l xviii. 23. Lev. xxi. 19. — Ps. xxxviii. 4. Ez. xvi. 10.  
 m i Kings viii. 56. Ps. lxxvii. 8. cv. 42. Heb. iv. 1.

34 <sup>k</sup>After <sup>l</sup>the number of the days in which ye searched the land, *even* forty days, (each day for a year,) <sup>m</sup>shall ye bear your iniquities, *even* forty years; and <sup>n</sup>ye shall know my <sup>o</sup>breach of promise.

n xxvii. 19.  
 o 24. 29. xxvi. 65. i Cor. x. 5. 11. Heb. iii. 19.

35 I the LORD have said, <sup>n</sup>I will surely do it unto all <sup>o</sup>this evil congregation, that are gathered together against me: in this wilderness they

shall be consumed, and there they shall die.

36 ¶ And <sup>p</sup>the men which Moses <sup>q</sup>sent to search the land, who returned, and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land;

37 Even those men, that did bring up the evil report upon the land, <sup>r</sup>died by the plague before the LORD.

38 But <sup>r</sup>Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, *which were* of the men that went to search the land, lived *still*.

39 And Moses told these sayings unto all the children of Israel: and the people <sup>s</sup>mourned greatly.

40 And they <sup>t</sup>rose up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we *be here*, and will go up unto the place which the LORD hath promised: for we have sinned.

41 And Moses said, Wherefore now

gave occasion to this expostulation, and the more explicit sentence of exclusion of that generation from Canaan.—Thus “the LORD sware in his wrath, that they should not “enter into his rest;” and irrevocably condemned them to wander in the wilderness for forty years, and never to see city, or town, or cultivated field, till that generation was dead, and their children grown up to inherit the land, according to his promise to their fathers. (Note, Ps. xcv. 9—11.) Having sworn by himself, and pledged the honour of all his perfections, the sentence was made absolute and irreversible; and his almighty power shut them up in the desert, as effectually as if it had been surrounded with the highest and strongest walls imaginable.—The Levites, who were numbered from a month old, were not included; for it is evident that Eleazar, the son of Aaron, assisted Joshua in dividing the land of Canaan, after the conquest of it; (Josh. xiv. 1:) though he was old enough to officiate in the priest’s office before this time, and was chief over the Levites. The women and minors, with Caleb and Joshua, were also excepted.—The promises were made to the descendants of the patriarchs, and not to the individuals of this generation.

V. 31. *Know the land.*] The children of these Israelites, by possessing Canaan, *knew* what a good land their fathers had despised.

V. 33. (Notes, 1 Cor. x. 1—5. Jude 5—8.) Forty years elapsed, from the departure of Israel out of Egypt to their entrance into Canaan; and the whole term is evidently included.—The word rendered *wander*, signifies *feed*: and thus implies, that the Israelites should move from place to place in the deserts, as shepherds in many countries do, who have no certain dwelling, but go from one district to another seeking pasture for their flocks.—The word “whoredoms” is generally used for *idolatry*;

and it is thought that this doom was denounced on the people for their sin in worshipping the golden calf, and for their other idolatries; as well as for the transgression which they had just committed. (Note, Ex. xxxii. 34, 35.)

V. 34. Neither the text, nor the marginal reading, seems to convey the precise meaning of the word (מִנְיָנִי) rendered, “My breach of promise.” Some translate it, ‘Ye shall know *the fury of my anger*,’ or ‘*my vengeance*.’ But perhaps it may signify *my disannulling*. The words may either mean, that the people should know whether the Lord, having pronounced sentence against them, would *disannul* it, or not; that is, they should experience the truth of it: or that they should know, that whilst his promises stood firm to the believing and obedient, hypocrites and apostates had no benefit from them. They perhaps would consider this exclusion as a “breach of promise:” but *he* would shew that it was only a delay, made for wise, righteous, and gracious purposes; and that he would fulfil the promises to their descendants.

V. 39—45. The Israelites lamented very much, that the sentence of exclusion had been pronounced; and, like Esau in similar circumstances, they sought with tears to have it reversed: (Notes, Gen. xxvii. 38. Heb. xii. 15—17:) but their subsequent conduct proved that they had not sorrowed to repentance. They were not truly humbled for their most heinous sin: having repeatedly escaped, they concluded that the Lord would not proceed to extremities; and being convinced by the death of the spies that they had sinned, they vainly hoped that an alteration of conduct would produce at least a mitigation of the sentence. But the irreversible oath was sworn, and they only added one rebellion to another. The Lord had expressly commanded them to return into the wilderness towards the Red Sea (25); and Moses, with the priests who used to

<sup>x</sup> 25. 2 Chr. xiv. <sup>x</sup> do ye transgress the commandment of the LORD? <sup>y</sup> but it shall not prosper.

<sup>a</sup> Deut. 1. 42. <sup>b</sup> 42. Go not up, for the LORD is not among you; that ye be not smitten before your enemies.

<sup>a</sup> 25. xlii. 29. Lev. xxvi. 17. Deut. xxxviii. 26. <sup>b</sup> Judg. xvi. 20. <sup>c</sup> 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. <sup>d</sup> 2 Chr. xv. 2. Is. lxi. 10. Hos. ix. 12. <sup>e</sup> 43. For <sup>a</sup> the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and ye shall fall by the sword: <sup>b</sup> because ye are turned away from the LORD;

therefore the LORD will not be with you.

44 But <sup>c</sup> they presumed to go up unto the hill-top: nevertheless, <sup>d</sup> the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and Moses, departed not out of the camp.

45 Then <sup>e</sup> the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them, and discomfited them, even unto Hormah.

<sup>c</sup> xv. 30. Deut. i. 43. <sup>d</sup> x. 33. 1 Sam. iv. 5—11. <sup>e</sup> See on 43.—Ex. xvii. 16. Deut. i. 44. xxxii. 30. Josh. vii. 5. 11, 12. <sup>f</sup> xxi. 3. Judg. i. 17.

carry the ark, protested against their presumption. The Lord, their Defence, had been provoked to leave them; the Amalekites and Canaanites waited for them; the honour of the divine justice was concerned to punish them; and accordingly it is probable, that a great slaughter of them was made by their victorious enemies.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—25.

We shall not derive the full benefit from Scripture, unless we consider it as the history of human nature; written with an infallible and perfectly impartial pen; and are aware that we ourselves are disposed to act, in similar circumstances, exactly after the same manner as the Israelites did. If we are conscious of this, we shall see, in the chapter before us, a very humiliating picture of our own hearts, which may be of great advantage to us. For we must perceive, that it is natural to sinful man to believe a lie in preference to the faithful word of God; and this gives Satan and his instruments their grand advantage, in opposing religion and deceiving souls. In this spirit of unbelief, we are prone to harbour hard thoughts of God, to rebel against him, to torment ourselves, and to rush headlong upon our own destruction; and we should be completely ruined, if our wishes were granted us, when discontent and unbelief influence our hearts: for we are capable of quarrelling even with our choicest mercies, nay, of impatiently desiring those very evils, which at other times are most dreaded! But we should watch and pray against the first beginnings of this ungrateful and rebellious frame of mind; and keep a guard at the door of our lips, when such thoughts arise in our hearts: for the Lord frequently takes rebels at their word, and sends them the judgment, or the death, for which they rashly wish.—But the madness of a discontented heart is as manifest in its *resolves*, as in its *desires*, or *wishes*. Nor is there any thing so impracticable, or so desperate, that man dares not attempt it, when raging in feeble rebellion against the will of God: as if he could overpower Omnipotence, and disannul the appointments of his Maker! Intreaties, counsels, encouragements, and warnings, at such a time, are vain, or only enrage the more: and thus Solomon's words are illustrated, "Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly." (Note, Prov. xvii. 12.) But the grace of the Holy Spirit, possessing the soul, produces a contrary disposition: the servants of the Lord under this influence are inclined to stoop, and to venture or suffer any thing, in order to rescue infatuated sinners from impending ruin: and, while they abhor their crimes, they compassionate their persons,

and both plead with them and pray for them, even when they see them full of enmity and rage against them.—The Lord will afford peculiar protection, and singular marks of regard, to those who, in genuine love, venture to stem the torrent of prevailing iniquity, without being intimidated by the scorn and malice of their enemies; and the displays of his glory are sufficient to dismay the stoutest spirits of rebels, and to encourage the hearts of his servants in the most extreme danger. Though millions of the Lord's *professed* people perish in unbelief and disobedience, his covenant and promises stand sure: and, whilst he glorifies his truth and mercy in his dealings with his faithful servants, he takes occasion from the perverseness of unbelievers more extensively and durably to glorify his whole NAME. With the glory of God at heart, and the word of God dwelling within us, we cannot pray amiss, or plead in vain. Intercessors of this character are an invaluable blessing to any people, though seldom much esteemed, and often treated with the basest ingratitude: but while they avert temporal judgments, and prevail for the conversion of many individuals, their prayers will not prevent the final destruction of obstinate and impenitent sinners.

##### V. 26—45.

In his hottest displeasure, the Lord knoweth how to distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, and to exercise his faithfulness and mercy, as well as his justice and holiness, according to the characters of men: so that they who manifest "another spirit," and follow him fully, being valiant and patient in his cause, shall in due time have the distinguished credit and comfort of their faithfulness.—But dreadful is the case of those, against whom the oath of God is gone forth! for as it is the *irreversible* security of the covenant of grace, for the "strong consolation of all who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them;" (Note, Heb. vi. 16—20;) so it seals irrevocably the doom of those who provoke him "to swear in his wrath, that they shall never enter into his rest." And it is in vain to oppose the execution of the sentence; as the Lord can fence around the waste howling wilderness, and convert it into a prison, in which effectually to confine the most outrageous rebels, so that they can by no efforts escape. These truths are plain and important; yet sinners will not take warning, but persist in their rebellion, only varying the mode of it: and they are often blind enough to think that one act of disobedience may atone for another,—a hypocritical, uncommanded form of devotion, for gross profaneness or injustice! But evil pursueth them: many plagues remain for all who go on still in their wickedness; and they may read their own

## CHAP. XV.

The law of the meat-offerings and drink-offerings to be brought with the sacrifices; in which strangers are included, 1—16. The heave-offering of dough, 17—21. The sin-offerings of the congregation, and of private persons for sins of ignorance, 22—29. The punishment of presumption, exemplified in the stoning of a sabbath-breaker, 30—36. Fringes to be worn, 37—41.

- a 18. Lev. xiv. 34.  
xxiii. 10. xxv. 2.  
Deut. vii. 1, 2.  
xii. 1. 9.  
b Ex. xxix. 18. 25.  
41. Lev. i. 9. 13.  
17. x. 13.  
c Lev. i. 1, &c.  
Lev. vii. 16. xxiii.  
18—23. Deut.  
xii. 11.  
• Heb. separating.  
Lev. xxvii. 2.  
• Lev. xxii. 21. 23.  
Deut. xii. 6. 17.  
xvi. 10.  
f xxviii. 16—19.  
27. xxix. 1, 8.  
13. &c. Lev.  
xxiii. 8. 12. 36.  
Deut. xvi. 1—  
17.

**AND** the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, <sup>a</sup> When ye be come into the land of your habitations, which I give unto you,

3 And <sup>b</sup> will make an offering by fire unto the LORD, <sup>c</sup> a burnt-offering, or <sup>d</sup> a sacrifice in <sup>e</sup> performing a vow, <sup>f</sup> or in a free-will-offering, or <sup>g</sup> in your solemn

feasts, to make <sup>h</sup> a sweet savour unto the LORD, of the herd or of the flock;

4 Then shall he that offereth his offering unto the LORD, bring <sup>h</sup> a meat-offering of a tenth-deal of flour, mingled with <sup>i</sup> the fourth *part* of an hin of oil.

5 And <sup>k</sup> the fourth *part* of an hin <sup>l</sup> of wine for a drink-offering shalt thou prepare, with the burnt-offering or sacrifice, for one lamb.

6 Or <sup>m</sup> for a ram, thou shalt prepare for a meat-offering two tenth-deals of flour, mingled with the third *part* of an hin of oil.

7 And for a drink-offering, thou shalt offer the third *part* of an hin of wine, for a sweet savour unto the LORD.

Gen. viii. 21. Ex. xxix. 18. Matt. iii. 17. Eph. v. 2. Phil. iv. 18.

Ex. xxix. 40. Lev. ii. 1. vi. 14. vii. 9. 10. xxiii. 13. Is. lxvi. 20. Mal. i. 11. Rom. xv. 16. Heb. xii. 16.

xxviii. 5. Ex. xxix. 40. Lev. ii. 15. xiv. 10. xxiii. 13. Judg. ix. 9. Ez. xvi. 14.

xxviii. 7. 14. Judg. ix. 13. Ps. cxvi. 13. Cant. i. 4. Zech. ix. 17. Matt. xxvii. 28. Phil. ii. 17. 2 Tim. iv. 6.

m. 4. xxviii. 12—14.

condemnation, when the Lord's people separate from them, and protest against them.—But, in this history of those who were excluded from Canaan, let us advert to a case of infinitely greater and more universal importance. A heavenly rest is revealed and proposed to us in the sacred oracles. The ministers of Christ describe it as an exceedingly good land, flowing with richer blessings than milk and honey, and freely given to all in whom the Lord delighteth: and the very proposal of such a blessing to us by his gospel is a token for good. They point out the way in which sinners must come, and the means which they must use, if they would enter this good land; they assure them in the name of the Lord, that, notwithstanding all their guilt, depravity, and weakness,—notwithstanding the power, malice, and number of their enemies,—the Lord will bring them into it and give it them, if they rebel not against him by neglecting so great salvation; and that they need fear no opposition, since even conflicts, temptations, and persecutions will eventually do them good. They exhort them to day to hearken to the voice of the Lord; they warn them not to harden their hearts, and provoke him by delay; and admonish them to “take heed that there be not in them an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.” (Notes, Heb. iii. 14—19. P. O. 7—19.) In such addresses and exhortations, and in fervent prayers for them, they must, and will, and do, persist with unceasing importunity, in the face of hatred, contempt, and persecution, so long as hope is left. But alas! most men “despise the pleasant land, and believe not the word of God;” they place no dependence on his promises; are discouraged by the prospect of real or imaginary difficulties and dangers; do not think even heaven worth so much trouble and self-denial; prefer a portion in this world, and harden their hearts till it be too late; till their exclusion is irreversibly determined, and then they unavailingly regret their folly. How many also, who appear to set out, through unbelief grow weary, and in their hearts, perhaps in their conduct, return back to the world: and many, who profess to have searched out the good land, bring an evil report upon it; and either by their doctrine, or by

their evident attachment to temporal interests, and carelessness about spiritual things, weaken the hands of believers, and strengthen those of unbelievers! These, being ringleaders in wickedness, will have the first share, or the largest proportion, of divine vengeance.—“Let us then fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into the Lord's rest, any of us should seem to come short of it;” let us take warning from the fate of Israel, lest we perish “after the same example of unbelief:” (Note, Heb. iv. 1, 2:) let us be afraid of nothing, but of “provoking the Lord to swear in his wrath, that we shall never enter into his rest;” let us go forth depending on his mercy, power, promise, and truth; let us follow him, fully prepared to venture or suffer every thing for his sake: and he will assuredly be with us, and bring our souls to everlasting rest in heaven.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XV. : V. 2. That generation of Israel was doomed to fall in the wilderness, and the whole congregation to wander in it forty years; during which space many new provocations and judgments were likely to intervene, which might seem to threaten their final exclusion from Canaan: yet, as the Lord actually intended to put the rising generation into possession of it, he enacted these laws, as a pledge and assurance of his purpose, and as a token of his being *thus far* reconciled.—We read that the people continued at Kadesh many days; during which time, it is probable, numbers died: and while they lay encamped, we may suppose these regulations were made. (Note, Deut. i. 46.)

V. 3—12. In the wilderness, while the people had neither corn-fields, nor vineyards, nor olive-yards, but lived upon manna, they could not easily bring meat-offering and drink-offerings; and these seem not to have been then required.—The meat-offerings before prescribed were offered *separately*: (Notes, Lev. ii:) but those here appointed accompanied all animal-sacrifices, except that of doves. The Jewish expositors say, that the whole of these oblations was burnt on the altar: but this is not enjoined

8 And when thou preparest a bullock for a burnt-offering, or for a sacrifice in performing a vow, or <sup>n</sup> peace-offerings unto the LORD :

<sup>n</sup> See on Lev. iii. 1 vii. 11—18

9 Then shall he bring with a bullock <sup>o</sup> a meat-offering of three tenth-deals of flour, mingled with half an hin of oil.

<sup>o</sup> xxix. 6. Lev. vi. 14 vii. 37. xiv. 10. 1 Chr. xxi. 23. Neh. x. 33. Ez. xlii. 13. xlv. 5, 7. 11. 15. Joel i. 9. ii. 14. <sup>p</sup> See on 5. vi. 15.

10 And thou shalt bring for <sup>p</sup> a drink-offering half an hin of wine, for an offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

11 Thus shall it be done for one bullock, or for one ram, or for a lamb, or a kid.

12 According to the number that ye shall prepare, so shall ye do to every one, according to their number.

13 All that are born of the country shall do these things after this manner, in offering an offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

14 And if a stranger sojourn with you, or whosoever *be* among you in your generations, and will offer an offering made by fire of a sweet savour unto the LORD; as ye do, so he shall do.

15 <sup>q</sup> One ordinance *shall be both* for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth *with you*, <sup>r</sup> an ordinance for ever in your generations: as ye *are*, so shall the stranger be before the LORD.

<sup>q</sup> 29. ix. 14. Ex. xii. 49. Lev. xxiv. 22. Gal. iii. 28. Eph. ii. 11—22. Col. iii. 11.

<sup>r</sup> x. 8. xviii. 8. Ex. xii. 14. 24. 43. 1 Sam. xxx. 25.

16 One law, and one manner, shall be for you, and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.

17 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

18 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, 'When ye come into the land whither I bring you,

<sup>s</sup> See on 2.—Deut. xxvi. 1.

19 Then it shall be, that 'when ye eat of the bread of the land, ye shall offer up an heave-offering unto the LORD.

<sup>t</sup> Josh. v. 11, 12.

20 Ye shall offer up <sup>u</sup> a cake of the first of your dough, for an heave-offering: as *ye do* <sup>v</sup> the heave-offering of the threshing-floor, so shall ye heave it.

<sup>u</sup> xviii. 12. Ex. xxiii. 19. Deut. xxvi. 2—10. Neh. x. 37. Prov. iii. 9, 10. Ez. xiv. 30. Matt. vi. 33. Rom. xi. 16. 1 Cor. xv. 20. Jam. i. 18. Rev. xiv. 4.

21 Of the first of your dough ye shall give unto the LORD, <sup>w</sup> an heave-offering in your generations.

<sup>v</sup> Lev. ii. 14. xxiii. 10. 16, 17. <sup>w</sup> xviii. 26. Ex. xxix. 28.

22 ¶ And <sup>x</sup> if ye have erred, and not observed all these commandments which the LORD hath spoken unto Moses,

<sup>x</sup> Lev. iv. 2. 13. 14. 22. 27. v. 13. 15—17. Ps. xix. 12. Luke xii. 48.

23 *Even* all that the LORD hath commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day that the LORD commanded *Moses*, and henceforward among your generations;

24 Then it shall be, <sup>y</sup> if *ought* be committed by ignorance, <sup>z</sup> without the knowledge of the congregation; that all the congregation shall offer <sup>z</sup> one young bullock for a burnt-offering, for

<sup>y</sup> See on Lev. iv. 13. <sup>z</sup> Heb. *from the eyes*.

<sup>z</sup> See on Lev. iv. 14—21.

in the law itself; and perhaps only a portion was burnt, and the remainder was eaten by the priests: and the drink-offering was disposed of in a similar manner. These sacrifices not only typified Christ, with all fulness of spiritual blessings in him for our use, even all which is well pleasing and honourable to the Father; but they likewise shadowed forth the pleasure, which a reconciled God takes in the services of his redeemed people, and the delight which they take in communion with him. This was represented by their feasting together: and therefore all those things were directed to be brought, which were of general use at feasts; and in due proportions, according to the kind or number of the sacrifices.—A tenth-deal was the same as an *omer*, or about five pints; a hin is computed by some to have been twice as much. (*Tables at the end.*)

V. 14—16. (*Marg. Ref.*) The intention of this law might be, to induce strangers to attend the worship and ordinances of God; to intimate to the Israelites, that if they became profligate and ungodly, they would be treated as strangers; and to signify that in due time the Gentiles would be fully admitted into the church. Though uncircumcised persons might not eat the passover, they might offer other sacrifices in the appointed way, if they were so

disposed. These regulations referred to sacrifices and ordinances only; not to publick offices, nor to marriages.

V. 17—21. (*Notes, Lev. xxiii. 15—21.*) The oblation before prescribed, seems to have been a general acknowledgment from the people at large: but this was an oblation from every one that reaped a harvest: who was required, previously to tasting it himself, to offer a portion of dough as a heave-offering to the Lord. This is supposed to have been given to the priests in their several cities, and not carried to the tabernacle.

V. 22—29. This law concerning sins of ignorance, being entirely diverse from one before considered, occasions considerable difficulty. (*Notes, Lev. iv.*) Some explain that law as relating to sins of *commission*, this to sins of *omission*: others explain the one of inadvertent violations of the *moral* law, and the other of the transgressions of the *ceremonial* law: and some think that related to the whole nation, this to any one tribe; or that to the bulk of the nation, this to the rulers and elders.—The Jews say, that the former law referred to such national transgressions through heedlessness, as consisted with the maintenance of the prescribed worship in the main: but that this especially respected the case of the nation, when

a sweet savour unto the LORD, with his meat-offering, and his drink-offering, according to the manner, and <sup>a</sup> one kid of the goats for a sin-offering.

25 And <sup>b</sup> the priest shall make an atonement for all the congregation of the children of Israel, and it shall be <sup>c</sup> forgiven them; for it is ignorance: and they shall bring their offering, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD, and their sin-offering before the LORD, for their ignorance.

26 And it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the children of Israel, and the stranger that sojourneth among them; seeing all the people were in ignorance.

27 ¶ And if <sup>d</sup> any soul sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she-goat of the first year for a sin-offering.

28 And <sup>e</sup> the priest shall make an atonement for the soul that sinneth ignorantly, when he sinneth by ignorance before the LORD, to make an atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him.

29 Ye shall have <sup>f</sup> one law for him that <sup>g</sup> sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is born among the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them.

30 But the soul that <sup>h</sup> doeth ought

<sup>i</sup> presumptuously, (*whether he be born in the land, or a stranger,*) the same <sup>j</sup> reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people.

31 Because he hath <sup>k</sup> despised the word of the LORD, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off: <sup>l</sup> his iniquity shall be upon him.

32 ¶ And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man <sup>m</sup> that gathered sticks upon the sabbath-day.

33 And they that found him gathering sticks, <sup>n</sup> brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation.

34 And they <sup>o</sup> put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him.

35 And the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>p</sup> The man shall be surely put to death: <sup>q</sup> all the congregation shall <sup>r</sup> stone him with stones without the camp.

36 And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the LORD commanded Moses.

37 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

38 Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them

<sup>a</sup> Or, ordinance.

<sup>b</sup> xxviii. 15. Lev. iv. 23. 2 Chr. xxix. 21—24. Ezra vi. 17. viii. 35.

<sup>c</sup> See on Lev. iv. 20, 28.—Rom. iii. 25. 1 John ii. 2.

<sup>d</sup> Luke xxiii. 34. Acts xiii. 39.

<sup>e</sup> See on Lev. iv. 27, 28.—Acts iii. 17. xvii. 30. 1 Tim. i. 13.

<sup>f</sup> Lev. iv. 35

<sup>g</sup> See on 15.—ix. 14. Lev. xvi. 29. xvii. 15. Rom. iii. 29, 30.

<sup>h</sup> Heb. doeth.

<sup>i</sup> ix. 15. xiv. 44. Gen. xvii. 14. Ex. xxi. 14. Lev. xx. 8. 6. 10. Deut. i. 43. xvii. 12. xxix. 19, 20. Ps. xix. 13. Matt. xii. 32. Heb. x. 26, 29. 2 Pet. ii. 18.

<sup>j</sup> Heb. with an high hand.

<sup>k</sup> Ps. lxxix. 9. lxxiv. 18. 22. lxxix. 12. lxxix. 51. Prov. xiv. 21. Is. xxxviii. 23, 24.

<sup>l</sup> Lev. xxvi. 15. 43. 2 Sam. xii. 9. Ps. cxix. 126. Prov. xiii. 13. Is. xxx. 12. 1 Thes. iv. 8. Heb. x. 28.

<sup>m</sup> Lev. v. 1. Ps. xxxviii. 4. Is. liii. 6. Ez. xviii. 20. 1 Pet. ii. 24.

<sup>n</sup> Ex. xvi. 23. 27, 28. xx. 8—10. xxxv. 2, 3.

<sup>o</sup> John viii. 3, &c.

<sup>p</sup> Lev. xxiv. 12.

<sup>q</sup> Ex. xxxi. 14, 15

<sup>r</sup> See on Lev. xxiv. 14. 23.—1 Kings xxi. 13. Acts vii. 58. Heb. xiii. 11, 12.

through inattention, and the example and authority of wicked rulers, they had turned aside and committed idolatry, or conducted their worship directly contrary to law; yet through a culpable ignorance, and not in presumption. This was evidently the case under several of their kings, and the explanation seems well grounded.—The law concerning individuals, who sinned through ignorance, does not so materially differ from that before given. The marginal references may assist the student, in forming his judgment on the several interpretations before stated: but the difference of sentiment, on such a subject, does not at all interfere with the practical instructions of the passage.

V. 30, 31. To do ought presumptuously, implies that it is done wilfully, deliberately, in contempt of the authority of God's word, in defiance of his justice, "with a high hand," (*marg.*) and in direct rebellion. Such a conduct "reproacheth the LORD," as if his commands were needless, unreasonable, and inimical to man's happiness; as if his authority were only fit to be trampled under foot; his favour were not desirable, or his wrath not to be feared; in short, as if it were more advantageous to rebel against him than to serve him. (*Marg. Ref. g, h, i. Notes, 2 Sam. xii. 9, 10.*) Many crimes will be found to

be sins of presumption, which did not appear such to the offender, at the time when he committed them. Whenever we set our own inclinations in opposition to the known command of God; and when God saith, *Thou shalt not*, our conduct replies, *But I will*; we are guilty of sins of presumption: and though the matter be in itself trivial, yet the daring rebellion is exceedingly atrocious. (*Notes, 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23.*) For an offender of this kind no sacrifice was appointed: he was condemned to bear his own iniquity, and to be utterly cut off; in most cases by a public execution, in others by the immediate judgment of God. (*Note, 2 Sam. xii. 13.*)

V. 32—36. This example was evidently introduced to illustrate the foregoing law. A certain person was observed gathering sticks on the sabbath-day, in contempt of the commandment: and he was condemned as a presumptuous offender to be stoned, for a warning to the rest; which sentence was executed the next day. (*Note, Heb. ii. 1—4.*)

V. 38—40. The word rendered "fringes," denotes an ornament resembling a flower, which being added to the bottom of the skirts of the outward garment, and tied together on each division of it, by a ribband or lace of a blue colour, placed upon the fringes, would render the

<sup>q</sup> Deut. xxiii. 12. <sup>r</sup> fringes in the borders of their garments, throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue.

<sup>r</sup> Ex xlii. 9. Deut. vi. 6—9. xi. 18—21. 28—32. Prov. iii. 1. <sup>s</sup> Deut. xxix. 19. Job xxxi. 7. Prov. xxviii. 26. Ec. xi. 9. Jer. ix. 14. Ez. vi. 9. <sup>t</sup> Ex. xxxiv. 15. 16. Ps. lxxiii. 27. cv. 30. Hos. ii. 2. Jam. iv. 4. <sup>u</sup> Lev. xi. 44, 45. xix. 2. Rom. xii. 1. Eph. i. 4. Col. i. 2. 1 Thes. iv. 7. 1 Pet. i. 15, 16. <sup>x</sup> Lev. xxii. 33. xxv. 38. Ps. cv. 45. Jer. xxxi. 31—33. xxxii. 37—41. Ex. xxxvi. 25—27. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10.

39 And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart, and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring;

40 That ye may remember and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God.

41 I am the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD your God.

wearer conspicuous among strangers. But it was especially intended as a mark of distinction, which the Israelites themselves might frequently look upon, and so be put in mind of their character and obligations as the worshippers and servants of JEHOVAH; that they might remember and keep his commandments, and act consistently in all places, companies, and transactions; not following their own corrupt inclinations, or yielding to the allurements of their senses. These they had ever shewn a strong propensity to prefer before the will of God, and had thus frequently been seduced into idolatry, as well as other heinous sins.—Christ was obedient to this law; for the word, translated “the hem,” or border, means the *fringe of his garment*: and the Pharisees ostentatiously enlarged their fringes.—It is remarkable, that the modern Jews generally neglect this precept, which they might obey; while many parts of their religion are become absolutely impracticable.—Some have argued that it would prevent much wickedness among the clergy, if they were always obliged to appear in their peculiar habits: but wretchedly abandoned must that clergyman be, who needs such a restraint from open wickedness.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We should study to order our conduct in obedience to the several commands of God, in that manner which may best conduce to his glory, and be useful to those around us. And, if “repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ,” be connected with godliness, righteousness, love, and temperance, in our daily walk, we shall attain that end.—When our chief delight is sought in the ordinances of God, and in communion with him, we shall find access and acceptance: and grateful, adoring love, connected with beneficence and temperance, will lead to the comfortable enjoyment of temporal blessings. But alas! we fallen creatures are always violating one or another of God’s commandments, when most circumspect: and even those slips, which are accounted small, and which spring from ignorance or inadvertency, are not pardonable but through atoning blood. Blessed be God, for the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ; to this the true be-

#### CHAP. XVI.

Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, openly rebel; and Moses falls down before God, 1—4. Moses remonstrates with Korah for seeking the priesthood; and sends for Dathan and Abiram, who refuse to come, 5—15. Korah and his company burn incense, and draw together the congregation. The glory of the Lord appears, 16—19. He threatens to consume them; but is stayed by the prayer of Moses and Aaron, 20—22. By divine command, Moses calls the people away from the tents of the rebels, and denounces their doom; the earth opens and swallows up some, while fire consumes those who burnt incense, 23—35. Their censers are reserved to cover the altar, for a memorial to posterity, 36—40. The rebellion is renewed; a plague breaks out, but is stopped by Aaron burning incense, 41—48. The number that died, 49, 50.

NOW Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and

xxvi. 9, 10. xxviii. 3. Ex. vi. 18. 21. Jude 11.

liever may always have recourse; and he alone feels his need of it continually, and cannot pervert it into an encouragement to sin.—But let presumptuous sinners tremble; for though that great sacrifice is available for all, who humbly repent and depend upon it; it enhances the guilt of those who contemptuously reject it, or hypocritically profess to rely on it, while they allow themselves in iniquity. Nor have any persons greater cause to tremble, than they who, in bold contempt of God’s authority, violate the holy rest of the sabbath-day; for though they at present escape punishment, yet unless they repent, the Lord will at length “utterly cut off their souls, with their iniquity upon them:” and it must be far worse with us as a nation than it was with Israel, when they provoked God in the desert; for they generally regarded the sabbath, we almost universally break it.—As we sinners of the Gentiles are now fully admitted to share the benefit of the Saviour’s atoning blood, we should be abundant in our spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving; we should boldly profess our faith, in the sight of the world, and circumspectly walk according to it. We should use every means of refreshing our memories, in respect to the precepts of our God, of animating and quickening our obedience, and of arming our minds against temptation. We should learn to mortify all our sinful inclinations, and to regulate, and subordinate, such as are not sinful in themselves, that we may not “think our own thoughts, speak our own words, or find our own pleasure;” but that we may seek the glory of the Lord, and do his commandments, as his redeemed and holy people.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1—4. We are not informed of the date of this rebellion: but probably it was soon after the congregation had been sentenced to wander in the wilderness.—It is remarkable how the giving of laws, and the breaking out of rebellions, are interchanged in this history; for sin, by the commandment, takes occasion to shew itself and its exceeding sinfulness. (Note, Rom. vii. 9—12.)—Korah was a near relation to Moses and Aaron: (Marg. Ref. a :) he was discontented with being an ordinary

<sup>b</sup> Gen. xlix. 3, 4  
<sup>1</sup> Chr. v. 1, 2. Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, <sup>b</sup> sons of Reuben, took men;

<sup>c</sup> Gen. vi. 4. <sup>1</sup> Chr. v. 24. xii. 30. Ez. xvi. 14. xxiii. 10. <sup>d</sup> 11. xii. 1, 2. xiv. 1—4. Ps. cvi. 16. Acts vii. 39. 51. <sup>e</sup> Heb. It is much for you. <sup>f</sup> Ex. xix. 6. Ezra ix. 2. 1a. i. 11—16. Jer. vii. 3. 12. Matt. iii. 9. 10. Rom. ii. 28, 29. <sup>g</sup> 14. xxxv. 34. Ex. xxix. 46. Ps. lxxviii. 17. <sup>h</sup> 45. xiv. 5. xx. 6. Josh. vii. 6. <sup>i</sup> Mal. iii. 18. 2 Tim. ii. 19. <sup>j</sup> 3. Lev. xxi. 6—8. 12—15. 1a. lxi. 5, 6. 1 Pet. ii. 5—9. Rev. i. 6. v. 9, 10. <sup>k</sup> Ex. xxviii. 43. Lev. x. 3. Ps. lxxv. 4. Ez. xl. 46. xlv. 15, 16. Eph. ii. 13. Heb. x. 19—22. <sup>l</sup> xvii. 5. Ex. xxviii. 1. Lev. viii. 2. 1 Sam. ii. 28. Ps. cv. 28. John xv. 16. Acts i. 2. 24. xiii. 2. xv. 7. xxi. 14. 2 Tim. ii. 3, 4.

2 And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, <sup>e</sup> famous in the congregation, men of renown:

3 And they <sup>d</sup> gathered themselves together against Moses, and against Aaron, and said unto them, <sup>e</sup> *Ye take too much upon you, seeing <sup>f</sup> all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and <sup>g</sup> the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?*

4 And when Moses heard *it*, <sup>h</sup> he fell upon his face:

5 And he spake unto Korah, and unto all his company, saying, Even tomorrow <sup>i</sup> the LORD will shew, who *are* his, and <sup>j</sup> *who is holy*; and <sup>k</sup> *will cause him to come near unto him*: <sup>l</sup> *even him whom he hath chosen, will he cause to come near unto him.*

6 This do; <sup>m</sup> Take you censers, Korah, and all his company;

7 And put fire therein, and put incense in them before the LORD to-morrow: and it shall be, <sup>n</sup> *that the man whom the LORD doth choose, he shall be holy: ye take <sup>o</sup> too much upon you, ye sons of Levi.*

8 And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi:

9 *Seemeth it but <sup>p</sup> a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath <sup>q</sup> separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself, to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them?*

10 And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: <sup>r</sup> and seek ye the priesthood also?

11 For which cause, *both thou and all thy company are gathered together <sup>s</sup> against the LORD: and <sup>t</sup> what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?*

Levite, in subjection to the priests, and became a competitor with Aaron and his sons for the priesthood. Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Reuben, Jacob's first-born, seem to have aspired to the supreme authority, as rivals to Moses; probably being also displeased with the pre-eminence of the tribe of Judah.—On is only once mentioned; either he repented, or he was of small note in the transaction. The former rebellions had been mere popular tumults: but this was a regular conspiracy, headed by persons of consequence, abetted by many of the princes, and favoured by most of the congregation. Korah is supposed to have been the first mover of this insurrection; but having engaged Dathan and Abiram, by their assistance he soon gained over others, who were men of reputation and influence among the people: and they intimated, that both the civil government and priesthood had been usurped by Moses and Aaron, without any commandment from God. Yet they allowed that the Lord was among them, and had shewn them special regard, when this could be rendered subservient to their purpose: and, by maintaining that all the people were alike holy, they attempted to overturn the whole system, civil and religious, which the Lord had established among them. (Note, Ex. xix. 6.) The two hundred and fifty princes, who do not appear to have been exclusively Levites, but heads of the families in the several tribes, under the idea that the people were all holy, as the worshippers of God, thought they had as good a right to officiate in the priest's office, as Aaron and his sons. They likewise accused both Moses and Aaron of "taking too much upon them," and of "lifting themselves up above the congregation of the LORD;" because every thing respecting the priesthood, the services of the Levites,

and the arrangement of the camps, was settled according to their word, without the counsel or approbation of them and their friends. They therefore thought that this extraordinary authority ought to cease; and that they, and the other princes, should thenceforth be consulted, and share the dominion.—The priesthood was the pretext; yet the civil authority was likewise assailed.—Moses fell on his face to deprecate the wrath of God, and to seek his direction.

V. 5—7. (Note, Ps. lxxv. 4.) Moses was directed to challenge those, who aimed at the priesthood, to refer the matter in this way to the Lord's decision, if they would venture on so perilous an appeal: and it was appointed for the morrow, that they might consider and deliberate upon it, and so be induced to decline it.—Nadab and Abihu, though priests, had been cut off for burning incense with strange fire; and it would be at their own peril, if these persons, who were no priests, ventured on this highest part of the sacerdotal office. (Note, 2 Chr. xxvi. 16—23.)

V. 8—11. In these verses Moses particularly addressed Korah, and the other sons of Levi, and charged them with despising the special honour which God had vouchsafed them, in appointing them to the service of the sanctuary; and with seeking the priesthood also. By this it appears, that while Korah charged Aaron and his sons with exercising an usurped authority; he really meant, by the assistance of the Levites and people, to exclude them and to seize upon the honour and emolument of their sacred office for himself and his family! and that whilst they all pretended to rise up against Aaron, they were in fact gathering together in rebellion against the Lord!

12 And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab; <sup>a</sup> which said, We will not come up.

13 *Is it* <sup>a</sup> a small thing that thou hast brought us up <sup>7</sup> out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, <sup>a</sup> to kill us in the wilderness, except <sup>a</sup> thou make thyself altogether a prince over us?

14 Moreover, <sup>b</sup> thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards: wilt thou <sup>a</sup> put out the eyes of these men? we will not come up.

15 And Moses was <sup>a</sup> very wroth, and said unto the Lord, <sup>a</sup> Respect not thou their offering: <sup>a</sup> I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them.

16 And Moses said unto Korah, <sup>a</sup> Be thou and all thy company <sup>a</sup> before the LORD, thou and they, and Aaron to-morrow:

17 And take every man his censer,

and put incense in them, and bring ye before the LORD every man his censer, two hundred and fifty censers; thou also, and Aaron, each *of you* his censer.

18 And they took every man his censer, and put fire in them, and laid incense thereon, and stood in the door of the tabernacle of the congregation with Moses and Aaron.

19 And <sup>b</sup> Korah gathered all the congregation against them unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and <sup>1</sup> the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the congregation.

20 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying,

21 <sup>a</sup> Separate yourselves from among this congregation, <sup>1</sup> that I may consume them in a moment.

22 And <sup>a</sup> they fell upon their faces, and said, O God, <sup>a</sup> the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall <sup>a</sup> one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?

V. 12—14. Moses, as the ruler whom God had placed over Israel, summoned Dathan and Abiram to appear before him, to inform him of the cause of this insurrection: but they, doubtless aspiring to the government, would not own his authority, and insolently refused to appear before him. They likewise absurdly and basely spake of Egypt, where they had groaned in abject servitude, in the very language which the Lord had used concerning the land of promise! and sarcastically accused Moses of deceiving them with vain expectations of a valuable inheritance, which they were never likely to see; and of usurping dominion over the nation. They charged him likewise with attempting to impose on the people, with pretences of acting by divine authority and for their advantage, while he was sacrificing all their interests to the establishment of a usurped authority; as if he had attempted to put out their eyes, that he might lead them when blind wherever he chose.—The cloke of religion did not so well serve the purposes of those, who aspired to the civil government; and therefore they never mentioned the Lord at all; but ascribed all to Moses, as if they had never witnessed any miracles, or divine interpositions!

V. 15. *Respect not, &c.*] That is, the offering of incense by Korah and his company, who were confederates with Dathan and Abiram. Much more seems to have been meant, than was expressed. Moses prayed, that some evident effect of divine wrath might vindicate his injured character, and confirm his authority in Israel. He was indeed their ruler, under God; but, so far from oppressing them, he had not imposed the smallest tax on them, nor taken, even as a present, so much as an ass from one of them. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, 1 Sam. xii. 2—7.*)

V. 16—18. The former challenge was now again re-

peated: but Aaron and Korah were directed to appear together on this occasion, as the competitors for the priesthood, between whom the Lord was about to decide. It is certain that the company met in the court of the tabernacle, and not in the sanctuary; and that Aaron in this critical emergency was required to burn incense in the court, though it was not exactly regular (46): for the sanctuary could not have contained so large a company, without great inconvenience; and the people would not, in that case, have witnessed the event, as they evidently did.

V. 19. While the Levites, and others of their party, presumptuously burnt incense; Korah, instead of directly joining the company according to the requirement of Moses, seems to have been employed, with vast success, in stirring up the whole congregation to rebellion. By these means he gathered them together to witness the event of the contest: and probably he intended to seize the disputed prize, perhaps with the slaughter of all who attempted opposition, had not the terrific appearance of the divine glory overawed and intimidated him and his party.

V. 22. *The God of the spirits of all flesh.*] Man is a spirit embodied in flesh, the creature and subject of God. This relation of God to the spirits of mortal men seems to be here pleaded, as a reason why he should not indiscriminately punish the whole congregation: for he was acquainted with the inmost spirits of men, and could not be imposed upon; but could distinguish both the innocent from the guilty, and the tempters from the tempted: and Moses and Aaron seem charitably to have hoped, that Korah alone had sinned presumptuously; and that the rest had been misled, and had sinned ignorantly.

23 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

24 Speak unto the congregation, saying, 'Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

25 And Moses rose up, and went unto Dathan and Abiram: and <sup>a</sup> the elders of Israel followed him.

26 And he spake unto the congregation, saying, 'Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.

27 So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side: and Dathan and Abiram came out, and <sup>a</sup> stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children.

28 And Moses said, 'Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for *I have not done them* <sup>a</sup> of mine own mind.

29 If these men die <sup>a</sup> the common death of all men, or if they be <sup>a</sup> visited after the visitation of all men; *then* <sup>a</sup> the LORD hath not sent me:

30 But if the LORD <sup>a</sup> make <sup>a</sup> a new thing, and the earth open her mouth,

and swallow them up, with all that *appertain* unto them, and <sup>a</sup> they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD.

31 And it came to pass as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that <sup>b</sup> the ground clave asunder, that *was* under them:

32 And <sup>a</sup> the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and <sup>a</sup> all the men that *appertained* unto Korah, and all *their* goods.

33 They, and all that *appertained* to them, went down alive <sup>a</sup> into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and <sup>a</sup> they perished from among the congregation.

34 And all Israel that *were* round about them <sup>a</sup> fled at the cry of them: for they said, <sup>b</sup> Lest the earth swallow us up *also*.

35 And there <sup>a</sup> came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the <sup>b</sup> two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.

36 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

37 Speak unto Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, that he take up <sup>a</sup> the

V. 24. By this command the Lord admitted the plea of Moses and Aaron; and they who testified their repentance, by separating from the ringleaders of the rebellion, were exempted from *their* punishment. Thus the congregation escaped, though many rebels perished in their presumption.

V. 26. The rebels with all that belonged to them were, as *an accursed thing*, devoted to utter destruction. (Notes, Lev. xxvii. 28, 29. Josh. vii. 13—15. 23—26.) The people therefore were forbidden to touch any thing belonging to them; that they might enter a solemn protest against their wickedness, acknowledge the justice of their punishment, and express their fear of being involved in it.

V. 27. Though the insurgents were of different tribes, they had quitted their proper situations in the camp, and pitched their tents close together; or they had formed one large tent, as the rendezvous of the whole party (24). Yet Dathan and Abiram at this time were in their own tents; and, in the height of impiety and insolence, appeared with all their families at the doors, as setting Moses the servant of the Lord at defiance.

V. 28—34. The solemn and express appeal to God, and the prediction given by Moses, combined with the awful event incontestably to demonstrate, that he acted by divine authority in all those things, respecting which he was accused of assuming too much.—It is probable, that Korah was swallowed up with Dathan and Abiram, and

their families; though some think that he perished by fire. Such of his household as remained in the tent, perished; but his sons survived: hence it may be concluded, that they separated themselves from the transgressors. (Notes, xxvi. 10, 11.)—The criminals, when they saw their doom inevitable, cried out so lamentably, that the Israelites who were at a distance were alarmed lest the same judgment should overtake them also.—The word translated the *pit*, is often rendered *hell*: but, as the little children, and the property also, went down into this pit; we must allow, that the word means the *grave*, or an *unseen state*, whether of body or soul. (Note, Ps. xvi. 10.)

*Make a new thing.* (30) Marg.—Note, Jer. xxxi. 21, 22.

V. 35. These two hundred and fifty persons seem to have been not only slain by the fire, but also entirely consumed; being themselves made awful sacrifices to the justice of God, whose priesthood and sacrifices they had despised. For no mention is made of the burial of their bodies, as in the case of Nadab and Abihu.—Aaron may be supposed to have stood close by the persons thus consumed, as by most tremendous lightning; and not only to have escaped unhurt, but to have been exempt from terror, confidently expecting the decision of JEHOVAH in his favour.—Moses was at some distance, as it appears, with the other company: for, probably, the two awful judgments took place at the same time.

V. 37—40. These censers, having been once presented

censers out of the burning, and scatter thou the fire yonder; for they are <sup>a</sup> hallowed.

<sup>m</sup> See on Lev xxvii. 28.

<sup>a</sup> 1 Kings ii. 23.  
Prov. i. 18. xx.  
2 Hab. ii. 10.

38 The censers of these <sup>a</sup> sinners against their own souls, let them make them broad plates *for* a covering of the altar; for they offered them before the LORD, therefore they are hallowed: and they shall be <sup>a</sup> a sign unto the children of Israel.

<sup>o</sup> 46. xvii. 1c. xxvi.  
10 Ez. xiv. 8.  
1 Cor. x. 11.  
2 Pet. ii. 6.

39 And Eleazar the priest took the brazen censers, wherewith they that were burnt had offered; and they were made broad *plates for* a covering of the altar:

40 *To be* a memorial unto the children of Israel, <sup>a</sup> that no stranger which is not of the seed of Aaron, <sup>a</sup> come near to offer incense before the LORD, that he be not as Korah and as his company; as the LORD said to him by the hand of Moses.

<sup>p</sup> iii. 38. xviii. 4-7.  
Lev. xxii. 10.  
2 Chr. xxvi. 18-20.  
Jude 11.  
1 Kings xlii. 1-3.  
2 Chr. xxxvi. 16-21.

41 ¶ But on the morrow <sup>a</sup> all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses, and against Aaron, saying, 'Ye have killed the people of the LORD.

<sup>e</sup> See on 1-7.—  
xiv. 2. Ps. cv.  
18. 23. Is. xxvi. 11.

<sup>e</sup> 3. 2 Sam. xvi. 7.  
8. 1 Kings xvii. 17.  
Jer. xxxvii. 13, 14.  
xxviii. 4.  
xliii. 8. Am. vii. 10.  
Matt. v. 11.  
Acts v. 28.  
xxi. 28. 2 Cor. vi. 8.  
19.

42 And it came to pass, 'when the congregation was gathered against Moses, and against Aaron, that they looked toward the tabernacle of the congregation: and, behold, the cloud covered it, and <sup>a</sup> the glory of the LORD appeared.

<sup>u</sup> 19. xiv. 10. xx. 6.  
Ex. xvi. 7. 10.  
xxiv. 16. xl. 34.  
38. Lev. ix. 23.

43 And Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of the congregation.

44 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

45 <sup>a</sup> Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment. <sup>a</sup> And they fell upon their faces.

<sup>x</sup> See on 21. 26.

<sup>22</sup> xx. 6. 1 Chr. xxi. 16. Matt. xxvi. 38.

46 And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein <sup>a</sup> from off the altar, <sup>a</sup> and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make <sup>a</sup> an atonement for them: for <sup>a</sup> there is wrath gone out from the LORD; the plague is begun.

<sup>z</sup> Lev. ix. 24. x. 1. xvi. 12, 13. Is. vi. 6, 7. Rom. v. 9, 10. Heb. vii. 26-27. ix. 26. Rev. viii. 3-5.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. cxli. 2. Mal. i. 11.

<sup>b</sup> Ex. xxx. 7-10. Lev. xvi. 11-16.

<sup>c</sup> 1 John ii. 1, 2. 1. 58. viii. 19. xl. 83. xviii. 5. 1 Chr. xxxvii. 24. Ps. cvl. 29.

<sup>d</sup> Matt. v. 44. Rom. xii. 21.

<sup>e</sup> See on a. 46. Deut. xxxiii. 10. 11. Is. liii. 10-12.

47 And Aaron took <sup>a</sup> as Moses commanded, <sup>a</sup> and ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people: <sup>a</sup> and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people.

48 And <sup>a</sup> he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed.

<sup>f</sup> 18. 25. xxv. 8-11. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16, 17. 25. 1 Chr. xxi. 26. 1 Thes. i. 10. 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6. Jam. v. 16. 1 John v. 14.

49 Now they that died in the plague were <sup>a</sup> fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died about the matter of Korah.

<sup>g</sup> 32-35. xxv. 9. 1 Chr. xxi. 14. Heb. ii. 1-3. x. 28, 29. xii. 25.

50 And Aaron <sup>a</sup> returned unto Moses, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: and the plague was stayed.

<sup>h</sup> 43. 1 Chr. xxi. 26-30.

to God, and used in burning incense, though in an uncommanded manner, must never more be employed about ordinary purposes: but, to impress the greater veneration for that typical institution, they were consecrated to the LORD, and used in such a manner, as to remain a constant and useful memorial to the people who brought the sacrifices, and to the Levites who assisted in offering.—It was an awful employment for Eleazar to gather them from amidst the dreadful conflagration; and must have reminded him of the somewhat similar fate of his brethren. (*Notes*, Lev. x. 1-3.)—Eleazar was appointed to this service, in order perhaps to mark him out as successor to the high priesthood. Aaron was fully employed, and some think he might have contracted defilement; but no mention is at all made of the dead bodies, which seem to have been entirely consumed, leaving not the least remains.—The fire in the censers, as unhallowed, was thrown aside, probably among the ashes.—It was the intent of the rebels to injure Moses and Aaron; but, in effect, they brought destruction upon themselves both in body and soul, even as if they had expressly designed it.

V. 41-43. While the congregation, with one voice, most absurdly imputed the opening of the earth, and the

consuming fire, to Moses and Aaron, as if they had caused them; they impiously called the persons, thus perishing in their rebellion, "the people of the LORD!" Nothing can possibly be imagined more perverse and provoking than such a conduct.—It is likely, that the cloud had disappeared for a while, during the dreadful scenes which had been exhibited: but now, when the whole congregation was gathered against Moses and Aaron, as about to proceed to further violence, it re-appeared, and the glory of the LORD was seen in it.—Moses and Aaron seem to have gone to the tabernacle for security, and to intercede for the people.

V. 45-50. Notwithstanding the intercession of Moses and Aaron, while prostrated before the tabernacle, the LORD proceeded to execute vengeance on the rebellious Israelites, in so awful a manner as evidently to shew them, that he could have consumed the whole multitude in a moment. It is probable, that when great numbers were dying, (perhaps the most daring of the insurgents,) by a sudden stroke from an invisible hand; and still more and more were seized with death, even by hundreds and thousands at once; the outcries of the sufferers, and their neighbours, made Moses acquainted with the dire calamity;

## CHAP. XVII.

The Lord commands twelve rods, one from each tribe, with the name written on it, to be laid up before the ark, 1—5. Aaron's rod alone buds, blossoms, and bears almonds, 6—9. It is laid up for a memorial,

and he, most cordially attached to the cause of his ungrateful brethren, immediately proposed to Aaron, without the loss of a moment, to take fire from the altar of burnt-offering, and to put on incense, and to go and burn it in the very midst of the dying Israelites; that thus the honour of the Lord's own institutions might be engaged in the cause. The faith, courage, and love to the people, which Aaron also manifested in *running*, at his advanced age, without regard to consequences, into the midst of an enraged multitude and a devouring pestilence, were very illustrious: and the success was a decisive proof of the acceptableness and efficacy of his priesthood, and consequently of its divine appointment. Whilst they who presumed to burn incense, were themselves consumed; by his burning of incense, the plague, which was so rapidly wasting the congregation, was instantly stayed! In this he was an eminent type of Christ, of his priesthood, and his intercession, by which his atonement is rendered effectual to our salvation. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Ps. xcix. 6.*) Aaron did not return to Moses, till the plague had entirely ceased.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

## V. 1—19.

On reading this chapter we may well enquire, for what purpose these events were thus particularly recorded. In order to derive instruction from them, we should remember that the house of Israel was "planted a noble vine, wholly a right seed;" nor can we reasonably suppose that they were of a more perverse and wicked disposition than other people. But we have in their history an unflattering picture of human nature, a thorough dissection of the human heart. Were any other number of men circumstanced, proved, and left to themselves, as they were; and were their history written with as complete information and as impartial a pen, they would appear at least as black as Israel. The secret history of every individual who lives and dies in sin, especially from under the means of grace, when made known at the day of judgment, will be found a similar compound of infidelity, ingratitude, rebellion, and absurdity; yea, the true believer sees in his former conduct, and feels in his daily experience, that his heart is of the same kind as that of Israel. This trial was therefore made of human nature, in order to expose the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the human heart; that we might, as in a glass, see the reflection of our own character; be led to examine and watch our own thoughts, desires, and motives; to judge and condemn ourselves; to become sensible of our need of pardoning mercy, and sanctifying grace; and so learn to seek them heartily and earnestly. Instead therefore of expressing our surprise and indignation at these ancient rebels, let us look to ourselves; and we shall soon become sensible that "the spirit, that is in us, lusteth to envy," pride, ambition, and covetousness. These restless passions are continually called forth into exercise: and whatever advantages men enjoy, by their rank in life, or station in the church of God;

10, 11. The people are affrighted, and despond, 12, 13.

AND the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

though wealthy, "famous in the congregation, and men of renown;" so long as God withholds any imagined blessing, or advances any one above them, they experience those insatiable cravings, which are only increased by indulgence.—Except these lusts are subdued by the grace of God, suitable occasions and temptations would induce any man on earth to despise the dominion which God hath placed over him; to treat every exercise of authority as usurpation and oppression; to aspire at a lawless independence, or to seize upon the authority for himself and his party; and to account all inferior favours and mercies but a small thing. Nor can any wisdom, equity, or excellence in superiors or competitors, abate envy and enmity; or stop the mouths of those from slanderous accusations, who are under the power of these hateful passions. This ungrateful and injurious conduct towards man, is often accompanied with infidel daring rebellion against God; which no evidences, no judgments, no warnings, no mercies can repress: or if they give its malignity a temporary check, it afterwards breaks out the more desperately. And if it should appear better to suit the purpose, he is capable of cloaking his ambition and selfishness under a pretence to godliness, and a hypocritical profession of being the Lord's holy people.—Such is human nature! Such are our hearts! yea, worse than this, even "desperately wicked; who can know them?" Such they would appear to be, if fully proved: such they have in a measure appeared already, when put to the trial. And, comparing the Lord's kindness to us with our conduct towards him, during our past lives, we may each of us exclaim, "It is of his mercies that we are not consumed," as Korah and his company were!—One dreadful effect of this depravity is the daring presumption, with which numbers intrude into the sacred ministry, from the base motives of covetousness and ambition, and love of ease or indulgence, without any suitable dispositions, without any delight in the work or love for it, any zeal for the honour of God, or any deep compassion for the souls of perishing sinners. Yet will such men dare to say, in the most solemn manner before God and his congregation, "that they judge themselves moved by the Holy Ghost to take this office upon them;" though they are not only conscious of hypocrisy in this declaration, but deride the very enquiry as enthusiasm! Of such conduct the Author himself was guilty, and to the end of his days would be abased before God on account of it; and admire and adore the patience and loving kindness of the Lord, that, instead of being visited after the manner of Korah, it hath pleased God to give him repentance and forgiveness; and to employ him in the work of the ministry, with some small degree of usefulness: "for where sin hath abounded, grace hath much more abounded." And he mentions this humiliating subject, not only that the pious reader may bless God in his behalf; but that he may hope and pray earnestly and constantly for others, who lie under the same guilt, that they may experience the same grace. For our God "hath mercy on whom he will have mercy."

2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod, according to the house of *their* fathers, of <sup>a</sup> all their princes, according to the house of their fathers, twelve <sup>b</sup> rods: write thou every man's name upon his rod.

3 And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi: for one rod *shall be* for <sup>c</sup> the head of the house of their fathers.

4 And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the congregation, <sup>d</sup> before the testimony, where I will meet with you.

5 And it shall come to pass, *that* the

man's rod <sup>e</sup> whom I shall choose, shall blossom: and <sup>f</sup> I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby <sup>g</sup> they murmur against you.

6 ¶ And Moses spake unto the children of Israel; and every one of their princes gave him <sup>h</sup> a rod apiece, for each prince one, according to their fathers' houses, *even* twelve rods: and the rod of Aaron *was* among their rods.

7 And Moses laid up the rods before the LORD, in <sup>i</sup> the tabernacle of witness.

8 And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness: and, behold, the rod of

#### V. 20—50.

The Lord will, first or last, manifest "who are his," "whom he hath chosen," "and who are holy:" for it is not enough that we have his word in our hand, or his name in our mouth, unless we really believe his truth, and keep his commandments: "nor will doing the service of the "sanctuary," and "standing before his congregation," though with acceptance from man, and usefulness also, prevent the doom of the hypocritical and rebellious; nay, rather they will aggravate it. And woe be to them, who refuse to judge or condemn themselves, till the Judge detects and condemns their iniquity!—He is "the God of "the spirits of all flesh;" all creatures obey him; and frequently in this world he makes examples of the wicked, to deter others from sin. But if in his long-suffering he spare them here, and they still persist in rebellion, relapsing again and again, after solemn warning, and with still greater aggravations, as numbers do; their doom will be the more dreadful at last: and they will indeed be cast alive into the bottomless pit, and the fire of hell will continually torment, but never consume them. (*Note, Heb. ii. 1—4.*)—Let sinners then take warning from such awful judgments, lest they too be swallowed up: let them separate from the wicked, and have no fellowship with their unfruitful works, but rather reprove and protest against them, if they would not be associated with them in punishment. But the Lord knows how to distinguish between the deluded and the presumptuous, the penitent and the impenitent; and to glorify his mercy towards the one, while he magnifies his justice upon the other, and records their doom for a useful lesson to succeeding generations.—Let us, however, turn from such awful objects, to contemplate, admire, and imitate the effects of divine grace in the conduct of Moses and Aaron, in their patience, fortitude, meekness, forgiveness of injuries, and unwearied labours and prayers for the welfare of their ungrateful enemies. May we have the same testimony of our conscience to our integrity and benevolence, whenever we are falsely accused: may we be thus angry without sinning, and thus able to "bless them that curse us;" "not "being overcome with evil, but overcoming evil with good." Then will the Lord protect, vindicate, and honour us in due time, in the presence of our opposers, and we shall be

blessed ourselves and blessings to others.—But we may in all this look unto Jesus, dying for us, when enemies; praying for his crucifiers; hastening between the dead and the living, with the incense of his meritorious intercession, to stay the plague which sin had occasioned, and by which multitudes have perished, and by which we all must otherwise have been eternally ruined. Through him we are spared and live: may "his love constrain us to live no longer to "ourselves, but to him who died for us, and rose again."

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 2—5. The rebellious spirit excited by Korah and his company was so violent, and had spread so widely through all the tribes, that even the awful judgments recorded in the foregoing chapter did not effectually repress it. It therefore pleased the Lord, to bring the point in contest to decision, by a miracle, significant in itself, and harmless in its effects. He had before expressly named the princes of the several tribes, without exact regard to primogeniture: (*Note, i. 5—16:*) and he had appointed Aaron to the priesthood, and also to be prince or representative of the tribe of Levi. (*Note, iii. 5—10.*) To confirm his authority, to establish the priesthood in his family, and finally to silence all other claims, and all murmurs on this account, were the express ends proposed on this occasion. (*Notes, xvi. 1—7.*)—The rods seem to have been sceptres, or badges of authority, used by the princes: but some think they were all cut out of the same almond-tree on this occasion.—The writing was doubtless formed in such a manner, as to render them certainly distinguishable: and the Lord expressly foretold, that one of them, and but one, should blossom, to determine the tribe and priesthood which he had chosen.

V. 6—11. Moses, who had access at all times into the most holy place, left the rods before the ark all night; and in the morning that of Aaron was covered with buds, and blossoms, and ripe almonds; but those of the other princes, (though probably they were all made of the wood of the almond-tree,) were unchanged. Thus, beyond all dispute, the Lord shewed his choice of the tribe of Levi, and of Aaron as his priest.—Accordingly, the rod of Aaron was laid up "for a token against the rebels," and probably continued in that very state to future ages; (*Heb. ix. 4;*)

<sup>1</sup> Aaron, for the house of Levi, was <sup>1</sup> bud-  
ded, and brought forth buds, and  
bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds.

9 And Moses brought out all the  
rods from before the LORD unto all the  
children of Israel: and they looked,  
and took every man his rod.

10 And the LORD said unto Moses,

<sup>1</sup> Bring Aaron's rod again before the  
testimony, to be kept <sup>1</sup> for a token  
against the <sup>1</sup> rebels; and thou shalt  
quite take away their murmurings from  
me, that they die not.

11 And Moses did so: as the LORD  
commanded him, so did he.

12 And the children of Israel spake  
unto Moses, saying, <sup>1</sup> Behold, we die,  
we perish, we all perish.

and no mention is made in the whole history of Israel of  
any further murmurs on this account. 'This was a fit  
'emblem of the Messiah's resurrection, as declarative...  
'of his priesthood's being acceptable to God; nothing  
'being more fit to represent one raised from the dead, than  
'a dead branch...restored to vegetable life, and made to  
'bud, and blossom, and bring forth fruit.' *Maclaurin*.

V. 12, 13. The language of these verses is exceedingly  
descriptive of a forced submission, attended with terror and  
despondency, and an inward revolting against an appoint-  
ment which they dared no longer oppose. And it signifi-  
cantly expresses the state of mind and heart of the  
people, and the greatness of the ferment which prevailed  
among them. In the preceding events, they "despised the  
"chastening of the LORD;" and now "they fainted when  
"rebuked by him." (*Note, Heb. xii. 4—8.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Though "the LORD hath no pleasure in the death of the  
"wicked;" yet such is his holiness and justice, that con-  
tinuance in sin is inseparable from ruin: he therefore gra-  
ciously removes the occasions of offending, that men may  
be preserved from condemnation. He gives all proper  
satisfaction to those who are disposed to be convinced, and  
manifests the equity of his determinations to every impartial  
and humble enquirer: but, as we have no claim to his  
favours, "he does what he willeth with his own," and  
deigns not to assign his reasons for making one man to  
differ from another.—Our Lord Jesus was unanswerably  
demonstrated to be the "great High Priest over the house  
"of God," by his resurrection from the dead, and when  
"the rod of his strength went forth out of Zion, and mul-  
"titudes were made willing in the day of his power, in  
"the beauties of holiness;" and when, through him,  
"Israel shall blossom, and bud, and fill the face of the  
"world with fruit," it will appear still more illustriously  
divine. (*Notes, Ps. cx. 3. Is. xxvi. 19. xxvii. 2—6.*) Nor  
shall those ministers, whom he chooses, remain as dry rods  
before him and his church: but, more or less, sooner or  
later, they shall "bud, and blossom, and bear fruit;" both  
that of holiness in their lives, and that of usefulness in

13 <sup>a</sup> Whosoever cometh <sup>a</sup> any thing  
near unto the tabernacle of the LORD  
shall die: shall we be <sup>b</sup> consumed with  
dying?

#### CHAP. XVIII.

The charge of the priests and Levites, 1—7. The  
portion of the priests, 8—20. The tithes assigned to  
the Levites, and the tithe of that tithe to the priests,  
21—32.

AND the LORD said unto Aaron,  
"Thou and thy sons, and thy father's  
house with thee, shall <sup>b</sup> bear the ini-  
quity of the sanctuary: and thou and  
thy sons with thee shall bear the ini-  
quity of your priesthood.

2 And thy brethren also of the tribe  
of Levi, the tribe of thy father, bring

their ministry. And when they are opposed and perse-  
cuted, they may hope with increasing confidence for more  
signal success; in order that their adversaries may be  
silenced, the faith of the Lord's people established, and  
their own hearts encouraged in their work of faith and  
labour of love.—And whether this usefulness be more im-  
mediate, or be longer waited and prayed for, it will be  
"fruit which shall remain" before the Lord, to his ever-  
lasting glory, and their eternal recompence; and in the  
church for the good of many, after they have finished their  
course. (*Notes, John xv. 12—16. v. 16.*)—But alas!  
when man's presumption is checked, and his self-suffi-  
ciency is abated, he naturally verges to the opposite ex-  
treme: and, in unbelieving despondency arising from hard  
and injurious thoughts of God, neglects divine ordinances,  
lest he should be guilty of profaning them: buries his  
talent in the earth, lest he should be condemned for wast-  
ing it; and often justifies himself in both, because he  
cannot merit heaven by his good works!—The Lord give  
us grace to avoid all the extremes, into which an evil heart  
and a subtle enemy combine to betray us!

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1. Aaron and his family were now  
confirmed in the priesthood, against all competitors; and  
the people were exceedingly terrified lest the tabernacle  
should occasion their destruction: but, to counterbalance  
the honour conferred on the former, and to allay the ter-  
rors and abate the envy of the latter, it was declared that  
the priests must bear the blame of every thing, which was  
not properly conducted, in respect of the tabernacle and its  
service; and that the people had in this respect nothing to  
fear, except a presumptuous intrusion into the places and  
services, from which they were by the law excluded. But  
the priests must be very circumspect, active, and exem-  
plary, both in their ministrations and conversation, else  
they would soon be laden with guilt, which their sacrifices  
could not expiate.

V. 2—6. *Levi* signifies *joined*, (*Gen. xxix. 34*;) and  
the name seems alluded to in this appointment. The  
Levites, though brethren to the priests, were given to

c 4 Gen. xxi. 34. thou with thee, that they may be <sup>e</sup>joined unto thee, and <sup>d</sup>minister unto thee: <sup>e</sup>but thou and thy sons with thee *shall minister* before the tabernacle of witness.

3 And they shall keep thy charge, and the charge of all the tabernacle: <sup>f</sup>only they shall not come nigh the vessels of the sanctuary and the altar, that <sup>g</sup>neither they, nor ye also, die.

4 And they shall be joined unto thee, and keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, for all the service of the tabernacle: and <sup>h</sup>a stranger shall not come nigh unto you.

5 And <sup>i</sup>ye shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar; that there be <sup>k</sup>\*no wrath any more upon the children of Israel.

6 And <sup>l</sup>I, behold, <sup>m</sup>I have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel; to you *they are* <sup>n</sup>given as a gift for the LORD, to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.

7 Therefore thou and thy sons with thee, shall keep your priest's office for every thing of the altar, and <sup>o</sup>within the veil; and ye shall serve: I have given your priest's office *unto you* <sup>p</sup>as a service of gift: and <sup>q</sup>the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death.

8 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Behold, I also have given thee <sup>r</sup>the charge of mine heave-offerings, of all the hallowed things of the children of Israel; unto thee have I given them, <sup>s</sup>by reason of the anointing, and to thy sons, by an ordinance for ever.

9 This shall be thine of the most holy things *reserved* from the fire: every oblation of their's, <sup>t</sup>every meat-offering of their's, and <sup>u</sup>every sin-offer-

ing of their's, and <sup>x</sup>every trespass-offering of their's, which they shall render unto me *shall be* most holy for thee, and for thy sons.

10 In <sup>y</sup>the most holy *place* shalt thou eat it: <sup>z</sup>every male shall eat it: it shall be holy unto thee.

11 And this *is* thine; <sup>a</sup>the heave-offering of their gift, with all the wave-offerings of the children of Israel: I have given them <sup>b</sup>unto thee, and to thy sons, and to thy daughters with thee, by a statute for ever: <sup>c</sup>every one that is clean in thy house shall eat of it.

12 All the <sup>d</sup>\*best of the oil, and all <sup>e</sup>\*the best of the wine, and of the wheat; <sup>f</sup>the first-fruits of them which they shall offer unto the LORD, them have I given thee.

13 And <sup>g</sup>\*whatsoever is first ripe in the land, which they shall bring unto the LORD, shall be thine: every one that is clean in thine house shall eat of it.

14 Every thing <sup>h</sup>'devoted in Israel shall be thine.

15 Every thing that <sup>i</sup>'openeth the matrix, in all flesh which they bring unto the LORD, *whether it be* of men or beasts, shall be thine: nevertheless, <sup>j</sup>the firstborn of man shalt thou surely redeem, and the firstling of unclean beasts shalt thou redeem.

16 And those that are to be redeemed from a month old shalt thou redeem, <sup>k</sup>'according to thine estimation, for the money of five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, <sup>l</sup>which *is* twenty gerahs.

17 But <sup>m</sup>'the firstling of a cow, or the firstling of a sheep, or the firstling of a goat, thou shalt not redeem, they

them as servants; and the menial and most laborious parts of the service, in the court of the tabernacle, were allotted them: but the priests alone might minister within the sanctuary, and sprinkle the blood, and order the sacrifices at the altar of burnt-offering. Nay, the Levites must not look upon the sacred vessels which they carried, till they were covered. (Notes, iv. 5—18.) The ordinary priests performed the other services; and the high priest once every year entered within the veil.

V. 7. *A service of gift.* The priests were thus taught to account their work and charge to be a special gift and favour from God, and not to consider them as a disagree-

able appendage to the distinction and emolument of their office. (Marg. Ref. p.)

V. 10. "The most holy place" here signifies the precincts of the tabernacle, which were *most holy*, compared with the houses or tents of the priests.—It was very proper, on this occasion, to renew the grants before made to the priests; and which have already been considered. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Lev. vi. 14—18. vii. 1—10.)

V. 11—14. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Lev. ii. 1—14. vii. 29—34. xxiii. 15—21.

V. 15—18. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xiii. 11—16. Lev. xxvii.

<sup>m</sup> See on Lev. iii. 2-5. *are* holy: <sup>m</sup> thou shalt sprinkle their blood upon the altar, and shalt burn their fat *for* an offering made by fire, for a sweet savour unto the LORD.

<sup>a</sup> Ex. xxix. 26-34. Lev. vii. 31-34. 18 And the flesh of them shall be thine, <sup>a</sup> as the wave-breast and as the right shoulder are thine.

<sup>o</sup> 8. xv. 19-21. xxxi. 29. 41. Lev. vii. 14. Deut. xii. 8. 2 Chr. xxxi. 4-10. 19 All <sup>o</sup> the heave-offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer unto the LORD, have I given thee, and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, by a statute for ever: it is <sup>p</sup> a covenant of salt for ever before the LORD unto thee, and to thy seed with thee.

<sup>q</sup> 23, 24. xxvi. 62. Deut. x. 9. xii. 12. xiv. 27. 29. Josh. xiv. 3. 20 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I <sup>r</sup> am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel.

<sup>r</sup> Deut. xviii. 1. 2. Josh. xiii. 14. 38. xviii. 7. Ps. xvi. 5. lxxiii. 26. cclii. 5. Lam. iii. 24. Ez. xiv. 28. 1 Cor. iii. 21-23. Rev. xxi. 3. 21-26. Lev. xxvii. 30-32. Deut. xii. 17-19. xiv. 22-29. 2 Chr. xxxi. 5, 6. 12. Neh. x. 37-39. xii. 44. xiii. 12. Heb. vii. 5-9. 21 And behold, I have given the children of Levi all <sup>s</sup> the tenth in Israel, for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, <sup>s</sup> even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation.

<sup>t</sup> 6. iii. 7, 8. 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14. Gal. vi. 6. 22 Neither must the children of Israel henceforth <sup>t</sup> come nigh the tabernacle of the congregation, lest they <sup>x</sup> bear sin <sup>u</sup> and die.

<sup>y</sup> See on iii. 7. 23 But the Levites shall <sup>y</sup> do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they shall bear their iniquity. *It shall be* a statute for ever throughout your generations; that <sup>z</sup> among the children of Israel they <sup>z</sup> have no inheritance. <sup>z</sup> See on 20.

<sup>a</sup> Mal. iii. 8-10. 24 But <sup>a</sup> the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer *as* an heave-offering unto the LORD, I have given to the Levites to inherit; therefore I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance.

25 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

26 Thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, When ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, <sup>b</sup> then ye shall offer up an heave-offering of it for the LORD; *even* <sup>b</sup> a tenth *part* of the tithe. <sup>b</sup> See on 19. <sup>c</sup> Neh. x. 38.

27 And *this* your heave-offering shall be reckoned unto you <sup>d</sup> as though *it* were <sup>d</sup> the corn of the threshing-floor, and as the fulness of the wine-press. <sup>d</sup> Lev. vi. 19-23. <sup>e</sup> 30. xv. 20. Deut. xv. 14. 2 Kings vi. 27. Hos. ix. 1, 2.

28 Thus ye also shall offer an heave-offering unto the LORD, of all your tithes which ye receive of the children

V. 19. *A covenant of salt.*] Note, Lev. ii. 13.—The Lord established it, as a perpetual and stable covenant with the family of Aaron, and an unalterable statute to Israel, all the time they possessed Canaan, that the priests should have these perquisites for themselves and their families; by reason of their *anointing* to the sacred office.

V. 20. *No inheritance, &c.*] The priests and Levites possessed houses and lands, for gardens and pasturage in the suburbs of their cities; and they might purchase estates to the year of jubilee: but they had no portion allotted them in the division of the land of Canaan; for it was the will of God, that they should be maintained by that portion, which he reserved to himself as a rent out of the estates of the other Israelites. Thus they were exempted from many avocations and snares, which the cultivation and improvement of lands would have occasioned; and were plentifully supplied with every thing needful and comfortable. At the same time, their interests were placed in an inseparable connexion with the maintenance of the worship of God: for if the people became generally irreligious or idolatrous, they would neither bring sacrifices nor pay tithes. And indeed the nature of man, and the entail of the priesthood and sacred ministry upon one family and tribe, would render it proper to employ every tie and motive, to engage them to support the worship of God to the utmost of their ability.

V. 21. The Lord, by this statute, gave the Levites a

clear tenth of the whole *increase* of the land; that is, of the labour and improvements, as well as of the estates, of all the other tribes. This was a large proportion for by far the smallest tribe; and, when joined to all the rest assigned them, was an abundant provision. But the other tribes would have also the advantages accruing from trade and manufactures, in which the Levites were not allowed to be occupied.—This tenth seems to have been the common stock of the tribe, and divided among them accordingly: and this would obviate that common bad effect of tithes; namely, the contentions which arise about them, between ministers and the people of their peculiar charge: as the tithes were not paid to an *individual*, but to a *collective* body; or rather they were presented as an oblation to God, who was pleased to give them to the Levites (24).

V. 25—32. The foregoing regulations were delivered to Aaron, and by him to the people: but this law, immediately relating to the interests of him and his family, was given by Moses.—The Levites, receiving tithes of the people, gave a tithe of them to the priests; and some have conjectured that the tenth of this tithe was allotted for the high priest's support, according to the pre-eminence to which he was advanced. This tithe of the tithes was the oblation of the Levites to the Lord, and as acceptable as that which was paid out of the estates of the other Israelites; and when it had been offered of the best, they might use the rest with comfort and a good conscience, as if it

<sup>f</sup> Gen. xiv. 18. of Israel; 'and ye shall give thereof  
<sup>Heb. vi. 20. vii. 1—10.</sup> the LORD's heave-offering to Aaron the priest.

<sup>• Heb. fet.</sup> 29 Out of all your gifts ye shall offer every heave-offering of the LORD, of all the \*best thereof, *even* the hal-  
 lowed part thereof, out of it.

<sup>g 28. Gen. xlii. 11. Deut. vi. 5. Prov. iii. 9, 10. Mal. i. 8. Matt. vi. 33. x. 37—39. Phil. iii. 8, 9.</sup> 30 Therefore thou shalt say unto them, When ye have heaved 'the best thereof from it, then it shall be counted unto the Levites as the increase of the threshing-floor, and as the increase of the wine-press.

<sup>h Deut. xiv. 22, 23</sup> 31 And ye shall eat it <sup>i</sup>in every place, ye and your households: for it <sup>i</sup>is 'your reward for your service in the tabernacle of the congregation.

<sup>i Matt. x. 10. Luke x. 7. 1 Cor. ix. 10—14. Gal. vi. 6. 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.</sup> 32 And ye shall <sup>k</sup>bear no sin by reason of it, when ye have heaved from

it the best of it: neither shall ye <sup>l</sup>pol-  
<sup>1 Lev. xxi. 2. 15.</sup> lute the holy things of the children of Israel, lest ye die.

## CHAP. XIX.

The water of separation directed to be made with the ashes of a red heifer; and all who prepared these must be cleansed from pollution, 1—10. The cases in which the water was to be used, and how: the soul that neglected it to be cut off; and the person that sprinkled it to be cleansed, 11—22.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses <sup>m xxxi. 21. Heb. ix. 10.</sup>  
 and unto Aaron, saying, <sup>b 6. Lev. xiv. 6. Is. i. 18. Rev. i. 5.</sup>

2 This *is* 'the ordinance of the law which the LORD hath commanded, say-  
<sup>c See on Ex. xii. 5.—Lev. xxii. 20—25. Luke i. 35. Heb. vii. 25. 1 Pet. i. 19 ii. 22.</sup>  
 ing, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee <sup>b</sup>a red heifer without spot, wherein *is* 'no blemish, <sup>d Deut. xxi. 8. 1 Sam. vi. 7. Lam. i. 14. John x. 17, 18. Phil. ii. 6—8.</sup> and <sup>d</sup>upon which never came yoke.

had been the produce of their own lands. But they would *pollute the holy things*, if they used the tithes without separating the portion assigned to the priests.

*The hallowed part.* (29) That part which was most proper to be selected, as *hallowed*, or devoted to God, who requires the best of all things to be employed in his immediate service.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The office of a minister is a good work, and an important charge; and to be employed and trusted in it, to be approved faithful and made useful, is the greatest honour and favour, which God ever confers upon mortal man. But it is weighty and perilous: "the iniquity of the priest-  
 "hood" and "of the sanctuary" forms the most aggravated guilt, and will sink the mercenary, the careless, and the profligate minister into the deepest condemnation; besides occasioning wrath upon the people, and dragging them down with him into destruction. All therefore, who are thus employed, should "rejoice with trembling;" and "take heed to themselves, and to their doctrine;" not "entangling themselves in the affairs of this life;" (*Note, 2 Tim. ii. 3—7;*) but considering the Lord as their Portion, the interests of godliness as their interests, and the glory of God in the salvation of souls, as their grand, their sole object. They who desire this good work should look to it, that their motives, dispositions, and qualifications are such, as may give them a reasonable ground to hope, that they will "be approved of God, as workmen that need not be  
 "ashamed;" and that the maintenance, which they receive, may be indeed "for their service in the sanctuary."  
 —On the other hand it is the Lord's pleasure, "that they  
 "who preach the gospel should live of the gospel," and be preserved from the anxieties and temptations of pinching poverty; that they may have no occasion to engage in secular business, or inducement to flatter the rich, or to be silent out of pecuniary considerations. Nay, it is his will, that they should not only have enough to maintain

their families, and punctually to discharge their debts; but that they should have a surplus for pious and charitable uses, and that they should thus employ it: not luxuriously spending, or covetously hoarding it, but living themselves, and leaving their families to live, in dependence on Providence. It is therefore criminal not only to defraud, but to be niggardly to, the ministers of God: and their maintenance must not be considered as an alms or an imposition, but their just due; as the Lord's portion out of men's estates, which being withheld will pollute the enjoyment of all the rest.—Whatsoever is offered to the Lord must be of the best; and they who have him for their inheritance, will be well provided for, in this world and in the next, without the embarrassments and cares which perplex others.—Let us then endeavour to know and do our own work diligently; to be contented with our daily bread, and thankful for it; to seek our inheritance and our treasure in heaven; to "set our affections on things above;" to have our conversation heavenly; to consider ourselves as "strangers and pilgrims upon earth;" and to leave the eager pursuit of earthly things to those, who know no better treasures to be desired or enjoyed.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 2. Intimations had before been given, concerning the method of purification from ceremonial defilement, which is prescribed in this chapter. (viii. 7.)—The red colour of the heifer being expressly insisted on, must be supposed to have had some meaning. Atrocious guilt is spoken of as *crimson* and *scarlet*; blood is the atonement for sin; and the vengeance executed by the Lord on his enemies, is represented by his garments being red with their blood. (*Is. lxiii. 2.*) Perhaps these things might be alluded to.—Christ never bare the yoke of sin; nor would he have been subject to the yoke of the law, except for our sakes and as our Surety. (*Note, Gal. iv. 4—7.*)

3 And ye shall give her unto Eleazar the priest, that he may bring her forth <sup>e</sup> without the camp, and *one* shall slay her before his face.

<sup>e</sup> v. 2. xv. 36. Lev. iv. 12. 21. xiii. 40, 46. xvi. 27. xxiv. 14. Heb. xiii. 11—13.

4 And Eleazar the priest shall take of her blood with his finger, and <sup>f</sup> sprinkle of her blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times.

<sup>f</sup> Lev. iv. 6. 17. xvi. 14. 19. Heb. ix. 13, 14. xii. 24. 1 Pet. i. 2.

5 And *one* shall burn the heifer in his sight; <sup>g</sup> her skin, and her flesh, and her blood, with her dung, shall he burn.

<sup>g</sup> Ex. xxix. 14. Lev. iv. 11, 12. 21. Ps. xxi. 14. Is. liii. 10. h Lev. xiv. 4. 6. 40. Ps. li. 7. Is. i. 18. Heb. ix. 19—23.

6 And the priest shall take <sup>h</sup> cedar-wood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and cast *it* into the midst of the burning of the heifer.

i 8. 19. Lev. xi. 25. 40. xiv. 8, 9. xv. 5. xvi. 26—28.

7 Then the priest shall <sup>i</sup> wash his clothes, and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp, and the priest shall be unclean until the even.

8 And he that burneth her shall wash his clothes in water, and bathe his flesh in water, and shall be unclean until the even.

9 And a man *that is* <sup>j</sup> clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and <sup>k</sup> lay *them* up without the camp in a <sup>k</sup> clean place; and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel, for <sup>l</sup> a water of separation: it is a purification for sin.

18. ix. 13. 2 Cor. v. 21. Heb. vii. 26. 13. 20, 21. vi. 6. 12. xxxi. 23, 24. Lev. xv. 20. Zech. xiii. 1. 2 Cor. vii. 1.

10 And he that gathereth the ashes of the heifer, shall <sup>m</sup> wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: and <sup>n</sup> it shall be unto the children of Israel, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among them, for a statute for ever.

m See on 7, 8. 19.

n xv. 15, 16. Ex. xii. 49. Rom. iii. 29, 30. Col. iii. 11.

11 ¶ He that <sup>o</sup> toucheth the dead body of any <sup>o</sup> man shall be unclean seven days.

o 16. v. 2. ix. 6. 10. xxxi. 19. Lev. xi. 31. xxi. 1. 11. Hag. ii. 13. Rom. v. 12. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. ii. 1. Heb. ix. 14.

12 He shall <sup>p</sup> purify himself with it on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean: but if he purify not himself the <sup>q</sup> third day, then the seventh day he shall not be clean.

\* Heb. soni of man. p 17, 18. Ps. li. 7. Ez. xxxvi. 25. Acts xv. 9. Rev. vii. 14.

q xxxi. 19. Ex. xix. 11. 15. Lev. vii. 17. Hos. vi. 2. 1 Cor. xv. 8, 4.

13 Whosoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead, and <sup>r</sup> purifieth not himself, defileth the tabernacle of the LORD; and that soul shall

r xv. 30. Lev. v. 8. 6. 17. xv. 31. Heb. ii. 2, 3. x. 29. Rev. xxi. 8. xxii. 11. 15.

V. 3. The high priest must not on any account knowingly contract defilement; and therefore the next priest to him officiated in this ceremony, not only at this time, but probably on all future occasions of the same kind.

V. 4. *Before the tabernacle.*] Either towards the tabernacle when without the camp, as it is generally thought; or in the court of the tabernacle, when the solemnity without the camp was finished.

V. 5—10. This oblation differed from all other sacrifices, in that the heifer was slain, not in the court of the tabernacle, but without the camp; the greater part of the blood, and all the fat were burned with the skin and carcase; and the same things were cast into the burning, which had been appointed in the case of a leper when cleansed. (*Note, Lev. xiv. 4—7.*) Yet it is evident, that it was for substance an atoning sacrifice; and the *typical* purifying efficacy of the ashes was derived from the *typical* expiation, made by the spotless animal thus slaughtered.—Every circumstance was ordered, so as to impress the mind with an idea that the heifer was *extremely polluted and polluted*; and that by thus carrying the pollution out of the camp, it made way for the purification of the people. Even Eleazar, by superintending the transaction and sprinkling the blood, was rendered unclean, as well as he who burned the heifer: and when a *clean* person had collected the ashes, he also in some degree partook of the pollution.—Thus Christ, our unblemished Sacrifice and Sanctification, bearing our sins, suffered without Jerusalem by the hands of the Romans, yet by the decree and under the inspection of the chief priests: and though his death was “according to the determinate counsel and “foreknowledge of God;” yet every one concerned in it

contracted guilt and pollution of the most aggravated kind.—The ashes of the heifer thus prepared, and carefully kept apart from those of the wood with which it was burned, were laid up in some clean place without the camp, that the water of *separation* (or the water for purifying those who were *separated* for ceremonial pollution,) might be made, by putting a small quantity of them into spring-water. This water must be frequently wanted by the whole multitude of Israelites: yet, as a little would suffice, the ashes of one heifer might last for some considerable time; and the nature of ashes, which do not easily corrupt, might also typify the *abiding efficacy* of the atonement of Christ. But that man must be endued with an uncommon measure of credulity, who can believe the assertions of the Rabbies, that the ashes of this one heifer lasted the whole nation, and the strangers sojourning among them, till the days of Solomon!—It is reasonable to suppose, that after the people were settled in Canaan, ashes for this purpose were placed in every neighbourhood, for the convenience of all who needed them.

V. 11. It does not appear that the touch of an unclean person, or of any other thing, required this burdensome purification, except that of a *dead human body*, or a *grave* (18).—It is worthy of notice, that no object is so offensive to our senses as a human body in a state of putrefaction; for death *in man alone* is the wages of sin, the execution of the sentence of God’s law upon a condemned criminal. The hatefulness of sin is therefore strongly marked in the circumstances of this purification: but through Christ the very nature of death is changed to the believer, and the defilement of it is removed.

V. 12—20. *Marg. Ref.*

<sup>a</sup> 12. vii. 7.

be cut off from Israel: because <sup>a</sup>the water of separation was not sprinkled upon him, he shall be unclean; <sup>a</sup>his uncleanness is yet upon him.

14 This is the law when a man dieth in a tent: all that come into the tent, and all that is in the tent, shall be unclean seven days.

<sup>a</sup> xxxi. 20. Lev. xxi. 3. Prov. xiv. 32. John vii. 24.

15 And <sup>a</sup>every open vessel which hath no covering bound upon it, is unclean.

<sup>x</sup> 11. xxxi. 19.

16 And whosoever <sup>a</sup>toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open fields, or a dead body, or <sup>a</sup>a bone of a man, or <sup>a</sup>a grave, shall be unclean seven days.

<sup>y</sup> <sup>Es</sup> xxxix. 11—16.  
<sup>z</sup> Matt. xxiii. 27. Luke xi. 44.

17 And for an unclean *person* they shall take of the <sup>a</sup>ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and <sup>a</sup>running water shall be put thereto in a vessel;

<sup>\*</sup> Heb. dust. 9

<sup>+</sup> Heb. living waters shall be given. Gen. xxvi. 19. marg. Cant. iv. 15. John iv. 10, 11. vii. 38. Rev. vii. 17.

<sup>a</sup> 9. Ps. li. 7. <sup>Es</sup> xxxvi. 25—27. John xv. 2, 3. xvii. 17, 19. 1 Cor. i. 30. Heb. ix. 14.

18 And <sup>a</sup>a clean *person* shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave:

19 And the clean *person* <sup>b</sup>shall sprinkle upon the unclean on the third day, and on the seventh day: and on <sup>a</sup>the seventh day he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and shall be clean at even.

<sup>b</sup> Eph. v. 25—27. Tit. ii. 14. iii. 5. 1 John i. 7. ii. 1, 2. Jude 23. Rev. i. 5, 6. c 12. xxxi. 19. Gen. ii. 2. Lev. xiv. 9.

20 But the man that shall be unclean, and <sup>a</sup>shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from among the congregation, because he hath defiled the sanctuary of the Lord; the water of separation hath not been sprinkled upon him; he is unclean.

<sup>d</sup> See on 13.—xv. 30. Gen. xvii. 14. Mark xvi. 16. Acts xiii. 29—41. Rom. ii. 4. 5. 2 Pet. iii. 14. Rev. xiii. 11.

21 And it shall be a perpetual statute unto them, that <sup>a</sup>he that sprinkleth the water of separation shall wash his clothes, and he that toucheth the water of separation shall be unclean until even.

<sup>e</sup> Lev. xi. 26. 49. xvi. 26—28. Heb. vii. 19. ix. 10, 13, 14. x. 4.

22 And <sup>a</sup>whatsoever the unclean *person* toucheth shall be unclean: and <sup>a</sup>the soul that toucheth it shall be unclean until even.

<sup>f</sup> Lev. vii. 19. Hag. ii. 13.

<sup>g</sup> Lev. xv. 5. Matt. xv. 19. 20. Mark vii. 21—23.

## CHAP. XX.

The people come to Zin, where Miriam dies, 1. They murmur for water, 2—6. Moses speaks to the people in anger and unadvisedly, and smites the rock, instead of speaking to it, as ordered; water is given,

V. 21. The Jews say, that <sup>a</sup>even Solomon could not understand the mystery, how the same water should pollute the clean *person*, and cleanse the polluted. But the defiling nature of sin, and the insufficiency of the ceremonial observances, except in their reference to Christ, are denoted: and the mystery is revealed to him, who <sup>a</sup>“holds the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.”

### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They who seem to lay an exclusive claim to reason, yet allow the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, and will not say that God commands any thing *unreasonable*; should seriously consider what rational account can be given of these appointments, or what use can be made of them, if we do not refer them to those doctrines, which they object to, or perhaps deride. But comparing them with the New Testament, and with the undeniable character of human nature, the propriety and instructive use of them become evident. Fallen man is actually sunk in some respects below the beasts that perish, and is in a most abject condition, an object of the divine displeasure and abhorrence: yet, by an astonishing infatuation, he admires and flatters himself, loses sight of his filthiness, and accounts his very death as a matter of course, instead of an ignominious execution upon the body, and an introduction to a more dreadful condemnation of the immortal soul!—Now, his true condition was, in these institutions, presented before his eyes, and the humiliating consideration forced upon his attention. Here we learn the defiling nature of sin,

which contaminates whatever it touches; and we are warned to avoid “evil communications, which corrupt good manners;” and not to associate with sinners unless to benefit them, and then with great fear and care, lest instead of cleansing them we should be defiled by them. From the pollution of sin we must be cleansed, or we never can enter heaven; nor can it be removed, except in a method of the Lord’s own appointing. The atoning sacrifice of Christ is the only purchase of our purification; his Holy Spirit applying salvation to the soul is the only efficient cause; the *living water* and the *ashes of the sacrifice*, the pardoning efficacy and the sanctifying grace, are never separated. By faith, (like this bunch of hyssop,) in the use of the instituted means, we are both justified and sanctified. Thus the guilt and dominion of sin are removed, and its pollution by repeated applications gradually cleansed away, until at length its existence is finally destroyed. No degree of guilt or pollution can bar the salvation of that man who avails himself of this provision: but the least sin will for ever ruin such as presumptuously despise and neglect it. Though we cannot contrive, merit, or effect salvation for ourselves or others; yet we may use, or we may neglect, the means of application: and we may be instrumental either to the salvation, or to the destruction, of those connected with us. And even they, who are most useful to their fellow-sinners, should recollect that they also need cleansing; not only in their other conduct, but even in respect to their most honest and zealous endeavours to save the souls of their fellow-sinners.

but Moses and Aaron are doomed to die in the wilderness, 7—13. Edom refuses Israel a passage through their land, 14—21. At mount Hor, Aaron resigns his priesthood to Eleazar, and dies, 22—29.

**THEN** came the children of Israel, *even* the whole congregation, <sup>a</sup>into the desert of Zin, in the first month: and the people abode in <sup>b</sup>Kadesh; and <sup>c</sup>Miriam died there, and was buried there.

2 And there was <sup>d</sup>no water for the congregation: and they <sup>e</sup>gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron.

3 And the people chode with Moses, and spake, saying, 'Would God that we had died <sup>f</sup>when our brethren died before the LORD.

4 And <sup>h</sup>why have ye brought up the congregation of the LORD into this wilderness, <sup>i</sup>that we and our cattle should die there?

5 And wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us in unto <sup>j</sup>this evil place? it is no place of seed, or of figs, or vines, or of pomegranates; neither is there any water to drink.

6 And Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly, unto the

door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and <sup>k</sup>they fell upon their faces; and <sup>l</sup>the glory of the LORD appeared unto them.

7 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

8 Take <sup>m</sup>the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou and Aaron thy brother, and <sup>n</sup>spake ye unto the rock before their eyes, and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt <sup>o</sup>bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.

9 And Moses took the rod from <sup>p</sup>before the LORD, as he commanded him.

10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, <sup>q</sup>ye rebels; must <sup>r</sup>we fetch you water out of this rock?

11 And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he <sup>s</sup>smote the rock twice: and <sup>t</sup>the water came out abundantly: and the congregation drank, and their beasts *also*.

12 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye <sup>u</sup>believed me not, <sup>v</sup>to sanctify me in the eyes of the

xiv. 5. xvi. 4. 22  
45 Ex. xvii. 4  
Josh vii. 6. 1 Chr  
xxi. 16. Pa. c.  
3. 4. Matt. xxv.  
39.  
1 xii. 5. xiv. 10.  
xvi. 19. 42. Ex.  
xvi. 10.  
n xxi. 15—18. Ex.  
iv. 2. 17. vii. 20.  
xiv. 16. xvii. 5.  
9.  
n Gen. xviii. 14.  
Josh. vi. 5. 20.  
Pa. xxxiii. 9.  
Matt. xxi. 21.  
Mark xi. 22—24.  
Luke xi. 13.  
John iv. 10—14.  
xvi. 24. Acts i.  
14. ii. 1—4.  
Rev. xxii. 1. 17.  
o Neh. ix. 15. Pa.  
lxxxviii. 15. 16.  
cv. 41. cxiv. 8.  
Is. xlii. 17. 18.  
xliii. 20. xlviii.  
21.  
p xvii. 10.  
q Deut. ix. 24.  
Pa. cvi. 32. 33.  
Matt. v. 22.  
Luke ix. 54. 55.  
Acts xxiii. 3—5.  
Eph. iii. 26.  
Jam. iii. 2.  
r xi. 22. 23. Gen.  
xi. 8. xii. 16.  
Dan. ii. 28—30.  
Acts iii. 12—16.  
xiv. 9—15. Rom.  
xv. 17—19.  
1 Cor. iii. 7.  
s 8. Lev. x. 1.  
1 Sam. xv. 13.  
14. 19. 24. 1 Kings  
xiii. 21—24.  
1 Chr. xiii. 9. 10.  
xv. 2. 13. Matt.  
xxviii. 20. Jam.  
i. 20.  
t Ex. xvii. 6.  
Deut. viii. 15.  
Hos. xiii. 5.  
u 1 Cor. x. 4.  
x xi. 21. 22. 2 Chr.  
x. 20. Is. vii. 9.  
Matt. xvii. 17.  
20. Luke i. 20.  
45. Rom. iv. 20.  
v xxvii. 14. Lev. x. 3. Deut. i. 37. xxxii. 51. Is. viii. 13. 1 Pet. iii. 15.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1. For more than thirty-seven years, Israel had now abode in the wilderness, confined as in a prison by the power of God; during all which time, scarcely any thing is recorded about them, except that the old generation had almost all died off, and a new one was risen up in their stead. But in the first month in the fortieth year, the history is resumed, and we find them at Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin, on the confines of Canaan, not in that of *Sin*, in the neighbourhood of the Red Sea. (*Ex.* xvi. 1.) Here Miriam, who must have been at least one hundred and thirty years of age, died and was buried.—This Kadesh is supposed to have been a different place from Kadesh-barnea before-mentioned, and further from the south of Canaan: so that Israel could not *in that route* enter Canaan, without passing through a part of the land of Edom.

V. 2—5. It is not recorded, how long the water from the rock in Horeb followed Israel, or whence they had been supplied. But being at this time in want of water, the new generation imitated the rebellion of their fathers, by murmuring, desponding, wishing they had been struck dead by the hand of God as others of the nation had been, and quarrelling with Moses and Aaron. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8. It has been shewn, that the waters from the rock in Horeb typified the sanctifying and comforting influences of the Holy Spirit, communicated to us through the atone-

ment of Christ, when smitten for our sins. (*Notes and P. O. Ex.* xvii. 1—7.) The *smiting of the rock* needed not to be repeated: for though it was not the same rock, it was the outward sign of the same spiritual benefit. (*Note, 1 Cor.* x. 1—5.) It was, therefore, only requisite to speak to it. And thus, Christ having been once smitten, “and “wounded for our transgressions,” needs not to be smitten any more; but only to be spoken to by the prayer of faith accompanying the preaching of the gospel; and the waters will flow forth.—The pretended sacrifice of the mass seems to be an imitation of Moses’s error, in repeatedly smiting the rock, when he ought only to have spoken to it.

V. 9. As Moses “took the rod from before the LORD,” many suppose that “the rod of Aaron which blossomed” was meant: but it is not improbable, that the rod, with which Moses wrought so many miracles, was also generally laid up in the sanctuary. Whatever rod was meant, it was only intended to be a token of the divine power to be exerted, and ought not to have been used in *smiting* the rock.

V. 10—13. Though the people were *rebels*, and Moses called them so at other times without offence, yet he evidently spake at this time in an angry spirit. He also assumed honour to himself and to Aaron, instead of giving glory to God, when he enquired, “Must we fetch you “water out of this rock?”—He seems not firmly to have believed that the water would be given, and he did not

y 24. xi. 15. Deut. iii. 29—36. xxvii. 49, 50. xxxiv. 4. Josh. i. 2. John i. 17.

children of Israel, therefore 'ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.

z Deut. xxxiii. 8. Ps. cvi. 32. \* That is, *Strife*. Ex. xvii. 7.—Deut. xxxii. 61. Meribah-Kadesh.

13 This *is* 'the water of 'Meribah; because the children of Israel strove with the Lord, and 'he was sanctified in them.

a 1s. v. 16. Ez. xx. 41. xxxvi. 23. xxxviii. 16.

b Judg. xi. 16, 17.

14 ¶ And <sup>b</sup>Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom, Thus saith 'thy brother Israel, Thou knowest all the travail that hath 'be-

c Gen. xxxii. 3, 4. Deut. xxxii. 7. Obad. 10—12. Mal. i. 2. \* Heb. *found us*. Ex. xviii. 8.

d Gen. xvi. 6. Acts vii. 15.

e Gen. xv. 13. Ex. xii. 40.

f xi. 5. xvi. 13. Ex. i. 11—14. 16. 22. v. 14. Acts vii. 15.

g Ex. ii. 23, 24. iii. 7—9. vi. 5. xiv. 10.

h Ex. iii. 2—6. xiv. 19. xxiii. 20. xxxiii. 2.

fallen us;

15 How <sup>d</sup>our fathers went down into Egypt, and we have 'dwelt in Egypt a long time; and the Egyptians 'vexed us and our fathers.

16 And when 'we cried unto the Lord, he heard our voice, and <sup>h</sup>sent an Angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt; and, behold, we *are* in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border.

i xxi. 1. 22—24. Deut. ii. 1—4. 27. 29.

17 Let us pass, I pray thee, 'through thy country: we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink *of* the water of the wells; we will go by the king's high-way, we will not turn to the right

hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy borders.

18 And Edom said unto him, Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword.

19 And the children of Israel said unto him, <sup>k</sup>We will go by the high-way; and if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then I will pay for it: I will only, without *doing* any thing *else*, go through on my feet.

20 And he said, 'Thou shalt not go through. And Edom came out against him with much people, and with a strong hand.

21 Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border: <sup>m</sup>wherefore Israel turned away from him.

22 ¶ And the children of Israel, *even* the whole congregation, journeyed from 'Kadesh, and came unto 'mount Hor.

23 And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in mount Hor, by the coast of the land of Edom, saying,

24 Aaron shall be 'gathered unto his people: for he shall not enter into the land which I have given unto the

think it sufficient to "speak to the rock;" and therefore he hastily *smote it*, and repeated the stroke immediately; though the sign of *speaking* was probably intended as a rebuke to the people, who were not so obedient to the Lord's command as the very rocks were. In this view of his conduct we perceive that he was very culpable; the Lord considered it as exceedingly dishonourable to his name; and he knew Aaron likewise to be highly criminal: though the water therefore was not withheld, yet the relief to Israel was followed by a severe rebuke to Moses and Aaron, and a sentence of exclusion from Canaan.—They were eminent characters; the eyes of all Israel were upon them; and their improper conduct, and want of confidence in the power and faithfulness of God, rendered it expedient that he should be sanctified in their punishment. (*Note*, Ps. cvi. 32, 33.)—The other place, where water had been brought out of the rock, was called *Meribah*; but it was called also *Massah*: this was *Meribah-Kadesh*. (*Marg. Ref. z.*)

V. 14—21. The descendants of Esau, now grown into a flourishing kingdom, were not unacquainted with the relation in which the Israelites stood to them, nor with their bondage in Egypt and deliverance from it, their continuance in the wilderness, and their pretensions to Canaan. With them Moses pleaded the brotherly relation, to move natural affection; the past distresses of the people, to excite compassion; and the favour of the Lord to them, who by the Angel of his presence guided and protected them, to influence their hopes and fears. He engaged also that

the people should pass through with all convenient speed, on the king's highway, doing no harm, and paying even for the water which they drank: this being the direct road into the land promised to their fathers.—But the Edomites suspected their intentions, retained their old enmity, denied their request, and threatened them with war. Yet the Israelites were not allowed to molest them; but were required to set an example of forbearance, by taking a long circuit round their country. Hence it is evident, that so long as they were under the conduct of Moses and Joshua, they did not wage war from resentment or rapacity, but according to the commandment of God; and that he pointed out to them the people, on whom they were required to execute his righteous vengeance, and whose countries they should receive for an inheritance; nor would they have been successful, if they had assaulted any others. (*Notes*, xiv. 2—4. 39—45. xxi. 21—25. xxxi. 2.)—The Edomites seem to have been governed by dukes or military leaders, when Israel came out of Egypt; but now a king ruled over them. (*Ex.* xv. 15. *Notes*, Gen. xxxvi. 31—43.)

V. 22—28. At the command of God, delivered by Moses, Aaron seems to have put on the rich pontifical garments, and in them to have ascended the mountain; where they were taken off from him by Moses, and put on his son Eleazar, who was now invested with the high priesthood. This being done, Aaron immediately expired: and though he left the world under a divine rebuke, yet he died as a pardoned sinner with the hope and earnest of



THE DEFILES OF EDM.

NUMBERS XX. 21.







SUMMIT OF MOUNT HOR.

NUMBERS XX. 28.

<sup>q</sup> See on 11, 12. children of Israel, <sup>a</sup> because ye rebelled against my <sup>\*</sup> word at the water of Meribah.

<sup>r</sup> xxxiii. 38, 39. 25 'Take Aaron and Eleazar his son, and bring them up unto mount Hor;

<sup>s</sup> Ex. xxix. 29, 30. 1a. xxi. 21, 22. Heb. vii. 11, 23, 24. 26 And 'strip Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son: and Aaron shall be gathered unto his people, and shall die there.

27 And Moses did as the LORD commanded; and they went up into

mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation.

28 And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and 'put them upon Eleazar his son: and Aaron <sup>u</sup> died there in the top of the mount: and Moses and Eleazar came down from the mount.

29 And when all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, they <sup>x</sup> mourned for Aaron thirty days, even all the house of Israel.

xxvii. 16—23  
Deut. xxxi. 7.  
8. xxxiv. 9. 1 Chr.  
xxii. 11, 12, 17  
xxviii. 5—9, Acts  
xx. 25—29. 2 Pet.  
i. 15.  
u xxxiii. 38, 39.  
Deut. x. 6  
xxxii. 49, 50.  
xxxiv. 5. Heb.  
vii. 24, 25.

x Gen. 1 10.  
Deut. xxxiv 8  
2 Chr. xxxv. 24,  
25. Acts viii. 2.

glory, and probably without terror or reluctance. Doubtless the command given to Moses, and the service assigned him, must have awakened in him many painful feelings, when he considered his own perhaps deeper guilt.—*Not enter, &c.* (24) 'A manifest token, that the earthly Canaan 'was not the utmost felicity, at which God's promises 'aimed; because the best men among them were shut out 'of it.' Bp. Patrick.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—13.

Well might Moses say, "All our days are passed in thy "wrath; we spend our years, as a tale that is told:" when during so long a period he witnessed nothing worth recording, but the death of many hundreds of thousands of his brethren! (*Notes, Ps. xc. title. 7—10.*)—Even to this day man's life passes away almost in the same manner: for what is it, but a tedious repetition of the same dull occurrences, with evident proofs of our folly and guilt, and of the Lord's anger tempered with mercy, "till it be cut "off, and we fly away?" Thus the longest life soon comes to a close; and the only advantage that the most eminent possess above the more obscure is, that they do not die quite so unnoticed. O Lord, "so teach us to number our "days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom!"—The propensity to sin is evidently not the fault of any one man or people, but of human nature; and therefore one generation after another manifests the same disposition to unbelief, impatience, and rebellious murmurs.—We can easily exclaim against the Israelites in this respect, after all which they had witnessed and experienced: but had we been in their place, cooped up in the wilderness; confined mainly to one kind of food; at a distance from all the delicacies and varieties, with which even the poorest in a fertile land are comparatively feasted, during the revolutions of the seasons and their several productions; should not we too have been fretful and impatient? Not that we should have had either right or reason to complain; but because we are proud and sensual, and consequently hard to please.—But why question whether we should have rebelled? when Moses and Aaron stand condemned with Israel, though not of the same, yet of similar unbelief, rebellion, and anger. Even Moses the meekest man on earth "spake unadvisedly with his lips;" and we are constrained repeatedly to notice the most eminent saints defective in their most distinguishing excellencies. (*Note, Gen. xii. 11—16.*)—Under long continued trials, the best of men prove, that "sin dwelleth in them;" nay, old age gives advantage to

some evils, and to none more than a peevish spirit.—But in proportion to the eminence of a man's character, and the notoriety of his offence, it will dishonour and displease God: (*Note, Ec. x. 1:*) and by putting us to shame for our sins, he will obtain that honour which we have neglected to render him. \*Whilst impenitent sinners escape punishment in this world, being "reserved unto the day "of judgment;" the Lord marks the offences of his people with alarming severity, yet still in mercy: and notwithstanding our unworthiness, he provides for our wants, and answers our prayers, when we call upon him for a supply of the waters of life, which flow from the Rock of salvation.

##### V. 14—29.

Here again, let us learn to imitate the impartiality of the historian; the silent submission of him and of Aaron; and the example of Israel to insolent and injurious Edom. Thus upright and inoffensive, candid in our declarations, and open in our profession of religion;—thus fair in our proposals, slow to anger, and ready to forgive;—thus willing to give up our convenience, and even recede from our right rather than contend about it, should we be: and when we cannot "overcome evil with good," we should leave the Lord to plead our cause in his own time and manner.—The word of God will surely, perhaps speedily, be fulfilled in his providence. Shortly death will strip the richest, wisest, and most honourable of all their distinctions, except true grace have made them to differ; but, in that case, when they leave all the rest to others, this will be their own for ever. Having served their generation, they need not wish to survive their usefulness; nor can that correction be reasonably complained of, which hastens a man's entrance into heaven.—When eminently good men die, rivalry, envy, resentment, and prejudice, which often render them uneasy while they live, die also; and survivors very commonly honour and mourn for those, whom when living they opposed and reviled! This respect for their memory is indeed a tribute due to them; but it is of little consequence what others think and say of them, when dead, except they then receive their testimony and follow their example.—Blessed be God, our High Priest at death relinquished not his priesthood to another, but rose again to complete his design, and ever liveth to make intercession for us. (*Note, Heb. vii. 23—25.*) Having the fulness of the Spirit, he raises up a succession of ministers and Christians to preach and profess his truth, from age to age; and he hath consigned the robe of his righteousness to all his spiritual posterity,

## CHAP. XXI.

Israel is assaulted by a Canaanitish king, and utterly destroys him, his people, and his cities, 1—3. The people murmur, and are punished with fiery serpents; but, confessing their sin, they are healed by means of a brazen serpent, 4—9. They go forward several stages; and compose a song on finding water, 10—20. They conquer Sihon and Og, kings of the Amorites, 21—35

**AND** when \*king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, heard tell that Israel came by <sup>b</sup>the way of the spies; \*then he fought against Israel, and took *some* of them prisoners. 2 And Israel <sup>d</sup>vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then \*I will utterly destroy their cities. 3 And the LORD <sup>e</sup>hearkened to the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them and their cities: and he called <sup>f</sup>the name of the place \*Hormah. 4 ¶ And they journeyed from <sup>g</sup>mount Hor, <sup>h</sup>by the way of the Red sea, to <sup>i</sup>compass the land of Edom:

for their accepted appearance before God.—If we be his indeed, though we be separated from our dearest friends, and must shortly be absent from the body; yet we shall never be separated from him: “for he that is joined to “the Lord is one spirit.”

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1—3. Before the people set out to march round the country of Edom, the king of those Canaanites who inhabited the southern part of the country, knowing their intentions of invading the land, remembering that they had formerly searched it, and now learning that they approached his borders, attacked them in the wilderness, and took some prisoners, which elated him and discouraged them. But this disadvantage induced the Israelites to place their whole dependence on the Lord; and to devote the cities and property of the assailants to utter destruction, if he should render them victorious; their persons being already thus devoted by God himself. In this confidence they waged war with them, and pushed forward to their cities, which they took and utterly destroyed, and called the name *Hormah*; that is, *utter destruction*, (*marg.*) that none might ever after build cities on the same ground. The clause rendered “king “Arad the Canaanite,” may very properly be translated, “the Canaanite, the king of Arad;” and he is elsewhere called “the king of Arad.” (*Josh.* xii. 14.)—Some argue, that the Israelites did not at this time destroy the cities, but only devoted them; and that Joshua afterwards destroyed them: supposing that the cities of Arad lay beyond the country of Edom. But our knowledge of the

and <sup>†</sup>the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way.

5 And the people <sup>‡</sup>spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for *there is no bread, neither is there any water*; <sup>‡</sup>and our soul loatheth this light bread.

6 And the LORD sent <sup>§</sup>fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.

7 Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, <sup>¶</sup>We have sinned; for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee: <sup>¶</sup>pray unto the LORD that he take away the serpents from us. <sup>¶</sup>And Moses prayed for the people.

8 And <sup>¶</sup>the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

9 And Moses made <sup>¶</sup>a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it

xxxii. 7. 9. Ex. vi. 9. Acts xiv. 22. 1 Thes. iii. 3. 4. Or, grieved. Heb. shortened.

† xi. 1—6. xiv. 1—4. xvi. 13, 14. 41. xvi. 12. Ex. xiv. 11. xv. 24. xvi. 2. 3. 7. 8. xvii. 2. 3. Pa. lxxviii. 19.

‡ xi. 7—9. Ex. xvi. 16. 21. Pa. lxxviii. 24. 25. Prov. xxvii. 7.

§ Gen. iii. 14, 15. Deut. vii. 15. Is. xiv. 29. xxx. 6. Jer. viii. 17. Am. ix. 3. 4. 1 Cor. x. 9.

¶ Ex. ix. 27, 28. 1 Sam. xii. 19. xv. 24. 30. Pa. lxxviii. 34. Matt. xxvii. 4.

¶ Ex. viii. 8. 28. 1 Kings xiii. 6. Jer. xxxvii. 3. Acts viii. 24.

¶ xi. 2. xiv. 17—20. Gen. xx. 7. Ex. xxxii. 11.

¶ 30. Deut. ix. 20. 22—23. 1 Sam. xii. 20—23. Job xiii. 10. Pa. cvi. 28. Jer. xv. 1.

¶ Rom. x. 1. Pa. cvi. 43—45. cxi. 8.

¶ 2 Kings xviii. 4. John iii. 14, 15. xii. 32. Rom. viii. 3. 2 Cor. v. 21.

ancient geography of those parts is very imperfect; and the account of the transaction seems given by Moses, and not inserted afterwards by another person.

V. 4, 5. The Israelites were not permitted to force their way through the land of Edom, but were led back into the wilderness, as if about to return to the Red Sea. The road perhaps proved heavy or rough; water was scarce; and they grew weary of living so long on manna, which probably they fancied was not *heartly* enough to support them under such fatigues. They had expected directly to enter Canaan, and their retrograde journey was a grievous disappointment. Few of them had ever lived upon bread; and even that circumstance might concur in enhancing to their imaginations the satisfaction of having that kind of food. It seems also, that water failed them, and they endured some hardship: but their spirits were embittered, as well as discouraged; and they relapsed into their old sin of distrustful murmuring against Moses and against God. (*Marg. Ref.* m, n.)

V. 6—9. Serpents of various kinds abounded in the wilderness: but they had been restrained from hurting the people, till they provoked God to send them to assail the camp; in which they soon did dreadful execution, and caused still greater consternation. They were called *fiery* serpents, as some think, from their colour, which resembled polished brass; others deduce the epithet from the inflammation, like the burning of fire, which immediately followed their bite.—The people were at length, by this judgment, made sensible of their fault, and intreated Moses to pray for the removal of the serpents, which he readily did. Yet they were not removed: but Moses was

came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, <sup>a</sup> when he beheld the serpent of brass, <sup>a</sup> he lived.

<sup>a</sup> Is. xlv. 22. Zach. xii. 10. John i. 29. Heb. xii. 2. 1 John iii. 8. x John vi. 49. Rom. i. 17 v. 20, 21. y xxxiii. 43—45.

10 ¶ And the children of Israel <sup>v</sup> set forward, and pitched in Oboth.

<sup>a</sup> Or, heaps of Abarim.

11 And they journeyed from Oboth, and pitched at <sup>a</sup> Ije-abarim, in the wilderness which *is* before Moab, toward the sun-rising.

<sup>a</sup> Deut. ii. 13, 14. the brook Zered.

12 From thence they removed, and pitched in <sup>a</sup> the valley of Zared.

commanded to form an image of a serpent of brass exactly like them, to affix it to a long pole, or standard, and to place it in a conspicuous part of the camp; and to this, they who had been bitten were directed to look. Nothing could in *itself* be less suited to give relief than this expedient: but it was the Lord's appointment; and by this token the sufferers must express their entire dependence on him, and submissively expect a cure from him alone. Accordingly, whoever looked, however desperate his case, or feeble his sight, or distant his situation, was infallibly and perfectly cured; and manifested his recovery, by becoming capable of the services to which he was called, or marching in his place when the camp was removed: but if any one would shut his eyes, or turn his back on the brazen serpent, and depend for help on any thing else; he must inevitably die.—This forms a very significant type of our salvation by Jesus Christ. The Lord, provoked by man's first apostasy, hath permitted that old Serpent, the tempter, the devil, to communicate his baleful venom to the whole human race, which operates to their destruction: and numbers in consequence have perished, are perishing, and will perish. But "God so loved the world, as to give his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not *perish*, but have everlasting *life*." The Saviour was indeed perfectly free from sin, but he assumed "the likeness of *sinful* flesh:" (Note, Rom. viii. 3, 4;) he was numbered with malefactors, and crucified with them; and it is observable that the supposed crime for which he suffered, namely, "making himself equal with God," was considered by his enemies as the essence of *diabolical* ambition, usurpation, and blasphemy. Having thus been "*made Sin* for us," he is now held forth in the gospel to all nations; (Note, 2 Cor. v. 18—21;) and when any poor sinner is made sensible of his guilt and danger, and humbly prays for mercy and deliverance, he is commanded to look unto Jesus, as dying upon the cross for the transgressions of "the law given by *Moses*:" and renouncing all other confidences, and looking in faith, with a desire of salvation, and in obedience to God; and persevering from day to day in the use of the appointed means; he obtains effectual relief, and at length a perfect deliverance, even though weak in faith, and though Satan's temptations as yet harass his soul. For faith in a crucified Saviour is the appointment of God, and rendered effectual by his grace: and though man's reasoning pride considers it as foolishness, all believers experience it to be "the power of God to salvation." (Note, John iii. 14, 15.)—The command given to Moses, to make an image of a serpent, shews that *forming images*

13 From thence they removed, and pitched <sup>a</sup> on the other side of Arnon, which *is* in the wilderness that cometh out of the coasts of the Amorites: for Arnon *is* the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites.

<sup>a</sup> 14 xxii. 36. Deut. ii. 24. Judg. vi. 18. Is. xvi. 2. Jer. xlviii. 20.

14 Wherefore it is said <sup>b</sup> in the book of the wars of the LORD, <sup>†</sup> What he did in the Red sea, and in the brooks of Arnon;

<sup>b</sup> Josh. x. 13. 2 Sam. i. 18. <sup>†</sup> Or, Faheb in Suphah.

15 And at the stream of the brooks

is no violation of the moral law; unless intended as *representations of God*; or worshipped when made, as the Israelites afterwards worshipped the brazen serpent. (Notes, Ex. xx. 4. 2 Kings xviii. 4.)—It is thought that the sight of a serpent, or the image of one, tends to increase the malady of him who has been bitten: and some naturalists have said the same of the sight of brass; yet that of the brazen serpent healed the people. "The sight of Christ crucified, naturally filled his crucifiers only with anguish, when they beheld him whom they had pierced, and were convinced he was their Messiah; but by the grace of God, became their only salvation through faith in him." Bp. Patrick.—The Jews in general allow, that there was some mystery in this appointment; but they will not understand the mystery till they become Christians.

V. 10. "Oboth," signifies *bottles*; (Job xxxii. 19. Heb.) and probably the place was so called, from the people's carrying water thence in bottles for their use in the desert.

זין (plur. זינות or זינות) generally signifies *one who has a familiar spirit*, 'because,' says Buxtorf, 'he brings forth oracles out of a swelling belly, as out of a bottle.'—See Lev. xix. 31. xx. 6. 1 Sam. xxviii. 3, &c. Is. viii. 19: et al.—The only place in which this word signifies a *bottle* is Job xxxii. 19: yet this is probably the original meaning.

V. 11—15. After some more journeys, the Israelites encamped in the borders of Moab, to the east of Canaan: and as the sacred historian was about to relate the conquest of Sihon and Og, kings of the Amorites, and the devices of Balak king of Moab; he briefly mentioned the boundaries which separated their kingdoms.—Arnon (a small rivulet, arising in the adjacent mountains, and falling into the Dead Sea,) ran through the wilderness to which the Amorites had extended their dominion, and thus formed one of these boundaries: and as Israel had passed this *brook* without molesting the Moabites, (though they seem to have gone through, or close by, some part of their country,) and were encamped in the land of the Amorites; it appeared that they had given no provocation to the Moabites or Ammonites. On this ground Jephthah long afterwards vindicated the right of his people to that part of the country of Sihon and Og, which the Ammonites claimed as their due; and which had once belonged to them; but the Amorites had conquered it before the Israelites came thither. (Notes, Judg. xi. 12—27.) In stating this subject, Moses referred to a book called "The wars of JEHOVAH," which some suppose to have been extant before this time, and others to have been written on this occasion, perhaps by an Israelite: for it can hardly be thought,

c 28. Deut. ii. 9  
 1<sup>st</sup> Is. xv. 1  
 • Heb. *teaneth*  
 that goeth down to the dwelling of  
 'Ar, and 'lieth upon the border of  
 Moab.

16 And from thence *they went* to  
 'Beer; that *is* the well whereof the  
 Lord spake unto Moses, 'Gather the  
 people together, and I will give them  
 water.

17 Then Israel 'sang this song,  
 'Spring up, O well; 'sing ye unto it:

18 The 'princes digged the well,  
 the nobles of the people digged it, by  
 the direction of <sup>h</sup> the lawgiver, with  
 their staves. 'And from the wilderness  
 they went to Mattanah:

19 And from Mattanah to Nahaliel:  
 and from Nahaliel to Bamoth:

20 And from Bamoth *in* the valley,  
 that *is* in the 'country of Moab, <sup>k</sup> to  
 the top of 'Pisgah, which looketh to-  
 ward 'Jeshimon.

21 ¶ And Israel 'sent messengers

unto Sihon king of the Amorites, say-  
 ing,

22 Let me pass through thy land:  
 we will not turn into the fields, or into  
 the vineyards; we will not drink of  
 the waters of the well; *but* we will go  
 along by the king's *high-way*, until we  
 be past thy borders.

23 And <sup>m</sup> Sihon would not suffer  
 Israel to pass through his border; but  
 Sihon gathered all his people together,  
 and went out against Israel into the  
 wilderness: and he came to 'Jahaz,  
 and fought against Israel:

24 And <sup>o</sup> Israel smote him with the  
 edge of the sword, and possessed his  
 land from 'Arnon unto Jabbok; even  
 unto the children of Ammon: for the  
 border of the children of Ammon *was*  
 strong.

25 And Israel took all these cities:  
 and Israel <sup>q</sup> dwelt in all the cities of

that an Amorite, or any idolater, would have used the  
 name of JEHOVAH in recording the successes of Sihon.  
 If, however, this was an ancient record, Moses quoted it  
 (as Paul did the writings of the heathen poets,) in order  
 to determine the question by the authority of their own  
 writers. But if a pious Israelite wrote a history of the  
 transactions which he had witnessed, or of which he had  
 received an authentick account, he might naturally call it  
 "the wars of JEHOVAH;" and the previous conquest of  
 this region by the Amorites might be considered by him,  
 as an interposition of Israel's God for his people. (Notes,  
 26—30. Deut. xxxii. 8.) And if the history were known  
 to be authentick, it would suit Moses's purpose to refer  
 the reader to it, for fuller information on the subject  
 which he had briefly mentioned.—As, however, the point  
 in question, though of importance at that time, had no  
 direct connexion with the grand concerns of religion, this  
 "book of the wars of the Lord" has long since been  
 lost.

*What he did in the Red Sea, &c.* (14) It does not ap-  
 pear how the passage, as it stands in our translation, could  
 suit the purpose of the sacred historian. He himself fully  
 recorded the works of JEHOVAH, both at the Red Sea, and  
 in giving Israel the victory over Sihon and Og, at the  
 brooks of Arnon. But the words rendered, "He did in  
 "the Red Sea," are very obscure. In the margin it stands  
*Vaheb in Suphah*; in the Hebrew *וַהֲבַת בְּסוּפָה*. There  
 is here no pronoun answering to *he*, and *וַהֲבַת* is preceded  
 by *וַהֲבַת*. The clause seems therefore to mean, 'What the  
 Amorite, or Sihon, had done to *Vaheb*, a prince, or place,  
 in a region called *Suphah*.' (Note, Deut. i. 1.)

V. 16—18. The people wanting water, the Lord  
 prevented their murmurs by promising them a supply:  
 and by his direction given by Moses "the lawgiver," when  
 the people had been gathered together to witness the event,

the princes, with their staves only, opened the dry and  
 sandy surface of the earth, and the water flowed in such  
 abundance, that the place was called "Beer," or *the well*;  
 and the people expressed their joyful admiration and gra-  
 titude in a song of praise.

V. 21—25. The kingdoms, at this time governed by  
 Sihon and Og, and lying between the country of Moab on  
 the south or south-west, and that of Ammon on the north-  
 east, and bounded by the river Jordan on the west, were  
 included in the grant made to Abraham; and so indeed  
 was the whole region as far as the Euphrates: yet the  
 Israelites did not expect at this time to possess it; but to  
 pass through, that they might directly invade the country  
 situated between Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea. We  
 find however, that the Lord, while he forbade them to  
 assault the Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites, assured  
 them that he would give them the country of Sihon and  
 Og. (Deut. ii. 24. iii. 2.) And the obedience of Israel,  
 under the conduct of Moses, shews that neither revenge,  
 ambition, avarice, nor carnal policy, but the command of  
 God, directed them with whom to wage war. (Note, xx.  
 14—21.) Nay, after this assurance, the people, no doubt  
 by the direction of Moses, sent ambassadors to Sihon, re-  
 questing a peaceable passage through his country, on the  
 same friendly terms as had been proposed to the Edomites.  
 He however not only refused them, but went out to at-  
 tack them: they were therefore directed to meet him in  
 battle; and, being victorious, they slew him, and took  
 possession of all his cities and all his dominions, as the  
 first-fruits of their conquests. (Notes, Deut. ii. 24—37.)—  
 The Amorites were descended from Ham by Canaan; but  
 the Moabites and Ammonites were the posterity of Lot,  
 Abraham's nephew. (Gen. x. 15—17. xix. 37, 38.)—The  
 strength of the border of Ammon was the reason why the  
 Amorites had not seized on that country also.

<sup>r</sup> Cant. vii. 4, 1s. xv 4 xvi 8, 9. Jer. xlviii. 2. 34. 45.  
<sup>s</sup> Heb. daughters. Ez. xvi. 46. 49. 53.

the Amorites, 'in Heshbon, and in all the villages thereof.

26 For Heshbon was the city of Sihon the king of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab, and taken all his land out of his hand, even unto Arnon.

<sup>a</sup> 14. 1s. xiv. 4. Hab. ii 6.

27 Wherefore 'they that speak in proverbs say, Come into Heshbon, let the city of Sihon be built and prepared;

<sup>t</sup> Judg. ix. 20. 1s. x. 16. Jer. xlviii. 45, 46. Am. i. 4. 7. 10. 12. 14. ii. 2. 5.  
<sup>u</sup> See on 15.—Deut. ii. 9. 18. 1s. xv. 1.

28 For there is 'a fire gone out of Heshbon, a flame from the city of Sihon: it hath consumed 'Ar of Moab, and the lords of the high places of Arnon.

<sup>v</sup> Judg. xi. 24. 1 Kings xi. 7. 33. 2 Kings xxiii. 13. Jer. xlviii. 7. 13. 46. 1 Cor. viii. 4. 5.  
<sup>x</sup> Gen. xlix. 23. 2 Sam. xi. 24. Ps. xviii. 14.

29 Woe to thee, Moab! thou art undone, 'O people of Chemosh: he hath given his sons that escaped, and his daughters, into captivity unto Sihon king of the Amorites.

<sup>y</sup> xxxii. 34. Josh. xiii. 17. 1s. xv. 2. 9. Jer. xlviii. 18. 22.

30 We 'have shot at them: Heshbon is perished even unto 'Dibon, and

we have laid them waste even unto Nophah, which *reacheth* unto Medeba.

31 Thus 'Israel dwelt in the land of the Amorites.

32 And Moses sent to spy out 'Jazer, and they took the villages thereof, and drove out the Amorites that were there.

33 ¶ And 'they turned, and went up by the way of 'Bashan: and 'Og the king of Bashan went out against them, he and all his people, to the battle at Edrei.

34 And the LORD said unto Moses, 'Fear him not: 'for I have delivered him into thy hand, and all his people, and his land; and thou shalt do to him 'as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon.

35 So they 'smote him, and his sons, and all his people, until there was none left him alive: and they possessed his land.

<sup>z</sup> xxxii. 33—42. Deut. iii. 16, 17. Josh. xii. 1—6. xiii. 8—32.

<sup>a</sup> xxxii. 1. 35. 1s. xvi. 8. 9. Jer. xlviii. 32. Jazer.

<sup>b</sup> Deut. iii. 1—6. xxxix. 7. Josh. xiii. 12.

<sup>c</sup> Deut. xxxii. 14. Pa. xxii. 12. lxxviii. 15. 1s. xxxiii. 9. Ez. xxxvii. 6. xxxix. 18. Am. iv. 1. xxxiii. 33. Deut. i. 4. iii. 1. iv. 47. xxxix. 7. Josh. ix. 10. xii. 4. xiii. 30.

<sup>e</sup> xiv. 9. Deut. iii. 2. 11. xx. 3. xxxi. 6. Josh. x. 25. 1s. xii. 13. Deut. iii. 3. vii. 24. Josh. viii. 7. Judg. xi. 80. 1 Sam. xxiii. 4. 2 Sam. v. 19. 1 Kings xx. 18. 2s. 2 Kings iii. 18.

<sup>g</sup> 24, 25. Deut. iii. 3—17. xxxix. 8. Josh. xii. 4—6. Pa. cxxxv. 11, 12. cxxxvi. 17—21. Rom. viii. 37.

V. 26—30. Here again Moses particularly takes notice, that Heshbon, which had belonged to the Moabites, was at this time the city of Sihon, who had vanquished the king of Moab, and taken it from him, with the rest of the country even to the river Arnon. And on this occasion he quotes some poem, or song, composed on account of these victories, in proverbs, or *parables*, (short, emphatical, figurative, sublime, or elegant sentences,) which was sung among the Amorites, though perhaps not committed to writing. In this poem the Amorites invite one another, in exulting language, to come and inhabit Heshbon, now become the city of Sihon; and, in a kind of insolent triumph, speak of the destruction of Ar and other cities of Moab, the slaughter of the princes, with the captivity and abject misery of the people. This seems to have been merely a vain-glorious poetical boast: for though the Amorites took from the Moabites Heshbon and the adjacent region; yet it does not appear that they made any further conquests.—It is supposed that Sihon was the common name of the kings of this district, as Pharaoh of the Egyptian monarchs; and that some preceding king obtained these victories, and took these countries from a former king of Moab.—Chemosh was the principal idol of the Moabites. (*Marg. Ref. v.*)

V. 34. Og was a giant and very formidable; the people therefore feared to attack him, till the Lord thus encouraged them. (*Marg. Ref. d. h.—Note, Deut. iii. 11.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—5.

The enemies of God are always the enemies of his people; and they often at first prosper in their attempts against them, but at last they will be utterly destroyed. For losses sustained by true Christians, in their spiritual conflicts, by taking them off from self-dependence, and excit-

ing them to call upon God for help, subserve their final victory: and being enabled to say, "When I am weak, then am I strong, for the power of Christ rests upon me," they become invincible.—But alas! how soon are the judgments and mercies of our God forgotten by us! and how prone are we to relapse into former sins, though we have suffered for them, and even repented of them! how apt to magnify every difficulty, to despise our choicest mercies, to be impatient of delays, to distrust, to murmur, and to rebel! Nay, where the dominion of sin is broken, it dwells within, and often breaks out; sometimes even openly to the dishonour of God, and the grief of his faithful servants; and under sharp trials, even the true believer may be so discouraged and tempted, and so yield to temptation, as to undervalue the "Bread of life," and the benefit of divine ordinances, as if they were "light food," and almost to wish that he had never set out in the ways of God! (*Ps. lxxiii. 13, 14.*) But he will soon be ashamed of these thoughts, if ever harboured in his mind. We have need however to "watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation:" and it is profitable for us to be aware of the enemy within, as well as of the enemies around us; especially in times of grievous disappointment and tedious discouragement.—But "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth;" and thus, as well as by his judgments upon hypocrites, he excites a salutary terror in their minds, and brings them back to his ways with weeping and supplication: and when they repent and acknowledge their offence, he removes the dreaded destruction, though perhaps the smart of the rod may continue for a time.

##### V. 6—9.

The Lord knows how to over-rule, not only the bite of poisonous serpents, but the persecutions of wicked men, and the temptations of the devil, for the good of those

## CHAP. XXII.

Israel encamps in the plains of Moab, 1. Balak king of Moab sends for Balaam to curse the people, 2—7. He, forbidden by the Lord, refuses to go, 8—14. On a second message he extorts permission, and goes, 15—21. An angel opposes him, and he is rebuked by his ass, whose mouth God opens; he beholds the angel, and obtains leave to proceed, 22—35. Balak meets him, and sacrifices, 36—41.

a xxi. 20. xxxiii.  
44—50. xxxvi.  
13. Deut. xxxiv.  
1. 8.  
b xxxvii. 19. xxxiv.  
15. Deut. i. 5. iii.  
8 Josh. iii. 16.

AND <sup>a</sup>the children of Israel set forward, and pitched in the plains of Moab, <sup>b</sup>on this side Jordan by Jericho.

whom he loves: and our prayers are often most desirably answered, when the letter of the request is not granted. (Note, 2 Cor. xii. 7—10.)—The Lord can relieve us from our dangers and distresses, by the means which we should deem most unpromising; of which he hath given proof in redeeming so many souls from hell, from Satan, and sin, and bringing them to holiness and eternal life, by the manifestation of his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, by his agonizing and accursed death upon the tree, and by the preaching of the despised doctrine of a crucified Saviour.—Oh! that the venom of the old serpent inflaming men's passions, and causing them to commit those sins, which must otherwise terminate in their eternal destruction, were but as sensibly felt, and the danger as plainly apprehended, as the Israelites felt the pain, and feared the death, which followed from the bite of the fiery serpents! Then none would turn away from Christ and his gospel: then would a crucified Saviour be so valued, that all things else would "be accounted loss for him:" then, without delay, and with all earnestness and simplicity of dependence, they would apply to him, crying, "Lord, save us, we perish:" then from day to day would they look to him for pardon and healing, and shew their faith by their works: nor would any abuse the *freeness* of his salvation to them, when they estimated the price which it cost *him*; and their love to the Saviour would increase their dread and abhorrence of sin, and watchfulness against temptation.—But alas! few feel their need of Christ to preserve them from perishing; and though he still proclaims, "Look unto me, and be saved;" most men die in their sins, even where they have the Bible in their hands, and Christ in the gospel "evidently set forth as crucified among them!" But how will they escape, who, through pride and love of sin, reject this simple method of cure, or prefer their own inventions to this suitable and divine salvation? or who, perverting the doctrine, presume that their iniquities are pardoned, while their covetousness, pride, anger, ambition, lust, or evil tempers betray the venom of the old serpent to be in full force within?

V. 10—35.

Our God has engaged to provide for his people in all emergencies, and wells of salvation are opened for them through their whole pilgrimage: so that they need only use the appointed means with simplicity and diligence, and he will send supplies of heavenly consolations, and they shall rejoice in celebrating his praises. Nor ought they to be unthankful to the instruments of their mercies, tem-

2 And <sup>c</sup>Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. c xxi. 8. 20—25.

3 And <sup>d</sup>Moab was sore afraid of the people, because they *were* many: and Moab was distressed because of the children of Israel. d Ex. xv. 15. Deut. ii. 25. Josh. ii. 10, 11. 24. ix. 24. Ps. lxxv. 5. Is. xxxiii. 5.

4 And Moab said unto the <sup>e</sup>elders of Midian, 'Now shall this company lick up all *that are* round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field. e 7. xxv. 15—18. xxxi. 8. Josh. xiii. 21.

<sup>f</sup>And Balak the son of Zippor *was* king of the Moabites at that time. f xxv. 17. Jer. xlviii. 38. g 2. Judg. xi. 25.

poral or spiritual, whether they be princes, nobles, lawgivers, magistrates, ministers, or private persons.—Still, however, we must prepare for fresh conflicts and enemies. With sin and the powers of darkness we must make no peace nor truce; we must not even treat with them; and it is vain to expect any long cessation of hostilities. Even our neighbours, with whom we would, if possible, live peaceably, will often make themselves ready to battle. But, trusting in the Lord's protection and obeying his commands, we shall be more than conquerors over every assailant, and profit by all their attempts to hurt us. For our inheritance is sure; and, in the Lord's time and manner, every thing will concur in putting us in possession of it.—But worldly inheritances are continually changing their masters: ill-gotten gain never spends well; idolatrous dependences fail in the crisis of need; and the destruction of the wicked, being appointed of God, will be certainly and speedily effected.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1. At length the Israelites terminated their wanderings, by encamping on the banks of Jordan over against Jericho, where they abode, until they passed over into Canaan. The plains, in which they encamped, had belonged to the Moabites, from whom they derived their name; but Sihon had taken them from the Moabites, and Israel had now got possession of them (2).

V. 4. The Moabites were descended from Lot; the Midianites, from Abraham by Keturah. (Gen. xix. 37. xxv. 2.) They lived near together, and were united in interest; as were also the Ishmaelites, and Edomites, and Ammonites: but they were all enemies to Israel, except that part of the Midianites, which was connected with Jethro, Moses's father-in-law.—The persons here called "elders," seem to be elsewhere called *princes*, and even *kings*, according to the language of those times. (Marg. Ref. e.) The message to them appears to have been sent with the concurrence of the principal persons in Moab, and by the general sense of the nation; as well as by Balak their king.—They all thought, that nothing but united and vigorous resistance could preserve them: for either they had not heard, that JHOSHUA had forbidden Israel to molest them; or they disregarded any report which they had heard to this effect.—The simile which they employed is extremely expressive, as referring to the complete destruction which Israel had made of Arad, Sihon, and Og, with the nations over whom they reigned.

h Deut. xxiii. 4.  
Josh. xiii. 22.  
xxiv. 9. Neh.  
xiii. 2. Mic. vi.  
5. 2 Pet. ii. 15.  
16. son of Beor.  
Jude 11  
i xxiii. 7. Deut.  
xxiii. 4.  
j Gen. xiii. 16.  
Ex. L. 7—10.  
Ps. cv. 24.  
• Heb. eye.

5 He <sup>b</sup> sent messengers therefore unto Balaam the son of Beor, to <sup>1</sup> Pethor, which is by the river of the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying, Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt: behold, <sup>i</sup> they cover the \* face of the earth, and they abide over against me.

6 Come now therefore, I pray thee, <sup>k</sup> curse me this people, for they are too mighty for me: peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land:

k xxiii. 7, 8. xxiv.  
9. Gen. xii. 3.  
xxvii. 29. Deut.  
xxiii. 4. Josh.  
xxiv. 9. 1 Sam.  
xvii. 43. Neh.  
xiii. 2. Ps. cix.  
17, 18.

for <sup>1</sup> I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed.

1 Kings xxii. 6.  
8, 13. Ps. cix. 28.  
Prov. xxvi. 2. 1a.  
xlvii. 12, 13. Ez.  
xiii. 6. Acts viii.  
9, 10. xvi. 16.

7 And the elders of Moab, and the elders of Midian, departed with the <sup>m</sup> rewards of divination in their hand: and they came unto Balaam, and spake unto him the words of Balak.

m 1 Sam. ix. 7, 8.  
Is. lvi. 11. Ez.  
xxiii. 19. Mic. iii.  
11. Rom. xvi. 18.  
1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.  
Tit. i. 11. 2 Pet.  
ii. 15. Jude 11.

8 And he said unto them, Lodge here <sup>n</sup> this night, and I will bring you word again, as the Lord shall speak unto me. And the princes of Moab abode with Balaam.

n 19, 20. xii. 6.  
xxiii. 12. Jer.  
xii. 2. Ez. xxxiii.  
31.

V. 5. It is the general opinion of expositors, that Balaam was first a prophet, (and as some think a good man,) and that afterwards he degenerated and became a soothsayer; yet this is exceedingly improbable, and unparalleled in Scripture. Had he been first a prophet, and then turned aside to use magical arts for the sake of gain, he would scarcely have "sought for enchantments," when he went for the express purpose of meeting the Lord, whatever he did at other times. It is not intimated, that any prophecies were spoken by him, except those contained in this history, which certainly are sufficient to entitle him to the name of "Balaam the prophet." His boasting likewise concerning "his eyes being opened, and "his seeing the visions of the Almighty," seems especially to relate to the events here recorded. It appears therefore more probable, that he was originally a diviner, or magician of great renown: but having acquired some knowledge of the true God, perhaps by hearing of the wonderful works performed by Moses in his name, he endeavoured to render this knowledge subservient to his interested and ambitious purposes, by professing himself a prophet of JEHOVAH, and uttering divinations as revelations from him. Thus the exorcists, observing how efficacious the name of Jesus proved in the mouth of the apostle, attempted to cast out devils, "adjuring them by Jesus "whom Paul preached:" (Note, Acts xix. 13—20 :) and thus Simon Magus, finding the miracles of Philip so much superior to the effects of his magick, embraced Christianity; and afterwards offered Peter money to confer on him the same power which he exercised, doubtless intending to enrich or aggrandize himself by it. (Notes, Acts viii. 9—24.) On this supposition Balaam's use of incantations, even in seeking JEHOVAH, was the natural effect of the association of his old practices with his new pretensions. It is not certain, whether the Lord had ever spoken to him or by him before this event, though probably he had; but he certainly did afterwards: yet there is abundant proof that he lived and died a wicked man, and an enemy to God and his people. (Notes, xxxi. 8. Deut. xxiii. 3—5. Mic. vi. 3—5. 2 Pet. ii. 15, 16. Jude 11—13. Rev. ii. 14—16.) This, however, as is evident from the Scriptures, has by no means been a singular case. (Notes, Matt. vii. 21—23. 1 Cor. xiii. 1—3.)—Balaam dwelt in or near Mesopotamia, by the Euphrates, the renowned river of the inhabitants of those countries. But his reputation had reached so far, and he was so celebrated, that he was sent for, as it appears, in consequence of the counsel given

to Moab by the elders of Midian; being the only person who was able to contend with Moses, the prophet of Israel. For we may suppose, that they ascribed to the superior skill of Moses in some unknown arts, all that power by which, notwithstanding Pharaoh's determined opposition, Israel had been brought out of Egypt, had subsisted for so many years in the wilderness, and had obtained their late victories over the Amorites.—Pethor.] Deut. xxiii. 4.

V. 6. Balak had some general notion of the overruling influence of an invisible Power; and at the same time such an opinion of Balaam's interest with that invisible Power, that he supposed he could do nothing so effectual to conciliate his favour, as to pay court to his prophet: nay, he either actually thought, or he was willing to compliment Balaam, and to comfort himself, with the supposition, that his blessings or curses were infallibly ratified! If he could therefore prevail with Balaam solemnly to curse Israel and to bless Moab, he would then defy Israel and declare war against them, notwithstanding all the wonders of which he had heard!—It has been shewn by learned men, that many of the heathen nations thus solemnly cursed their enemies in the name of their gods, and devoted them to destruction, before they declared war against them. (1 Sam. xvii. 43.) And it is not impossible, that the sentence denounced by the Lord against the nations of Canaan, whom he devoted to destruction, and employed Israel to extirpate, and Israel's vow concerning the cities of Arad, might suggest to the Moabites and Midianites the idea of engaging Balaam in a similar manner to devote the Israelites; and that the customs of other nations in this respect, were derived from the traditionary report of these events.

V. 8. Balaam seems to have been fully convinced, that JEHOVAH was the true God, and the Protector of Israel: if therefore "his heart had not been exercised with covetous practices," and hankering after the "rewards of "divination," he would peremptorily have declared that he durst not, and would not, undertake any thing against the people of God. He could not but know, that it was vain to attempt any opposition to Omnipotence: yet he had such unworthy notions of God, as to think that, by one means or other, he would be induced to renounce the cause of Israel, and espouse that of Moab! This appears to have been the project which he formed, and which he prosecuted for a long time, till he was still further given up to infatuation! He therefore desired a night's time, in hopes to obtain the Lord's consent to his journey; and he evidently expected some immediate revelation.

o Gen. xx. 8 xxxi. 24. xli. 25. Dan ii. 45. iv. 31, 32. Matt. vii. 22. xxiv. 24. John xi. 51.

p Gen. iii. 9—11. iv. 9. xvi. 8. Ex. iv. 2. 2 Kings xx. 14, 15.

q See on 4—6.

\* Heb. prevail in fighting against him.

r 20. Job xxxiii. 15—17. Matt. xxvii. 19.

s 19. xxxiii. 8, 13—16. 19. 23. Mic. vi. 5.

t xxxiii. 20. Gen. xii. 2. Deut. xxxiii. 6. xxxiii. 29. Ps. cxliv. 15. cxlvi. 3—6. Rom. iv. 6, 7. xi. 29. Eph. i. 3.

u 14. Deut. xxxiii. 8.

x 13. 37

y 7, 8. Acts x. 7, 8.

9 And ° God came unto Balaam, and said, ° What men *are* these with thee?

10 And Balaam said unto God, ° Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me, *saying*,

11 Behold, *there is* a people come out of Egypt, which covereth the face of the earth: come now, curse me them; peradventure I shall ° be able to overcome them, and drive them out.

12 And God said unto Balaam, ° Thou shalt not go with them: ° thou shalt not curse the people: ° for they *are* blessed.

13 And Balaam rose up in the morning, and said unto the princes of Balak, Get you into your land: for ° the LORD refuseth to give me leave to go with you.

14 And the princes of Moab rose up, and they went unto Balak, and said, ° Balaam refuseth to come with us.

15 ¶ And Balak sent yet again ° princes, more, and more honourable than they.

16 And they came to Balaam, and

said to him, Thus saith Balak, the son of Zippor, ° Let nothing, I pray thee, † hinder thee from coming unto me;

17 For ° I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I ° will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me: come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people.

18 And Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak, ° If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, ° I cannot go beyond the word of the LORD my God, to do less or more.

19 Now therefore, I pray you, ° tarry ye also here this night, that I may know what the LORD will say unto me more.

20 And ° God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him, ° If the men come to call thee, rise up, *and* go with them; but ° yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do.

21 And Balaam ° rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab.

† Heb. Be not thou letted from, &c.

z xxiv. 11. Deut. xvi. 19. Eccl. v. 11. vii. 9. Matt. iv. 8, 9. xvi. 26. a xxiii. 2, 3. 29, 30. Matt. xiv. 7.

b xxiv. 13. Tit. i. 16.

c 1 Kings xxii. 14. 2 Chr. xviii. 13. Dan. v. 17. Acts viii. 20.

d See on 7, 8.—1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. 2 Pet. ii. 8. 15. Jude 11.

e See on 9.

f 1 Sam. viii. 5—9. xii. 12—19. Ps. lxxxi. 12. Eccl. xiv. 2—5. 2 Thea. ii. 9—12.

g 35. xxxiii. 12. 26. xxiv. 13. Ps. xxxiii. 10, 11. lxxviii. 30, 31. Is. xxxvii. 29. Hos. xiii. 11. h Prov. i. 15, 16.

V. 9—14. The Lord, for wise reasons, saw good to answer the expectations of Balaam, and to make known his will in a manner, which should at once have determined him on no account to attempt any thing in the business. But though he declined going at the present; he did not preclude all further applications. He yielded obedience to the divine injunction, but as it seems very reluctantly. He did not “bring the messengers word again as the LORD spake to him:” for he mentioned merely the *refusal*, but neither the peremptory manner, nor the reason of it, “That the people were blessed, and Balaam should not curse them.” Had he faithfully reported these, they would have conveyed an important warning to Balak not to “meddle to his hurt:” but he spake as one inclinable to the proposal, and not without hope of obtaining leave; and as *his* words appear to have been reported in the same imperfect manner, Balak naturally concluded that the prophet only wanted more respect and larger promises.—The constant mention of the name of Balak, shews that he was the principal person concerned; though the elders or princes had much authority and influence.

V. 15—17. As Balak concluded that Balaam might yet be induced to come, he sent a greater number of superior persons, offering him any terms which he chose to demand: and in return he expected an unreserved compliance; so that nothing, no not even his conscience, nor the command of God, should prevent his coming and cursing Israel!—His liberality to this wicked man proved him *sincere* in his confidence; as the penuriousness of some professed Christians, in the cause of their religion, proves their *hypocrisy*.

V. 18. Balaam does not declare, that he is determined not to come; nor does he express any abhorrence of the crime or the temptation; but he “cannot go” without the Lord’s permission, and he seems to regret that he may not avail himself of so liberal an offer. These touches must be carefully noted, if we would understand this instructive history.—He speaks also of “the LORD his God” with great confidence; but this might be done merely to keep up his high reputation: or he might deceive himself; for it is probable, that he outwardly worshipped JEHOVAH.

V. 19—21. After the peremptory answer which God had given Balaam, he should have spoken to this effect; “Say no more to me on this subject, but return home, and make the best terms you can with Israel. They are the people of the true God, whom he is determined to bless; and you can do nothing against them, by stratagem or by power, human or divine: for my part I cannot, I dare not, and I would not for the world, presume to oppose them; so tempt me no more.”—“The state of Balaam’s mind was this: He wanted to do what he knew to be very wicked, and contrary to the express command of God; he had inward checks and restraints which he could not entirely get over; he therefore cast about for ways to reconcile this wickedness to his duty. How great a paradox soever this may appear, as it is indeed a contradiction in terms, it is the very account which the Scripture gives of him.” *Bp. Butler*.—But he was the slave of covetousness, and entertained dishonourable thoughts of God, and supposed that he could be induced to change his determination: therefore the Lord in anger gave him the permission, which he so wickedly and eagerly desired. It seems he

22 ¶ And <sup>1</sup>God's anger was kindled because he went: and <sup>2</sup>the Angel of the LORD <sup>1</sup>stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants *were* with him.

23 And <sup>a</sup>the ass saw the Angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and <sup>b</sup>the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field; and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way.

24 But the Angel of the LORD stood in a path of the vineyards, a wall *being* on this side, and a wall on that side.

25 And when the ass saw the Angel of the LORD, she thrust herself unto the wall, and <sup>c</sup>crushed Balaam's foot against the wall; and he smote her again.

26 And the Angel of the LORD went

further, and stood in a narrow place, <sup>d</sup>where *was* no way to turn, either to the right hand or to the left.

27 And when the ass saw the Angel of the LORD, she fell down under Balaam: <sup>e</sup>and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff.

28 And the LORD <sup>f</sup>opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, <sup>g</sup>What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?

29 And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, <sup>h</sup>for now would I kill thee.

30 And the ass said unto Balaam, <sup>i</sup>Am not I thine ass, <sup>j</sup>upon which thou hast ridden <sup>k</sup>ever since *I was* thine, unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee? And he said, Nay.

was in such haste, that he did not wait the call of Balak's princes, but arose early and prepared for his journey.—The clause, "yet the words which I shall say unto thee, that thou shalt do," may be understood either as an *injunction*, or as a *prediction of the event*, namely, that he should be constrained to speak the words of God, and not be able to express his own desires.

V. 22. The Lord *permits* almost an infinity of actions which he does not *approve*: (Notes, 1 Kings xxii. 19—23. Job i. 12:) and he is very angry with those, who avail themselves of his permission to gratify their lusts. "They think evil, but God means it unto good." Nay, the motive even of obedience may be so corrupt, that while the action is approved, God may abhor the principle from which it sprang.—Balaam was instigated by covetousness and ambition: (Note, 2 Pet. ii. 15, 16:) and he wickedly, with perseverance, sought to curse a people whom the Lord had blessed: yet he seems to have had no attachment to Moab, or ill will to Israel, except for filthy lucre's sake. The Lord therefore, with evident disapprobation, gave him leave to go with the princes of Moab; of which he eagerly availed himself; and both the motive and conduct displeased the Lord, who therefore met him "as an adversary" in the way.—His avarice was the more inexcusable, as he could already afford to travel with two attendants. Probably, the princes of Moab, having been informed of his determination, had gone before to prepare matters for his reception.

V. 23—27. Balaam's eyes being holden that he could not see the angel, who was visible to the ass, was an emblem of the blindness of his mind to that imminent and evident peril, into which he was rushing by this presumptuous undertaking. Surely the singular circumstances of this occurrence should have induced him to consider, whether he were in the right way or not!—*The Angel, &c.* Note, 32.

V. 28. The faculty of speech in man is the gift of God,

and we cannot comprehend how we ourselves articulate: we need not therefore be surprised that the Lord made use of the mouth of the "ass to rebuke the madness of the prophet," and to shame him by the reproof and by the example of the brute. Satan spake to Eve by a subtle serpent, but the Lord chose to speak to Balaam by a dull ass: for he does not use "enticing words of man's wisdom," but works by instruments and means which men despise.—Some expositors, unable to conceive how an ass could speak, have thought, (in direct opposition to the words of the sacred historian,) that the whole was only a vision: but can they indeed *conceive* or *explain*, how God represented these things to Balaam's mind in a vision? If not, the difficulty remains, and Omnipotence must be allowed to have done what man cannot comprehend.

V. 29, 30. The miracle of the ass speaking might astonish Balaam, though that is not recorded; or, having been a magician, he had witnessed or heard of strange, portentous events, and perhaps ascribed it to magick; or the fury of his passion resembled madness, and the prodigy served to increase it.—Balaam was supposed capable of destroying Israel, or at least making way for their destruction, by a curse; yet he could not kill his ass for want of a sword! But the Lord reasoned with him by the mouth of the ass; and, by reminding him of his property in the animal and his benefit from her, and that she had not been accustomed so to behave, he taught him that his conduct was very absurd, and prepared the way for a more full discovery of his wickedness.—The words, used on this occasion, seem to imply that Balaam had ridden on this ass from his youth; (*marg.*) and consequently that she had been a valuable and faithful servant to him.—It must have been peculiarly humiliating to this proud man, who boasted "of his eyes being open, and of seeing the visions of the Almighty," to be reproved and silenced from the mouth of a brute. As the Lord both appeared to the ass, and spake by her, before Balaam was enabled to see the vision;

u xxiv. 4. marg.  
16. Gen. xxi. 19.  
2 Kings vi. 17—  
20. 1 Chr. xxi.  
16. Luke xxiv.  
16. 31. Acts  
xxvi. 18.  
x Ex. xxxiv. 8. Ps.  
ix. 50. John xv. ii.  
6.  
\* Or, bowed him-  
self.

v 28. Deut. xxv.  
4. Ps. xxxvi. 6.  
cxlvii. 9. Jon.  
'v. 11.  
† Heb. be an ad-  
versary unto  
thee. 22.  
z Deut. xxiii. 4.  
Prov. xxviii. 6.  
Mic. vi. 5. Acts  
xiii. 10. 2 Pet. ii.  
14. 15.  
a See on 20. 22. 35.  
Ex. iii. 2—6.  
b xiv. 37. xvi. 33  
—35. 1 Kings  
xiii. 24—28.

c Ex. ix. 27. x. 16.  
17. 1 Sam. xv.  
24. xxiv. 17.  
xxvi. 21. Job  
xxxiv. 31. 32. Ps.  
lxxviii. 34. Matt.  
xxvii. 4. 5.  
d See on 12.  
z Heb. be evil in  
thine eyes. xl. 1.  
1 Chr. xxi. 7.  
Prov. xxiv. 18.  
margins.  
c See on 20.—Ps.  
lxxxi. 12. 1s  
xxvii. 26—29.  
2 Thes. ii. 9—  
12.  
† See on 20. 21.

31 Then the LORD "opened the eyes  
of Balaam, and he saw the Angel of  
the LORD standing in the way, and his  
sword drawn in his hand: and he  
"bowed down his head, and "fell flat  
on his face.  
32 And the Angel of the LORD said  
unto him, 'Wherefore hast thou smit-  
ten thine ass these three times? be-  
hold, I went out to 'withstand thee,  
because 'thy way is perverse "before  
me.

33 And the ass saw me and turned  
from me these three times: unless she  
had turned from me, "surely now also  
I had slain thee, and saved her alive.  
34 And Balaam said unto the Angel  
of the LORD, "I have sinned; for I knew  
not that thou stoodest in the way  
against me: now therefore, "if it 'dis-  
please thee, I will get me back again.

35 And the Angel of the LORD said  
unto Balaam, "Go with the men: but  
only the word that 'I shall speak unto  
thee, that thou shalt speak. So Balaam  
went with the princes of Balak.

36 And when Balak heard that Ba-  
laam was come, "he went out to meet  
him unto a city of Moab, which is in  
"the border of Arnon, which is in the  
utmost coast.

37 And Balak said unto Balaam,  
Did I not earnestly send unto thee to  
call thee? wherefore camest thou not  
unto me? 'am I not able indeed to pro-  
mote thee to honour?

38 And Balaam said unto Balak, Lo,  
I am come unto thee: "have I now  
any power at all to say any thing? 'the  
word that God putteth in my mouth,  
that shall I speak.

39 And Balaam went with Balak,  
and they came unto 'Kirjath-hu-  
zoth.

40 And Balak "offered oxen and  
sheep, and sent to Balaam, and to the  
princes that were with him.

41 And it came to pass on the mor-  
row, that Balak took Balaam, and  
brought him up into the "high places  
of Baal, that thence he might see the  
"utmost part of the people.

g Gen. xiv. 17.  
xxvii. 2. xlv. 29.  
Ex. xxviii. 7.  
1 Sam. xiii. 15.  
Acts xxvii. 15.  
h xxi. 13, 14. Deut.  
ii. 24. m. 8. Judg  
xi. 18. 1s. xvi. 2.  
Jer. xlviii. 20.

16. 17. xxiv. 11.  
Matt. iv. 8. 9.  
Luke iv. 6.

k 18. Ps. xxxiii.  
10. lxxvi. 10.  
Prov. xxi. 21. 1s  
xliv. 25. xlv. 10.  
xlvii. 12.  
l xxiii. 16. 26.  
xxiv. 13. 1 Kings  
xxii. 14. 2 Chr.  
xxiii. 13.

† Or, a city of  
streets.

m xxiii. 2. 14. 30.  
Gen. xxxi. 54.  
Prov. i. 16.

n xxv. 2. 8. Deut.  
xii. 2. 2 Chr. xi.  
15. Jer. xlviii  
35.  
o xxiii. 13.

he had little reason to *boast* when the Lord appeared to  
him and spake by him.

V. 32. *Thy way is perverse before me.*] From this ex-  
pression, and from the language of the thirty-fifth verse,  
"The word that I shall speak unto thee," we may be  
satisfied that this was the Angel of the covenant, the  
second person of the Trinity, visibly appearing on this  
occasion.

V. 33. Balaam was thus shewn, that he owed his life  
to that supposed ungovernableness of the ass, which he so  
madly resented.

V. 34, 35. Though Balaam acknowledged that he had  
sinned; yet he excused himself as being ignorant that any  
opposition was made to him. He does not appear to have  
been convinced of the *wickedness* of his undertaking; and  
it was with hesitation that he proposed to return, only if  
he might not proceed except at the hazard of his life. (*Is.*  
*lvii. 17.*) So reluctant was he to give up "the wages of  
"unrighteousness!" He was therefore again permitted to  
follow his own foolish devices.

V. 36—38. Balak, hearing that Balaam was at length  
coming, to shew his joy, and to honour him, went to the  
borders of his land to meet him. Yet he could not but  
express his surprise, that he had not come at first when  
such a prospect of honour and emolument opened before  
him: and Balaam's answer plainly indicated his readiness  
to concur in Balak's projects, and his strong desire of suc-  
ceeding, though he feared he should not be *able*. Nay,  
he seems to have made a merit of coming through the  
midst of so much opposition!

V. 40, 41. These sacrifices seem to have been offered

to the gods of Moab, by whose aid Balak hoped to prevail  
over Israel through Balaam's incantations: for he was not  
yet aware of Balaam's project of drawing over the God of  
Israel to the side of Moab; and he therefore propitiated  
his idols, and invited Balaam, with the princes, to feast  
upon the sacrifice. After which, without loss of time, the  
idolatrous king took his covetous prophet to the high  
places of Baal, that he might both take a view of the  
Israelites, and curse them by his gods.—"Baal" signifies  
*lord*, or *governor*, and was a name common to many idols.  
Probably this *Baal* was the same as *Chemosh*, the god of  
Moab. (*Jer. xlviii. 13. 46.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—7.

Our life is a succession of wanderings which will shortly  
close upon the brink of the grave: happy they who have  
an inheritance in the Canaan beyond! with comfort may  
they sit down on the banks of that Jordan which rolls be-  
tween, and with composure wait the Lord's call to pass  
over and possess the promised land. But the ungodly, "are  
"consumed with terrors;" though more generally "afraid  
"of them who can only kill the body," than of "Him who  
"is able to destroy both body and soul in hell."—The  
prosperity of the church, instead of inducing sinners to  
seek a share in its felicity, generally excites their envy,  
hatred, and terror, and stirs up the spirit of persecution:  
but the crafty methods, which ungodly politicians take to  
secure themselves, generally involve them in more speedy  
ruin.—That propensity to religion, which results from  
reason and conscience, and the corrupted remains of tradi-

## CHAP. XXIII.

Balak builds seven altars, and offers sacrifices on them, 1, 2. Balaam goes to meet the Lord, and re-

tion, is, through the depravity of our nature, generally productive of absurd superstitions and abominable idolatries; by means of which Satan, that ambitious spirit, is consulted and depended on for information and assistance; his ministers are caressed and honoured; and his rites attended on, with immense degradation, trouble, and expense. (*Notes, Is. lvii. 9, 10. Mic. vi. 6—8. Col. ii. 20—23.*)—Great knowledge of doctrinal truth may fill the minds of very wicked men; many convictions may disquiet their consciences; and excellent words may proceed from their lips: but the smallest degree of sanctifying grace is infinitely preferable to the most shining talents, or the most splendid gifts of knowledge, utterance, and eloquence; yea, to those of prophecy and miracles, by which hypocrites have sometimes become more extensively mischievous, illustriously infamous, heinously criminal, and exquisitely miserable.—Let us then covet earnestly and diligently that best gift of divine love, which springs from faith and hope, and never faileth, but shall endure for ever.—If we had learned to lay up our treasure in heaven, and to seek that honour which cometh from God only, and to be content with food and raiment; and if covetousness, ambition, and sensuality were greatly mortified within us, we should have little to hope or fear from man, and be removed far out of the way of temptation: but, as there is so much of these evils still remaining in the heart, we all have cause to dread and shun those connexions, which almost every one covets; I mean connexions with ungodly men, who are able to promote us to honour and affluence. These are especially dangerous to such as are called to speak in the name of the Lord: for by their influence, by fair promises exciting large expectations, and by shewing great kindness and flattering respect, they prevail with many to sacrifice conscience, judgment, character, and the fear of God, to the humour and inclination of their patrons; and to flatter and countenance their sinful practices.—The attraction is almost irresistible, the heart is deceitful: and who, that values his soul and knows himself, would venture into such a perilous situation?—Therefore “avoid “them, pass not near them, turn from them, and pass “away.”

## V. 8—21.

There have always been many “who loved the wages “of unrighteousness,” and paid their court to those who could bid highest and reward best. Some of this character act the hypocrite, and ostentatiously avow their knowledge of God, and intimacy with him, to cloke their wicked intentions: nay, they in this manner deceive themselves, calling “the LORD their God,” while they neither keep his commandments nor seek his salvation.—These men do not hate sin, and they love its wages; and thus they mistake gain for godliness, and covetousness for wisdom. (*Note, 1 Tim. vi. 6—10.*) Fear restrains them for a time from those outward crimes, which they are inwardly desirous of committing; and this restraint they mistake for conscientiousness. Convictions struggle against temptations, though overcome by them; and this they mistake for the conflict between flesh and spirit. (*Note, Rom. vii. 18—21,*

turning blesses Israel: Balak remonstrates, and Balaam excuses it, 3—12. Balak sacrifices in another place, Balaam blesses Israel still more; Balak cannot hinder him, 13—26. Balak sacrifices on the top of Peor, 27—30.

conclusion.) But they parley with the enemy, and nibble at the bait; they seek excuses, and watch for opportunities; they wrest the Scriptures, explain away the prohibition or threatening, or seek diligently for some evasion; and even seem to crave leave to commit their darling sin.—Thus they provoke God to “give them up to their own “hearts’ lusts;” Satan is permitted to increase the force of the temptation; providential dispensations are misinterpreted into a favourable indication; and, by the ingenuity of a wicked heart, aided and prompted by the enemy, they at length find some method of expecting impunity, in following their own wicked inclinations. (*Note, 2 Thes. ii. 8—12.*)—When persons are once judicially “given over “to a strong delusion to believe a lie,” all their boasted knowledge and wisdom fail them; and they are left to form such dishonourable notions of God, such erroneous opinions in religion, and such absurd projects in practice, as evidence their folly and ignorance, and expose their desperate wickedness. Nor does this appear more surprising in any thing, than in their strong confidence that the Lord favours them, and their presumptuous hope that he will side with them, notwithstanding the manifest iniquity of their conduct.

## V. 22—41.

The Lord knows how to restrain the most desperate rebels, and over-rule their efforts against him and his cause, to his own glory and the good of his church. By the way, as well as at the end of their course, he will manifest himself to be their Adversary: and though they be not convinced, but rush through every hinderance to the gratification of their lusts, these obstructions will one day rise up in judgment against them to their confusion; and every check, which stopped the sinner’s career for a time, but did not hinder his continuance in sin, will increase his final condemnation.—Such is man’s folly and madness, that, with all his boasted powers, he may be sent to school to the most stupid of the animals: for though God hath “formed us wiser than the beasts of the field,” sin hath made us more foolish: (*Job xxxv. 11. Prov. vi. 6. Is. i. 3:*) and the conduct of the ox and the ass towards their possessors, yea, their inhuman abusers, forms a continued, though silent reproach of our forgetfulness of God, of our ingratitude and rebellion; and may lead us to conceive in what language they might address us, and how they might plead the cause of their Creator, and their own cause, against us, to our shame and confusion, if the Lord should open their mouths. How might they reproach multitudes with their abuse of God’s gift, in the cruel tyranny exercised upon them! with their senseless anger vented in oaths and curses, revilings and unmerciful blows, furiously bestowed upon a brute beast, even to their own loss! How might they expose man’s cruelty to his own species, yea, to his own soul and body; and his excessive animal indulgence; as if his understanding only served him to invent methods of being more exquisitely a brute, by refining in sensual gratification!—Little cause then have we to be proud of our reason, which fails to preserve us from such absurd and destructive excesses; or of the faculty of

**AND** Balaam said unto Balak, <sup>a</sup>Build me here <sup>b</sup>seven altars, and prepare me here <sup>c</sup>seven oxen and seven rams. <sup>d</sup>2 And Balak did as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam <sup>e</sup>offered on *every* altar a bullock and a ram. <sup>f</sup>3 And Balaam said unto Balak, Stand by thy <sup>g</sup>burnt-offering, and I will go; <sup>h</sup>'peradventure the LORD will come to meet me: and whatsoever he sheweth me, I will tell thee. And he <sup>i</sup>went to an high place. <sup>j</sup>4 And <sup>k</sup>God met Balaam: and he said unto him, <sup>l</sup>'I have prepared seven

altars, and I have offered upon *every* altar a bullock and a ram.

5 And the LORD <sup>1</sup>put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said, Return unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak.

6 And he returned unto him; and, lo, <sup>2</sup>he stood by his burnt-sacrifice, he, and all the princes of Moab.

7 And he <sup>3</sup>took up his parable, and said, Balak the king of Moab hath brought me from <sup>4</sup>'Aram, out of the mountains of the east, <sup>5</sup>saying, <sup>6</sup>'Come, curse me Jacob; and come, <sup>7</sup>'defy Israel.

8 <sup>8</sup>'How shall I curse, whom God

speech which is so shamefully abused: and it may serve to abate our self-admiration, to reflect that, if God pleases, he can make a dull ass see further, and speak better, than any of us. Let us then watch and pray against corrupt and unreasonable passions; and listen to the voice of God, as speaking to us by all the creatures with which we are surrounded.—How little are the people of God in general aware of the machinations, which are forming against them; whilst all the policy and power on earth and in hell are combined for their destruction! (*Notes, Job i. 9—12. P. O. 6—12. Note, Ps. xxxvii. 12—15.*) Yet they need not fear, with distressing anxiety; for "he that keepeth Israel <sup>a</sup>"neither slumbereth nor sleepeth." The Lord sees through every plot, and "no weapon formed against his church <sup>b</sup>"shall prosper." (*Notes, Is. liv. 15—17. Rom. viii. 35—39.*) He restrains, intimidates, and infatuates, as he pleases. He hath blessed true believers, and of him alone it can be said, "He whom thou blessest is blessed, and he <sup>c</sup>"whom thou cursest is cursed." Let us therefore cast our lot among them, and then we shall be safe and happy; "for if God be for us, who can be against us?" "O LORD <sup>d</sup>"God of hosts, blessed is the man who trusteth in thee!" Oh, give us true faith, and increase it more and more!

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V 1, 2. Balaam had heard, that the Israelites had an altar, on which they offered bulls and rams, and in doing this were accepted by JEHOVAH; and he seems to have foolishly fancied, that by going beyond them in the number of altars and sacrifices, the Moabites might draw the Lord over to their side, and obtain leave to curse and destroy Israel.—It does not appear from the history, that he either dissuaded Balak from his purpose of warring against Israel, or exhorted him and his people to repentance: but in the language of authority or consequence, he directed Balak to build "seven altars, &c." and Balak, with great obsequiousness, complied with his expensive demands. It is evident that Balaam intended these sacrifices to be offered to the God of Israel; and probably he influenced Balak to join him in this respect likewise (4).

V. 3. The Lord had before met Balaam in anger, and greatly terrified him: but, having offered such costly sacrifices, he now hoped that he would countenance his design:

yet conscious guilt induced him to add "peradventure."—Probably Balaam used incantations in his retirement, to obtain a favourable meeting from the Lord, such as he had formerly employed in his soothsayings. (23. *Note, xxiv. 1, 2.*)—Formal converts very frequently intermingle their superstitious, philosophical, or carnal notions, with the truths, ordinances, and precepts of God; and from this source, almost all the corruptions of the Christian religion have been deduced.

V. 4—6. The Lord had important designs in meeting and speaking to this wicked man, notwithstanding the unwarranted method in which he sought him. He thus encouraged and admonished Israel, and his church in all ages; he warned their enemies; and he discovered the depths of wickedness which are in man's heart.—Balaam, instead of being ashamed of his atrocious wickedness, seems to have boasted of his service, in prevailing on Balak to offer so many and costly sacrifices to JEHOVAH. But he was blind indeed, to suppose that the God of Heaven would be pleased with sacrifices, offered in hypocrisy, without repentance, faith, love, and obedience; merely out of covetousness and malice, and with an intention of cursing and destroying his people! The Lord, however, gave him his message, which he could not but deliver; (*Note, xxii. 19—21*;) and he soon returned to Balak and his princes, who doubtless had joined with Balaam, in praying for leave to curse and destroy Israel. (*Mark v. 7. 12.*)

V. 7, 8. Balaam began his speech in the solemn style of prophecy, which approached that of poetry: and the Lord, probably by filling him with the dread of his power and wrath, constrained him reluctantly to pronounce blessings on his people. He guided the mouth of this wicked man, to speak words as contrary to the desires of his heart, as those of the ass were superior to the powers of the brute: and if we duly advert to the temper of the speaker, we shall perceive that the Lord spake by Balaam as entirely as by the ass; that the divine power was as really and effectually put forth in this case as in the other; and that Balaam had no more to glory in than the animal, but much indeed to be ashamed of. (*Note, xxii. 28.*)—Balaam was sent for from Aram, or Mesopotamia, to curse Israel, and thus disdainfully to set them at defiance: and he confessed that he came with that intent, in order that Balak might

hath not cursed? or how shall I defy,  
 whom the LORD hath not defied?

p Ec xix 3, 6. xxvi. 16 Deut. xxxiii. 28. Ezech. iii 8. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 9. q Deut. xxxii. 8. Ezra ix. 2. Jer. xvi. 28. Am. ix. 9. Rom. xv. 8—10. Eph. ii. 12—14.  
 9 For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.

war against them. But, as the Lord had not "cursed and defied them," (that is, had not rejected them, or determined to treat them as enemies,) he would not allow Balaam to curse them; though "the curse causeless" could have done them no hurt, and might have deceived and hardened Balak.—*Defy.* (7) *Notes*, 1 Sam. xvii. 8—10. 25, 26. 42—44.

V. 9. Beholding the regular encampment of the Israelites, separate from other people, Balaam was led to speak language suited, not only to that situation, but to the peculiar favour shewn them, and to their separation from other nations, by laws, religion, and character, as a holy people; in all which they were a type of true Christians.—The words, however, are a most extraordinary prophecy, which has now been accomplishing for above three thousand years. The distinction between Israel and the Gentiles, may in some sense be traced back to the calling of Abraham; it was recognized and established by the giving of the law and the Sinai-covenant; and after the final captivity of the ten tribes, the Jews, (as the nation was thenceforth generally called,) were kept a distinct people through the Babylonish captivity, and in subsequent ages, by their peculiar way of living, even when among other nations, which was always noted, and made a reproach to them, as the effect of bigotry. Since the destruction of Jerusalem, they have been scattered as aliens through many countries: yet they still "dwell alone, and are not reckoned among the nations;" for they have been preserved from being confounded with their conquerors and oppressors in foreign lands, in a manner absolutely unprecedented in the history of the world. (*Note*, Jer. xxx. 10, 11.) This prediction is the more wonderful, as the Israelites had at this time no settlement; and their peculiar laws and constitution could be very little known to Balaam. How then, except by divine revelation, could he possibly have foreseen this striking peculiarity of that people?—The distinction itself between Jews and Gentiles, which subsisted in every age, is a fulfilment of it.

V. 10. The multitudes of Israel were innumerable as the particles of the dust, according to the promises made to their fathers. (*Marg. Ref. r.*) Even "the fourth part" of them or one of their four grand encampments, could not be numbered.—As Balaam spoke the words of God, with some understanding of their meaning, and some conviction of their truth, we may consider the concluding part of this verse, as an important ancient testimony to the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, and of a future state of retribution. He not only bore testimony to the temporal felicity of Israel, and to their character as a righteous people; but he also acknowledged, that the righteous are happy in death, and beyond it.—That calmness with which the true believer expects and submits to the stroke of death; that hope full of immortality which

10 Who 'can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of 'the fourth part of Israel? Let 'me die 'the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!

11 And Balak said unto Balaam, What hast thou done unto me? "I took

Rev. xiv. 13.

u See on 7, 8.—xxiv. 10. Ps. cix. 17—20.

supports him at the solemn season; and that prospect of eternal felicity in another world, in which he rejoices, and which he recommends to others; render his latter end desirable, even in the judgment of those wicked people, whose convictions respecting a future judgment check them in their sinful pursuits with fears of eternal misery; and who would be glad of deliverance from the horror of dying in sin, and sinking into hell, if it could be obtained without repentance and self-denial. They *wish*, they *hope*, and in some sense they *intend*, to "die the death of the righteous:" but the love of wealth, honour, or pleasure, in one form or other, keeps them from living the life of the righteous. They therefore procrastinate, and quiet their consciences with the hope of future amendment: or they rest in some false confidence, some superficial reformation, or external change; or they despise that only salvation, by which a sinner can be righteous before God. (*Note* and *P. O. Luke* xiii. 22—30.) Thus many, who wish to "die the death of the righteous," live impenitent and perish in sin, as Balaam did.—'The object now before us is the most astonishing in the world. A very wicked man, under a deep sense of God and religion, persisting still in his wickedness, and preferring the wages of unrighteousness, even when he had before him a lively view of death, and that approaching period of his days, which should deprive him of all the advantages, for which he was prosecuting himself; and likewise a prospect, whether certain or uncertain, of a future state of retribution! All this joined with an explicit wish, that when he was to leave this world he might be in the condition of a righteous man! Good God, what inconsistency, what perplexity is here! With what different views of things, with what contradictory principles of action, must such a mind be torn and distracted! It was not an unthinking carelessness, by which he ran headlong into vice and folly, without making a stand to ask himself what he was doing: no, he acted upon the cool motives of interest. . . Neither was he totally callous to impressions of religion, what we call *abandoned*; for he absolutely denied to curse Israel. When reason resumes her place, . . he owns and feels, and is actually under the influence of the divine authority, whilst he is carrying on his views to the grave, the end of all temporal greatness; under this sense of things, with the better character and more desirable state present, . . full before him, . . in his thoughts, in his wishes, voluntarily to choose the worse! What fatality is here! Or, how otherwise can such a character be explained? And yet, strange as it may appear, it is not altogether an uncommon one. Nay, with some small alterations and put a little lower, it is applicable to a considerable part of the world. . . For if the reasonable choice be seen and acknowledged, and yet men make the unreasonable one; is not this the same inconsistency which

thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed *them* altogether!

x 20. 26. xxii. 33. 12 And he answered and said, "Must I not take heed to speak that which the LORD hath put in my mouth?"

13 ¶ And Balak said unto him, Come, I pray thee, with me "unto another place, from whence thou mayest see them: thou shalt see but the "utmost part of them, and shalt not see them all; and "curse me them from thence.

14 And he brought him into the field of Zophim, to the top of "Pisgah, and "built seven altars, and offered a bullock and a ram on *every* altar.

15 And he said unto Balak, Stand here by thy burnt-offering, "while I meet *the* LORD yonder.

16 And the LORD met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth, and said, Go again unto Balak, and say thus.

17 And when he came to him, be-

hold, he stood by his burnt-offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak said unto him, "What hath the LORD spoken?"

18 And he took up his parable, and said, "Rise up, Balak, and hear; hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor.

19 God "is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do *it*? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

20 Behold, I have received *commandment* to bless; and "he hath blessed, and "I cannot reverse it.

21 He "hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: "the LORD his God *is* with him, and "the shout of a King *is* among them.

22 "God brought them out of Egypt: he hath as it were "the strength of an unicorn.

'appeared unaccountable?...Men's strong attachments to 'this present world; their hopes, fears, and pursuits, are 'beyond all proportion to the known value of the things 'they respect...They try to make a composition with the 'Almighty...Those of his commands they will obey: but 'as to the others, they will make all atonements in their 'power...Indulgences before, or atonements afterwards, 'are all the same: and they add faint hopes and half-'resolves of making a change at one time or other.' Bp. Butler.

V. 12. Balaam attempted to make a merit of necessity; and when he was constrained to bless Israel, he would be thought very obedient to the Lord in so doing. Yet after he had declared that God had not cursed them, and he could not, he persisted in his endeavour. Indeed, he seems to have hoped, that he should at length obtain permission in this respect; for he had been allowed to come at the second time, though this had been refused him at the first. (Notes, xxii. 9—14. 19—21.)

V. 13. Balak seems to have thought, that Balaam's mind was indisposed for cursing Israel, by seeing their numerous and orderly encampments all at once: he therefore hoped to prevail, in cursing one division first, against which he probably intended to commence hostilities. Or he superstitiously thought one place more suited to the purpose than another. (Note, 1 Kings xx. 23—25.)

V. 14—18. Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1—8.

V. 19, 20. Men are deceitful, changeable, easily induced to revoke their engagements, or unable to fulfil them. On the contrary, God is perfectly sincere, faithful, unchangeable, almighty: and though, after the manner of man, he is said to repent of the kindness that he has shewn, when his creatures by ingratitude provoke him to withdraw his bounty; and of his judgments denounced,

when sinners repent, or when, in answer to prayer he delays the execution of them; (Notes, Gen. vi. 6, 7. Jer. xviii. 7—10 :) yet in the event it will be found, that every promise and engagement made to believers was exactly accomplished, and all his threatenings against unbelievers completely and finally executed.—This declaration, by the mouth of Balaam, had a peculiar reference to the state of Israel: God had absolutely determined to bless them; he had plainly revealed this purpose, and Balaam had reluctantly shewn it to Balak. Yet they were vainly attempting, by importunity, to induce the Lord to alter his mind and revoke his word! Balaam, however, was constrained to own that "he had received to bless;" (*commandment* is not in the original;) blessings on Israel were put into his mouth; and he could by no means reverse them.

V. 21. The national sins of Israel, in former years, had been pardoned, and the people were not at that time generally guilty of idolatry or rebellion, but were in an obedient disposition, had much true religion among them, and were *comparatively* righteous, and favoured by the Lord. The nation was also a type of believers, in whom God beholds not iniquity or perverseness; none allowed, none unrepented or unsubdued, and none unpardoned. (Notes, Jer. i. 20. Mic. vii. 18—20.) While this was the case, God, as reigning over them, protecting them, and leading them forth to victory, was among them; of whose power they had so much experience, that they were inspired with triumphant confidence; and at his word were ready to shout, or blow the trumpet, for the battle, and attack their enemies with assurance of success.

V. 22. The word rendered *unicorn*, is variously interpreted; but the rhinoceros is most generally supposed to be meant.—Israel, strengthened by the Lord, who brought him out of Egypt, was as invincible among the nations,

xxii. 6. xxiv. 1.  
Gen. iii. 15.  
Matt. xvi. 18.  
Luke x. 18, 19.  
Rom. xvi. 20.  
Rev. xii. 9.  
Or. in.  
Ps. xiv. 1-3.  
cxxxvi. 13-20.  
Is. lxiii. 9-12.  
Dan. ix. 15. Mic.  
vi. 4, 5. vii. 15.  
Ps. xxxi. 19. lxi.  
9. cxxvi. 2, 3.  
Is. xli. 4. John  
xi. 47. Acts iv.  
16. v. 12, 14. x.  
38. xv. 12. Gal.  
i. 23, 24. 1 Thes.  
i. 8, 9.  
xxiv. 6, 9. Gen.  
xlix. 8. Deut.  
xxxiii. 20. Ps.  
xvii. 12. Prov.  
xxx. 30. Is.  
xxx. 4. Amos  
iii. 8. Rev. v. 5.  
xxiv. 17. Gen.  
xlix. 27. Dan. ii.  
44. Mic. v. 8, 9.  
Zech. x. 4, 5.  
xii. 6. Rev. xix.  
11-21.  
t Ps. ii. 1-3.

23 Surely *there is* no enchantment  
against Jacob, neither *is there* any  
divination against Israel: according  
to this time it shall be said of Jacob  
and of Israel, 'What hath God  
wrought!'  
24 Behold, the people shall rise up  
as a great lion, and lift up himself as  
a young lion: 'he shall not lie down  
until he eat of the prey, and drink the  
blood of the slain.'  
25 And Balak said unto Balaam,  
'Neither curse them at all, nor bless  
them at all.'  
26 But Balaam answered and said  
unto Balak, Told not I thee, saying,

'All that the LORD speaketh, that I  
must do?'

27 ¶ And Balak said unto Balaam,  
'Come, I pray thee, I will bring thee  
into another place; peradventure it  
will please God that thou mayest curse  
me them from thence.'

28 And Balak brought Balaam unto  
the top of Peor, that looketh toward  
'Jeshimon.'

29 And Balaam said unto Balak,  
'Build me here seven altars, and prepare  
me here seven bullocks and seven rams.'

30 And Balak did as Balaam had  
said, and offered a bullock and a ram  
on every altar.

u 12. xxii. 18. 38  
xxiv. 12. 19  
1 Kings xxii. 14.  
2 Chr. xviii. 13.  
Acts iv. 19, 20  
v. 23.  
y See on 19, 20.—  
Job xxiii. 13  
Prov. xix. 21  
xxi. 30. Is. xiv.  
27. xlv. 10, 11.  
Mal. iii. 6. Rom.  
xi. 29.

z xxi. 20

a See on 1, 2.

as the rhinoceros among quadrupeds, and was as terrible to  
them. (*Marg. Ref.*—xxiv. 8.)

V. 23. It seems here to be taken for granted, that  
Satan exercised some power, in answer to the expectations  
of those who used enchantments. But Israel was so im-  
mediately under the divine protection, that nothing of this  
kind could injure him.—Some, however, render the words  
as meaning, that no enchantment or divination was used  
in Israel; and consequently the miracles of Moses were  
wrought by the power of God. (*Marg.*)—The favour at  
that time shewn to Israel was a specimen of the protec-  
tion always afforded the people of God; the remembrance  
of which would encourage the faith, and inspire the praises,  
of future ages; while with admiration they would con-  
sider what God had wrought. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, 2 *Thes.*  
i. 5—10, *latter part.*)

V. 24. At length Balaam not only blessed Israel, but  
likewise denounced the doom of all their enemies; which  
might have been a warning to Balak, and to himself also,  
to desist from the vain and perilous attempt. (*Note*, *Gen.*  
xlix. 8, 9.)

*Drink the blood, &c.*] The wild beasts gorge the blood,  
as well as devour the flesh, of the slaughtered prey: and  
it is indisputable, that many tribes of barbarians have  
actually, in the triumph of insulting, revengeful victory,  
drunk the blood of their enemies. But as far as Israel is  
concerned, it can only signify the completeness of their  
victories.

V. 25. Balak seems still to have thought Balaam's  
blessings as efficacious as his curses, and therefore wished  
to silence him; for he yet hoped to prevail against Israel.  
(*Note*, xxii. 6.)

V. 27. *It will please God.*] At length Balak spake as  
one, who had entered into Balaam's original plan; and  
who hoped, by change of place, (and perhaps times or  
days also,) and by repeating his expensive sacrifices, to  
render God propitious to him, and so to obtain leave to  
curse Israel; though Balaam himself seems almost to have  
despaired of prevailing.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—12.

Proud and wicked men spare no pains, and grudge

no expense, when they imagine that they can purchase  
the favour of God, or induce him to connive at their mis-  
chievous designs. And such is man's ignorance of the  
divine perfections and of true religion, that multitudes  
find teachers to encourage them in these vain hopes; while  
they neither mortify their lusts, nor humble themselves  
before God: and these in return have their covetousness  
gratified, by such pupils, and for such instructions!—  
Mere Pharisees have frequently exceeded the true people  
of God in the measure of external services, and of partial  
mortification: and not knowing of any thing more excel-  
lent, they are thus confirmed in self-confidence, and self-  
preference; they "trust in themselves that they are right-  
eous, and despise others;" and even boast of their  
services, at the very time when their hearts are full of  
malice and wickedness! But the Lord abhors pompous ex-  
ternals and superstitions, nay, even the most zealous at-  
tendance on his own ordinances, while the heart remains  
destitute of repentance, faith, and love to him and to his  
servants; and still more, when this devotion is the cloke  
of hypocrisy, and covers injustice and oppression. (*Notes*,  
*Prov.* xv. 8, 9. *Is.* i. 10—15. *Jer.* vii. 8—11. *Am.* v. 21—  
24.)—The spiritual worship of his people is of another  
kind: a broken and contrite, a believing and thankful, a  
pure and upright heart, are more suitable to his nature,  
and more precious in his sight, than "thousands of rams,  
and ten thousands of rivers of oil."—As true Christians  
are peculiarly favoured, so are they peculiarly character-  
ised: they "dwell alone:" they are despised by the sur-  
rounding multitudes, whom they pity while separated from  
their company, and with whom they desire no fellowship:  
their maxims, customs, laws, and conduct, are dissimilar  
from those of all other men: their inheritance, their home,  
their citizenship are in heaven: their affections, conversa-  
tion, pursuits, and pleasures, are heavenly: and, while  
they are deemed "the filth of the world, and the off-  
scouring of all things," and not fit to live; the Lord  
accounts them "the excellent of the earth," "of whom the  
world is not worthy." (*Note*, *Phil.* iii. 20, 21. *Col.* iii. 1—4.  
*Heb.* xi. 35—38.) Though few, hitherto in every place, when  
compared with the ungodly, they are very numerous in all:  
may the Lord multiply them a hundred fold, how many  
soever they be! Though despised by those who know them

## CHAP. XXIV.

Balaam desists from enchantments, and predicts the happiness of Israel and the destruction of his enemies, 1—9. Balak, being greatly enraged, dismisses Balaam, 10—13. Balaam prophesies of the Star of Jacob, the ruin of several nations, and very remote events, 14—25.

a xxi. 18. xxiii.  
20. xxxi. 16.  
1 Sam. xxiv. 20  
xxvi. 2. 25. Rev.  
ii. 14.

AND when Balaam <sup>a</sup>saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he

not, they often attract the reverence even of such wicked men, as are acquainted with them; but it is frequently accompanied with hatred and resentment. Yet many of the wicked, while, through domineering lusts and prevailing temptations, they espouse an opposite interest, and lead a contrary life, secretly account the righteous happy; and wish to have their lot with them at death, and in the eternal world: but in vain; for can they who, in defiance of conviction, choose to serve Satan and their sins in this world, reasonably expect to be 'numbered with the saints 'in glory everlasting?' There are indeed many whom the devil and his servants do not honour with their hatred; but despise, and only despise, as suspecting no harm to the cause from their example, influence, or endeavours. But let not such *mere professors* of religion deem themselves interested in those precious privileges, which belong to the true Israel of God.

## V. 13—30.

Notwithstanding disappointments and alarms, the lusts of wicked men revive and reign: for, while some are pushed forward by implacable malice and envy, others are induced to concur in persecution by insatiable avarice and restless ambition. But the Lord "is of one mind, who "can turn him?" He will infallibly perform his kindest, largest promises to his people; and execute his most terrible denunciations on his enemies: and, while earth and hell combine their power and policy to prevent it, the Lord "sitteth in the heavens," "hath them in derision," and will soon "speak to them in his wrath, and vex them "in his sore displeasure." (*Note, Ps. ii. 4—6.*)—Let believers then rejoice in his unchangeableness, his truth, and power; but let the wicked tremble at the alarming thought, and make haste to "flee from the wrath to "come."—If the Lord sees that we trust in his mercy, and accept of his salvation; that we do not indulge in any secret sin, or continue in presumptuous rebellion, but uprightly endeavour to serve and glorify him; we may be sure that our past offences are pardoned, and "buried in "the depths of the sea," no more to hurt us, than if they had never been committed. Then indeed the Lord hath blessed us, and "given commandment to bless us," and he will never suffer it to be reversed: and if Satan cannot deceive or defile us, he cannot hurt us by machinations or temptations, by enchantments or divinations. The Lord, having all hearts and all tongues in his hand, can not only restrain the malice of our enemies, but constrain them to speak well of us, and do well to us; to confess their impotency, to condemn themselves, and to foretel their own misery with their own mouth, even while they madly persist in their destructive opposition; and to acknowledge,

went not, as <sup>b</sup>at other times, <sup>c</sup>to seek <sup>b</sup>for enchantments, but he set his face <sup>c</sup>toward the wilderness.

2 And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel <sup>e</sup>abiding in his tents according to their tribes; and <sup>d</sup>the Spirit of God came upon him.

3 And <sup>e</sup>he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said,

b xxiii. 3. 15.  
Heb. to the meet-  
ing of. xxiii. 23.

c 5. ii. 2. &c. xxiii.  
9, 10. Cant. vi.  
4. 10.  
d xi. 25—29. 1 Sam.  
x. 10. xix. 20.  
23. 2 Chr. xv. 1.  
Matt. vii. 22. x.  
4. 8. Luke x. 20  
John xi. 49—51.  
e See on xxiii. 7.

with reluctant admiration, the work of God for us and in us.—Well then may the believer triumph in his King, the Lord of Hosts, and re-echo with grateful exultation, "What hath God wrought!" Oh, the wonders of his providence and grace! (*Note, Ps. cxxvi. 1—3.*) The wonders of his redeeming love, of his pardoning mercy, of his new-creating Spirit! What a change in our state, our character, and our prospects! Every former mercy now becomes an earnest of still further blessings; and from past deliverances we infer the certainty of final victory and eternal triumphs. Thus shall every true believer, thus shall the whole church of God, be "unto him for a name, and "for a praise;" whilst with their eyes they shall behold the destruction of the wicked.—But is this the reader's character and felicity? Let us seriously examine ourselves, and earnestly intreat the Lord to decide this infinitely important question. To this let us aspire; this let us pursue with unremitting diligence and undiverted attention: let us watch and pray always, for our enemies are vigilant, indefatigable, and malicious: and surely we ought to be as unwearied in glorifying God, and doing good, as his enemies are in doing mischief. Even Balaam's retirement to meet the Lord, and Balak's assiduous attention to his burnt-sacrifices, and rising up to hear the message from God, may furnish us with profitable hints; if we apply them to ourselves, in pursuing nobler objects, from higher motives, and for other purposes.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 1, 2. It is evident that Balaam had used enchantments, or incantations of some kind, even when he went to meet the Lord; but he had been constrained to return with answers the very reverse of his wishes and intentions; and therefore he deemed it to no purpose to repeat them. (*Note, xxiii. 3.*) It is not agreed among expositors, nor is it easy to decide, whether he desperately determined to curse Israel without permission, and thus to satisfy Balak and earn his reward, yet was constrained on the contrary to pronounce further blessings; or whether, under a pang of conviction, he desisted from his purpose for the present, and freely yielded himself to the powerful impulse of the Spirit of God coming upon him, though he afterwards returned to his wicked projects.

V. 3, 4. These verses may more literally be rendered, "He took up his parable and said, Balaam the son of "Beor hath said, and the man *whose eye was shut* hath said; he hath said who heard the words of God, who "saw the vision of the Almighty; falling, and his eyes "were opened." The word, rendered "are open," is generally agreed to signify *shut* (*marg.*), and the clause "into "a trance" is not in the original. Balaam is supposed to

• Heb. *who had his eyes shut, but now opened.* 4. 16. xxii. 31

and the man \*whose eyes are open hath said;

4 He hath said, which heard the words of God, which <sup>1</sup>saw the vision of the Almighty, <sup>2</sup>falling into a trance, but having his eyes open :

5 How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! and thy tabernacles, O Israel!

6 As the valleys are they spread forth, <sup>1</sup>as gardens by the river's side, <sup>2</sup>as the trees of lign-aloes <sup>3</sup>which the LORD hath planted, and <sup>4</sup>as cedar-trees beside the waters.

7 He shall <sup>1</sup>pour the water out of his buckets, and his seed *shall be* in <sup>2</sup>many waters, and <sup>3</sup>his king shall be higher than <sup>4</sup>Agag, and <sup>5</sup>his kingdom shall be exalted.

8 <sup>1</sup>God brought him forth out of Egypt, he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn: he <sup>2</sup>shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall <sup>3</sup>break their bones, and <sup>4</sup>pierce *them* through with his arrows.

r xiv. 9. xxiii. 24. Deut. vii. 1. s Ps. ii. 9. Is. xxxviii. 13 Jer. i. 17 Dan. vi. 24. t Deut. xxxiii. 23. 42. Ps. xci. 12.

9 He <sup>1</sup>couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion; <sup>2</sup>who shall stir him up? <sup>3</sup>blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee.

10 And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he <sup>1</sup>smote his hands together: and Balak said unto Balaam, <sup>2</sup>I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast altogether blessed *them* these three times.

11 Therefore now flee thou to thy place: <sup>1</sup>I thought to promote thee unto great honour; but, lo, <sup>2</sup>the LORD hath kept thee back from honour.

12 And Balaam said unto Balak, <sup>1</sup>Spake I not also to thy messengers, which thou sentest unto me, saying,

13 If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the LORD, to do *either* good or bad of mine own mind; *but* what the LORD saith, that will I speak?

14 And now, behold, I go unto my

refer to the time when his ass, seeing the Angel, (whom he himself could not see,) fell down with him; and then his eyes were *opened*, and he lay prostrate on the earth. But perhaps he also meant that his eyes had been *shut*, when he thought of cursing Israel, but were now *opened* to perceive that the Israelites were blessed; or that his bodily eyes were shut in his visions, while those of his understanding were opened.

V. 5, 6. As valleys verdant, fruitful, and widely extended; as luxuriant gardens on the banks of a fertilizing river; as aromatick trees diffusing a fragrant smell, or as cedars most stately to behold, planted as it were by God himself in a well watered, fertile soil, and wanting no human culture;—such did the camps of Israel appear, and such would be the prosperity of that favoured people!

*Lign-aloes.* (6) Or, *the wood of aloes*; 'an aromatick tree,...which widely diffuses a very agreeable smell.' Robertson. The word is rendered *aloes*, Prov. vii. 17; as the feminine plural is Ps. xlv. 8 (Heb. 9). Cant. iv. 14.

V. 7—9. Israel would be abundantly replenished with heavenly blessings; and, as seed sown in a well watered place, so his multitudes would increase still more and more. At length his king would be higher than Agag; which seems to have been the name of the several kings of Amalek in succession: though some think that Agag, whom Saul conquered and Samuel slew, was foretold by name long before his birth, as Josiah and Cyrus afterwards were. (Note, 1 Sam. xv. 32, 33.) The Amalekites were at this time very powerful, and their king renowned and prosperous: but it was here predicted, that Israel should in due time be governed by more prosperous princes, who would be far greater and more celebrated than those of the

Amalekites.—Saul, the first king of Israel, who seems to have been especially intended, subjugated the Amalekites and their king: but afterwards the kings of Israel were far more highly exalted. (Note, 20.) The kingdom of Christ, however, is generally allowed to be predicted; as exalted far above the highest of all earthly kingdoms.—Perhaps Balaam hoped at last to share the blessedness of Israel by thus blessing them; but he did it reluctantly, and not from love, and therefore he was not included. He however predicted Israel's successes under their most prosperous kings, and the spiritual prosperity and felicity of the church of Christ, and of all its cordial friends; and warned all its enemies, from Balak to his latest successors, to desist from the ruinous contest, involving himself also in the general sentence. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xxiii. 23, 24. Gen. xii. 1—3. xlix. 8, 9.)

V. 10, 11. Balak was at length enraged to the greatest degree, and expressed his indignation in the most furious manner: and, not without a mixture of scorn and disdain of Balaam, for having missed so fair a prospect of advancing himself from regard to the God of Israel, he sternly commanded him to depart immediately.

V. 12, 13. Balaam had repeatedly confessed his inability to go beyond the word of the Lord: but here he appears disposed, not only to vindicate his conduct to Balak, but also to intimate, that from the first he had only waited to know the will of the Lord, that he might obey it. (Marg. Ref.—Note, xxii. 18.)

V. 14. Balak, probably in a measure calmed by Balaam's expostulation, permitted him to proceed.—As the word rendered *advertise*, generally signifies *counsel*, many think it refers to the diabolical advice which Balaam gave

<sup>d</sup> See on 17.—people: come, *therefore*, and “I will advertise thee what this people shall do to thy people in” the latter days.  
<sup>e</sup> Gen. xlix. 1. Is. xxiv. 22. Jer. xlviii. 47. xlix. 39. Dan. ii. 28. x. 14. Hos. iii. 5. Acts ii. 17. 2 Tim. iii. 1.  
<sup>f</sup> 3, 4. xxiii. 7. 18. Job xxvii. 1. Matt. xiii. 35.  
<sup>g</sup> See on 4.—2 Sam. xxiii. 1. 2. 1 Cor. viii. 1. xiii. 2.  
<sup>h</sup> Job xix. 26—27. Zech. xii. 10. Jude 11. 14, 15. Rev. i. 7.  
<sup>i</sup> Matt. ii. 2—9. Luke i. 78. 2 Pet. i. 19. Rev. xlii. 16. Ps. xlv. 6. lxxviii. 70—72. cx. 1. Is. ix. 7. Luke i. 32, 33. k Heb. i. 8.

15 ¶ And <sup>h</sup> he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said;

16 He hath said, “which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High, *which* saw the vision of the Almighty, falling *into a trance*, but having his eyes open;

17 <sup>h</sup> I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh; there shall come <sup>i</sup> a Star out of Jacob, and <sup>k</sup> a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and

shall <sup>\*</sup> smite the corners of <sup>l</sup> Moab, and destroy <sup>m</sup> all the children of Sheth.

18 And <sup>n</sup> Edom shall be a possession: Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly.

19 Out <sup>o</sup> of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and <sup>p</sup> shall destroy him that remaineth of the city.

20 And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek *was* <sup>q</sup> the first of the nations, but <sup>r</sup> his latter end <sup>\*</sup> shall be that he perish for ever.

iii. 22. Rev. xix. 16. p Ps. xxi. 7—10. Matt. xxv. 46. Luke xix. 12, 27. q Or, shall be even to destruction.

Balak, either at this time or afterwards: but this is not probable; because what follows relates to those things which Israel would do to Moab, not what Moab should do to Israel; and the expression “the latter days” always denotes a very distant period. (*Marg. Ref. c.*)

V. 16. (*Note*, 1, 2.) Balaam here spake with increasing confidence of the revelations made to him: and though similar words were used by true prophets, yet from so wicked a man they have an air of ostentation. He indeed seems to have courted applause and admiration, when ready to despair of accumulating riches. “The secret of the *Lord* is with them that fear him;” (*Note*, Ps. xxv. 14;) but Balaam had little reason to boast of his knowledge of God and heavenly things.

V. 17. Balaam’s introduction to the subsequent prediction is very remarkable; and implies that it related to events, which could only be known by the Spirit of prophecy, enabling him to penetrate into the remotest futurity.—Balaam would see *Him*, the grand Object to be made known, but not at present; he would contemplate his glory, but at a great distance. (*Notes*, Job. xix. 23—27.) Some think that he also foreboded his own doom, as sentenced to “depart accursed,” by the Judge at his second coming. (*Notes*, Matt. xxv. 41—46. Luke xvi. 22, 23.)—The *STAR* coming out of Jacob, and the *SCEPTRE*, or regal authority, rising in Israel, may refer in a subordinate sense to David, as reigning over Israel with great reputation, and gaining considerable victories over the Moabites and others; and to the kings of his race as ruling over Judah, and still further subjugating the Moabites and the neighbouring nations. But the prophecy had its full accomplishment in the exalted Kingdom and spiritual victories of Jesus Christ. (*Note*, Gen. xlix. 10.)—Some suppose, that by *Sheth*, an ancestor or head of some Moabish tribe is meant; but others think that Seth the son of Adam and the progenitor of the whole post-diluvian world, is intended; and this seems the best grounded interpretation.—The word rendered “destroy,” is only used in this place and one more in Scripture; (*Is.* xxii. 5;) and some think it here means *build up*, for it is derived from a word which signifies a wall: yet, as it seems to be there properly rendered “breaking down,” its use in that passage does not favour this interpretation.—The *LXX* have

προνομευσαι, will lead captive, or spoil. If then it means destroy, or spoil, it may refer to Christ’s subverting the strong foundations of the several great monarchies, which have successively prevailed on earth, with that of Satan, the god and prince of this world; and subverting the corrupt state of things among all the posterity of Adam, by setting up his heavenly kingdom, and filling the earth with his glory. (*Notes*, Dan. ii. 44, 45. Rev. xx. 1—6.) The Jewish writers in general interpret this prophecy principally of the Messiah.—Onkelos, one of their most renowned paraphrasts, has these words: “When a prince shall arise of the house of Jacob, and Christ shall be anointed of the house of Israel; he shall slay the princes of Moab, and rule over all the sons of men.” The rest agree with him.—Had the house of David in general been meant, a single star would hardly have been mentioned. A Star was the known emblem of the Messiah; and one of the impostors, who pretended to be the Messiah in the primitive times, called himself *Barchochebas*, or the son of a star. Our Lord calls himself, “The bright and morning Star:” (*Note*, Rev. xxii. 16, 17;) and the Christian fathers were generally of opinion, that this prophecy being known in the East, prepared the way for the wise men following the star which appeared at the birth of Christ. (*Note*, Matt. ii. 1, 2.) In this grand and spiritual sense of the prophecy, Israel represents the true church of God, and Moab and Edom her enemies. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18, 19. The marginal references shew the fulfilment of this prophecy in the victories of David and Israel under him and his descendants, which were typical of the triumphs of David’s Son, who shall destroy all “that will not have him to reign over them,” however they may attempt to secure themselves. David and Solomon had indeed extensive dominions in those regions; yet not answerable to the words, “He that shall have dominion,” which emphatically describe Christ, “the King of kings, and Lord of lords.” (*Note*, Rev. xix. 11—16.)

V. 20. The Amalekites constituted one of the most ancient and prosperous of the nations, and they were the first who attacked the Israelites; (*marg.*) but Balaam predicted their final destruction; and thus, without knowing it, confirmed the sentence which the Lord by Moses had denounced against them. (*Notes*, Ex. xvii. 14—16.)

r Gen. xv. 19.

21 And he looked on 'the Kenites; and took up his parable, and said, Strong is thy dwelling-place, and thou putttest thy nest in a rock:

\* Heb. *Kais*.  
† Or, *how long*  
shall it be ere  
*Asshur* carry thee  
away captive?  
Gen. x. 11. Ezra  
iv. 2. Ps. lxxxiii.  
8. Hos. xiv. 8.

22 Nevertheless, 'the Kenite shall be wasted, 'until 'Asshur shall carry thee away captive.

23 And he took up his parable, and

said, Alas! who shall live 'when God doeth this?

24 And ships *shall* come from the coast of 'Chittim, and shall afflict Asshur, 'and shall afflict Eber, 'and he also shall perish for ever.

25 And Balaam rose up, and went 'and returned to his place: and Balak also went his way.

t xxiii. 23. 2 Kings  
7.  
u Gen. x. 4. Is.  
xxiii. 1. Dan.  
vii. 19. 20. viii.  
5-8. 21. x. 20.  
xi. 30.  
x Gen. x. 21-25.  
xiv. 18. Dan. ix.  
26. 27. Matt.  
xxiv. 15. Luke  
xx. 24. xxiii. 29  
-31. John xi.  
48.  
y Dan. ii. 35. 45.  
vii. 23-26. xi.  
45. Rev. xviii. 2  
-24.  
z 11. xxxi. 8.  
Josh. xiii. 22.

This prophecy was accomplished by Saul and David, after whose days but few vestiges of that once flourishing people can be traced; and no history now remains of them.

V. 21, 22. Jethro, a Midianite, is called a *Kenite*, (*Judges* i. 16,) and it is most probable the *Midianites* in general are here meant; who, dwelling in a rocky country, deemed themselves safe from the assaults of their enemies. But, notwithstanding this, they were wasted by the Israelites; till at length they were carried captive by the Assyrians, as it is supposed, about the time of the captivity of the ten tribes. The Kenites indeed are mentioned among the nations, whose land the Lord engaged to give to the posterity of Abraham: (*Gen.* xv. 19:) but they seem to have been extinct before Israel conquered Canaan, as they are not once mentioned in the history; and they could not be the people intended by Balaam, who perhaps saw at a distance the rocks and fastnesses of the Midianites.

V. 23, 24. Having paused awhile, Balaam seems to have sighed, and made this exclamation; either meaning that the predicted desolations would be so dreadful, that it would be miserable to live during such calamities; or that the time was so distant, that all who then heard him would have been dead a long time before it arrived. He might refer to the desolations by the Assyrians which he had predicted; or rather to those by the Greeks and Romans, as the next clause may properly be rendered "For ships shall come," &c.—The coasts or isles of Chittim always, in Scripture, mean the regions of Europe, bordering on the Mediterranean; especially, the Greeks or Romans. The passage is therefore an evident prediction of the victories of the Greeks, or Macedonians, under Alexander and his successors; and of those of the Romans after them. The latter especially, coming from far in ships, overturned the several kingdoms in the western part of Asia, and possessed them; causing dreadful afflictions to the people, who inhabited the ancient Assyria; but still greater to the Hebrews, especially in the last destruction of Jerusalem. And they have ever since been tyrannizing, in one form or other, over the world and the church; but shall at length be destroyed as entirely as the Amalekites were. This part of the prediction is not yet fulfilled. (*Notes*, Rev. xviii.)—It is well worthy our notice, that the final destruction of Amalek and Rome is foretold; but only the affliction of Asshur and Eber. The regions intended by Asshur remained but a short time under the dominion of the Romans, and were afterwards again governed by their own princes; and the Hebrews continue a distinct and numerous, though oppressed and scattered people to this day, evidently in order to the accomplishment of the prophecies respecting their conversion to Christ, and their subsequent prosperity; and this is one good proof that the

Hebrews were meant, and not any other obscure tribe, as some think.—What a surprising series of prophecy have we here in few words, which in former accomplishments hath already evidenced to successive generations the divine authority of the Scriptures; and shall to future ages demonstrate the same truth with undeniable evidence! 'Thus,' says Dr. Lightfoot, 'Balaam, instead of cursing 'the church, curseth Amalek the first, and Rome the last, 'enemy of the church.'—'His bearing witness to Moses 'and Israel, is somewhat like Judas's attesting the innocence of Christ.' Bp. Newton.

V. 25. Though Balaam for the present desisted from his purpose of cursing Israel; yet he was not rendered more friendly to them, or cured of his avarice, which at length suggested to him a still more diabolical plan.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—13.

The enemies of the church may renew their attacks, or vary them as they please; yet they can gain no real advantage: for it pleases the Lord to bless his people, and he will make all their opposers see, and feel, and acknowledge it; which will fill them with rage and desperation. Nay, in some cases, they are constrained to allow the excellence of the righteous, as well as to forebode their prosperity.—Under the protection of Judah's Lion, believers securely rest; and whoever disturbs them, will stir him up as an enemy: for he only suffers the malice of the wicked to proceed, till it hath accomplished his purposes for the good of his people, and he then arises to execute vengeance on their oppressors. (*Notes*, Ps. lxxvi. 10. Is. x. 5—7. 12—19.) But while he renders those, who would curse or injure his servants, most miserable under his awful displeasure; he abundantly blesses all who heartily pray for them and seek their peace.—They, who are kept from worldly honour and affluence by an upright heart and a good conscience, will be great gainers: and the minister of Christ especially, who faithful to his trust, with meekness and firmness, reproves the wickedness of those, who had thought to promote him to honour, will have "a hundred fold more in this present time, and in the world to come everlasting life." But such persons, as have light enough in their minds, and restraint enough upon their consciences, to induce their hesitation at going the whole length which a wicked patron may require; and thus lose his favour, and hinder their own preferment, continuing still the slaves of sin, and the enemies of God; are very miserable in this world, and likely to be so in the world to come. Let us not then attempt to serve God and Mammon, or halt between JEHOVAH and Baal: but let us follow the Lord fully, and he will make up every loss to

## CHAP. XXV.

The Israelites commit whoredom and idolatry, being tempted by the women of Moab and Midian, 1—3. God commands the criminals to be slain, 4, 5. Phinehas kills Zimri and Cosbi, and the plague which wasted Israel is stayed, 6—9. God approves his zeal, and gives him the covenant of a perpetual priesthood; and commands Moses to make war against the Midianites, 10—18

us; while the consent of wicked men in sin, will at length issue in bitter hatred and severe recriminations.

## V. 14—25.

Many foresee the miseries coming upon others, who do not suspect far greater and nearer miseries which await themselves. (*Note*, xxxi. 8.) But what benefit would accrue to us, what cause should we have to glory or rejoice, if we “understood all mysteries and all knowledge;” if we could penetrate the secrets of the most remote futurity, and develope the book of the divine decrees; “if we saw “the visions of the Almighty, and knew the knowledge “of the Most High,” and had our eyes opened to see things hidden from all others, “since the foundation of “the world;” while distant nations and successive ages were destined to celebrate our fame; if at the same time we remained the slaves of covetousness, ambition, lust, or malice; impenitent and unpardoned, under the wrath of God, doomed “to the fire that never shall be quenched, “and the worm that never dieth?”—All these endowments would but aggravate our guilt, and enhance our condemnation. Nor is there any indissoluble bond between extensive and exact knowledge, even in theological subjects, and “that holiness without which no man shall see “the Lord.” Let us then “take heed lest the light which “is in us be darkness; for if it should prove so, alas! how “great will that darkness be!” (*Note*, *Matt.* vi. 22, 23.) Let us seriously examine whether, or in what respects, our knowledge, attainments, experience, or profession, excel those of Balaam. No fluency nor excellency of speech, even in preaching or in prayer; no gifts of knowledge or prophecy; no “visions and revelations of the Lord;” are intrinsically and decidedly superior to the boasted endowments of this wretched man, who “loved the wages of “unrighteousness,” and died the enemy of God and his people. But a broken and contrite heart; a simple dependence on the Redeemer’s atoning blood and sanctifying grace; a cheerful subjection to the divine command, and submission to his will; an habitual aim to glorify God and benefit his people; are less splendid, but far more excellent attainments, and invariably “accompany salvation.” (*Note*, *Heb.* vi. 9, 10.) No vain-glorious hypocrite ever possessed these; yet the feeblest true believer is in some measure conscious of them, and is daily longing and praying for more of them: while perhaps, through an error in judgment and through Satan’s subtlety, he overlooks all these infallible evidences of saving grace; and indulges desponding fears, because he cannot emulate some boasting Balaam’s gifts.—But let such persons bless the Lord, and rejoice in what he hath done for them. Here by faith they behold the Saviour nigh unto them; shortly shall they

AND Israel abode in \*Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.

2 And \*they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and \*bowed down to their gods.

3 And Israel \*joined himself unto

a xxxiii. 49. Josh. ii. 1. iii. 1. Mic. vi. 2.  
b xxxi. 15, 16. Eccl. vii. 26. 1 Cor. x. 8.  
c Ex. xxxiv. 15, 16. 1 Kings xi. 1—8. 1 Cor. x. 20, 27, 28. 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17. Rev. ii. 14.  
d Ex. xx. 5. xxxiii. 24. Josh. xxxiii. 7. 16. 1 Kings xix. 18.  
e 5. Deut. iv. 3, 4. Ps. cvii. 28, 29. Hos. ix. 10.

see him nigh, as come to complete their redemption, and consummate their felicity: whilst the wicked shall be “punished with an everlasting destruction from his presence.”—Yet the Lord will glorify himself and benefit his church, by the gifts, and in the doom, even of hypocrites; and in these prophecies we may discern both the misery of the ungodly; the vanity of all worldly dependencies and pre-eminence; the approaching destruction of every enemy who hath done evil in the sanctuary; the consequent triumphs of the church; and the universal spread of the gospel, notwithstanding afflictions, persecutions, and damnable heresies; while they assure our faith in all the promises, which respect our own salvation.

## NOTES

CHAP. XXV. V. 1—3. It is expressly said, in several places, that the temptation, by which the Israelites were seduced, was the effect of Balaam’s counsel to Balak; (xxx. 15, 16. *Rev.* ii. 14;) yet we read in the conclusion of the preceding chapter, that “Balaam rose up, and “went and returned to his place.” He was, however, afterwards slain among the princes of Midian: (*Note*, xxxi. 8;) and it may therefore be supposed that he directly went home in sullen despondency, where after a time Satan suggested this infernal counsel to him; that he then returned to propose it to Balak; and that, waiting to observe its success and to enjoy his reward, he was slain by the Israelites. Many commentators however suppose, that he gave Balak this counsel before he went home; and consequently they must conclude, that he returned to claim his recompence when his project had succeeded, or to give further advice. (*Marg. Ref.*)—This wicked man could not obtain leave to curse Israel: but he instructed Balak how to seduce Israel to bring a curse upon themselves; or at least to deprive themselves of the Lord’s immediate protection, and to provoke such judgments as would diminish their numbers and discourage their hearts.—“Not daring, “as a prophet, to assist the king of Moab, he considers “whether some other means might not be found.... One “would not think it possible, that the weakness even of “religious self-deceit, in its utmost excess, could have so “poor a distinction, so fond an evasion, to serve itself of! “But so it was; and he could think of no other method, “than to betray the children of Israel to provoke his wrath, “who was their only Defence.—He could not forego the “rewards of unrighteousness; he therefore first seeks for “indulgences; and when these could not be obtained, he “sins against the whole meaning, end, and design of the “prohibition! And surely the impious counsel he gave to “Balak... was a greater piece of wickedness than if he had “cursed Israel in words!... He seeks indulgences for plain

<sup>r</sup> Josh. xcdi. 17. Baal-peor: and 'the anger of the LORD  
<sup>Judg. ii. 14. 20.</sup> was kindled against Israel  
<sup>Pa. xc. 11. Jer.</sup>

<sup>xxii. 4.</sup> 4 And the LORD said unto Moses,  
<sup>14, 15. 18. Ex.</sup> Take <sup>xxiii. 2.</sup> all the heads of the people,  
<sup>Deut. xii. 6-9.</sup> and hang them up before the LORD  
<sup>13. 15. xxi. 23.</sup> against the sun, <sup>2 Sam. xxi. 6. 9.</sup> that the fierce anger  
<sup>Eath. vii. 9. 10.</sup> of the LORD may be turned away from  
<sup>11. Josh. vii. 25.</sup> Israel.  
<sup>26. Pa. lxxxv. 3.</sup>

<sup>4. Jon. iii. 9.</sup> 5 And Moses said unto the <sup>k</sup> judges  
<sup>Ex. xviii. 21. 25.</sup> of Israel, <sup>26.</sup> Slay ye every one his men  
<sup>Ex. xxii. 20.</sup> that were joined unto Baal-peor.  
<sup>xxiii. 27.</sup>

<sup>Deut. xvii. 3-5.</sup> 6 ¶ And, behold, one of the chil-  
<sup>1 Kings xviii. 40.</sup> dren of Israel came, and brought unto  
<sup>14, 15. xxii. 4.</sup> his brethren <sup>xxxi. 2. 9-16.</sup> a Midianitish woman,  
<sup>n xv. 34. 31. Deut.</sup> in the sight of Moses, and in the sight  
<sup>xxix. 19-21.</sup> of all the congregation of the children of  
<sup>Jer. iii. 8. viii. 12.</sup> Israel, who *were* <sup>xxxi. 23. xlii. 4.</sup> weeping before the  
<sup>15-18. xlii. 4.</sup> door of the tabernacle of the congre-  
<sup>7. xlii. 16. 17.</sup> gation.  
<sup>2 Pet. ii. 13-15.</sup>

<sup>Jude 13.</sup> <sup>o</sup> Judg. ii. 4. Ezra  
<sup>ix. 1-4. x. 6-</sup> ix. 1-4. x. 6-  
<sup>9. Is. xxi. 12.</sup> 9. Is. xxi. 12.  
<sup>Ez. ix. 4-6.</sup> Ez. ix. 4-6.  
<sup>Joel ii. 17.</sup>

door of the tabernacle of the congre-  
 gation.

7 And when <sup>p</sup> Phinehas, the son of <sup>Ex. vi. 25. Josh</sup>  
 Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, <sup>xxiii. 30. 31</sup>  
 saw *it*, he rose up from among the <sup>Judg. xx. 28.</sup>  
 congregation, and took <sup>q</sup> a javelin in <sup>1 Sam. xviii. 10</sup>  
 his hand; <sup>11. xix. 9.</sup>

8 And he went after the man of  
 Israel into the tent, and <sup>r</sup> thrust both of <sup>5. 11. Pa. cvi. 29</sup>  
 them through, the man of Israel, and <sup>-31.</sup>  
 the woman through her belly. <sup>s</sup> So <sup>xvi. 46-48</sup>  
 the plague was stayed from the chil- <sup>2 Sam. xxiv. 25.</sup>  
 dren of Israel. <sup>1 Chr. xxi. 22.</sup>

9 And those that died in the plague  
 were <sup>t</sup> twenty and four thousand. <sup>4. 5. xvi. 49. 50.</sup>

10 And the LORD spake unto Moses, <sup>Deut. iv. 3, 4</sup>  
 saying, <sup>1 Cor. x. 8.</sup>

'wickedness; which not being able to obtain, he glosses  
 'over that same wickedness, dresses it up in a new form,  
 'in order to make it pass off more easily with himself!  
 'That is, he deliberately contrives to deceive and impose  
 'upon himself, in a matter which he knew to be of the  
 'utmost importance!... This was the man who desired to  
 'die the death of the righteous, and that his last end  
 'might be like his." *Bp. Butler*.—Under the mask of  
 friendship, an intercourse with Israel was opened, and  
 some of the women of Moab and Midian (who were, it  
 seems, by no means backward to such an infamous under-  
 taking,) were employed to allure the people to a criminal  
 intercourse. This made way for an invitation to those  
 idolatrous feasts, where every species of licentiousness was  
 practised; and this being readily complied with, the Israel-  
 ites flocked in great numbers, and greedily joined in this  
 abominable worship: (*Note* and *P. O.* 1 *Kings* xi. 1-8:)  
 for 'the ordinary charms unto idolatry, were good victuals  
 'and bad women." *Bp. Patrick*.—These Israelites had  
 hitherto been preserved from connexions with heathen  
 women, amidst all their rebellions; and therefore it is  
 said, "the people *began* to commit whoredom with the  
 "daughters of Moab."—The women of Moab perhaps  
 were the first tempters; but those of Midian at length  
 became more generally and deeply criminal. (*Note*, 17,  
 18.)—"Baal-peor," or the lord of Peor, might be the  
 same as Chemosh, the god of Moab. (*Note*, xxii. 40,  
 41.)

V. 4, 5. Many principal persons, in the several tribes  
 and families, seem to have been ringleaders in this com-  
 plicated provocation; and it is probable, that the Lord had  
 already sent a plague which was making dreadful ravages.  
 If, therefore, the people at large would not have this idol-  
 atry interpreted into a national forfeiture of the covenant,  
 and be destroyed by the pestilence, as one man; imme-  
 diate vengeance must be executed on the chief transgres-  
 sors, by putting them to death, and hanging them up  
 ignominiously, as a sacrifice to the justice of God. (*Note*,  
*Ex.* xxxii. 27-29.) The words "joined unto Baal-peor,"  
 seem to imply an exception for such as had sinned, but

had speedily repented.—The notorious criminals of every  
 rank were slain by the magistrates directly; but perhaps  
 none except the more eminent persons were ignominiously  
 hung up, for a warning to all the survivors.—From com-  
 paring the sum total of those who died by the plague (9),  
 with that mentioned by Paul, (1 *Cor.* x. 8;) it is thought  
 that no less than one thousand persons were thus executed  
 in a summary manner.

V. 6-8. This action of Zimri and Cosbi was done in  
 direct defiance of God himself; as well as of Moses, and  
 of the congregation, who in great multitudes were peni-  
 tently confessing their sins, and deprecating the divine dis-  
 pleasure. That a man should thus triumph in his wicked-  
 ness, and dare the sword of justice, while numbers were  
 dying by the sword of the magistrate, and much greater  
 multitudes by the hand of God, was the greatest insult and  
 outrage imaginable upon all authority, divine and human;—  
 upon all order, and even upon common decency. Phinehas  
 was the second priest, and successor to the high priest-  
 hood, and doubtless as high in authority as in rank. As a  
 magistrate, he was commissioned by Moses and by God to  
 slay "those who were joined to Baal-peor:" Zimri was  
 notoriously and avowedly guilty; but while others trem-  
 bled to come near him, Phinehas boldly executed venge-  
 ance upon him and his infamous paramour at once. No  
 conduct could in every view be more unexceptionable; nor  
 can it ever be drawn into a precedent to countenance acts  
 of private revenge, of religious persecution, or even of  
 irregular publick vengeance. The objections therefore of  
 some infidels, to this part of holy Scripture, expose their  
 ignorance, or disingenuity, as much as their hatred of this  
 sacred book. For there is not one of them, (religion out  
 of the question,) but in such a crisis, when a daring rebel  
 set the regular magistracy at defiance, and evidently meant  
 to instigate the people to revolt, would have allowed, that  
 the *welfare of the community was the chief law*, and that so  
 extraordinary a case required an extraordinary remedy; and  
 would have applauded a decisive measure, though irre-  
 gular: yet, after all, this does not appear in the least to  
 have been so.

<sup>a</sup> Josh. vii. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Sam. xxi. 14.

Heb. *with new*

zeal. 2 Cor. xi. 2.

<sup>c</sup> Ex. xx. 5. xxxiv.

14. Deut. iv. 24.

xxix. 20. xxxii.

16. 21. Josh.

xxiv. 19. 1 Kings

xiv. 23. Psalm

ixviii. 53. Ez.

xvi. 38. Nah. i.

2. Zeph. i. 18

iii. 8. 1 Cor. x.

22.

<sup>y</sup> Neh. xiii. 29.

Mal. ii. 4. 5.

<sup>z</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 30.

1 Kings ii. 27.

1 Chr. vi. 4—15.

50—53.

<sup>a</sup> Ex. xl. 15. Is.

lii. 6. Jer. xxxiii.

17. 22. Heb. vii.

11. 17. 18. 1 Pet.

ii. 5. 9. Rev. i. 6.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Kings xix. 10.

14. Ps. cxi. 31.

cxix. 139. John

ii. 17. Acts xxii.

3—5. Rom. x.

2—4.

<sup>c</sup> Ex. xxxii. 30.

Josh. vii. 12.

2 Sam. xxi. 8.

Heb. ii. 17.

John ii. 2.

11 Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, hath <sup>a</sup> turned my wrath away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous <sup>a</sup> for my sake among them, <sup>a</sup> that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy.

12 Wherefore say, Behold, <sup>a</sup> I give unto him my covenant of peace.

13 And he shall have it, and <sup>a</sup> his seed after him, *even* the covenant of <sup>a</sup> an everlasting priesthood; because he was <sup>a</sup> zealous for his God, and made an <sup>a</sup> atonement for the children of Israel.

14 Now the name of the Israelite that was slain, *even* that was slain with the Midianitish woman, *was* Zimri, the

son of Salu, <sup>a</sup> a prince of a <sup>a</sup> chief house among <sup>a</sup> the Simeonites.

15 And the name of the Midianitish woman that was slain, *was* Cosbi, the daughter of <sup>a</sup> Zur; he *was* head over a <sup>a</sup> people, *and* of a chief house in Midian.

16 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

17 <sup>a</sup> Vex the Midianites, and smite <sup>a</sup> them:

18 For they <sup>a</sup> vex you with their wives, wherewith they have <sup>a</sup> beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cosbi, the daughter of a prince of Midian, their sister, which was slain in the day of the plague for Peor's sake.

V. 11—13. The congregation had *wept* before the Lord, and doubtless many had joined with Moses in prayer and supplication: yet this act of Phinehas, by which, being zealous for the glory of God, he had inflicted condign punishment on two arrogant offenders, and thus offered an atoning sacrifice to the divine justice, is exclusively mentioned as having “turned away the wrath of God from Israel,” and prevented their destruction. It was therefore “imputed to him for righteousness.” (Note, Ps. cvi. 28—31.) Let who would censure it in succeeding ages, the heart-searching God declared his approbation of it as a righteous action; and he rewarded it by giving to Phinehas “his covenant of peace,” ensuring to him personally, no doubt, all the blessings of his favour and friendship, in this world and in the next; but, in particular, engaging that the high priesthood, the office of a typical mediator and peace-maker, should be continued in his family by “an everlasting,” or *perpetual* covenant. Phinehas was the eldest son of Eleazar, the eldest son of Aaron: but there was no express law limiting the high priesthood to the eldest son; he might die before his father; his children might die, or be incapacitated: so that there was no certainty of his and of their succession, till this promise was made.—The high priesthood continued in the family of Phinehas till about the days of Eli, who was descended from Ithamar; and it is not known on what account that branch was substituted. (Notes, 1 Sam. ii. 30. 35, 36. 1 Kings ii. 26, 27.) It soon, however, returned into that of Phinehas, in which it is probably supposed to have continued, till the time of Herod the great, if not till that dispensation came to an end.

V. 14, 15. The names and rank of these offenders are thus declared, in order to illustrate the heroic impartiality of Phinehas.—Zur is numbered among the kings of Midian, who were slain by Israel. (xxx. 8.)

V. 17, 18. Balaam's counsel seems to have been first given to Balak, king of Moab; yet probably the Midianitish women, especially of the higher ranks, as Cosbi was, were the principal tempters; and the nation of Midian seems, more generally and heartily, to have come into the

execrable measure than that of Moab: they were therefore first selected to be made examples of, for a warning to the Moabites, who were spared at this time. (Notes, xxxi. Deut. xxiii. 3—5. 2 Sam. viii. 2.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—5.

The friendship of the wicked is more dangerous than their enmity: for none can prevail against the servants of God, except by tempting them to sin; no enchantment can injure them, except the fascination of worldly interests and pleasures; nor would the enemy of souls be so much gratified by casting them into a fiery furnace, as by alluring them to criminal indulgences. When once the fence of the divine command is broken, the progress from one kind and degree of sin to another is almost unavoidable; and when the barrier of female modesty is removed, the transition to the most impudent licentiousness is frequently very sudden; nor are any persons more pestilential to the human species, than beautiful abandoned women. Numbers in every age are brought to an ignominious execution, and immensely greater multitudes are hurried to the grave by dreadful diseases, in consequence of listening to their allurements: in short, “their feet lead down to death, and their steps take hold of *hell*.” Yet multitudes, increasing multitudes, throng the fatal path, regardless of the law of God, in defiance of his vengeance, and in neglect of the dictates of common sense, universal observation, and their own painful experience of the fatal effects! (P. O. Prov. ii. 10—22. Note, v. 14. P. O. 1—14.) But let him who would have health, credit, and comfort in this world, or escape the wrath to come, “flee youthful lusts,” and shun such fascinating tempters, as he would persons infected with a baleful pestilence.—In collective bodies there is generally a diversity of characters: we should not therefore indiscriminately condemn *all* for the crimes of *some*, which perhaps the others detest and lament; and our gracious Lord always distinguishes between the penitent and the obstinate transgressor.

## CHAP. XXVI.

The people are numbered by divine command: the number of each tribe, and the sum total, 1—51. The law for the division of the promised land, 52—56. The Levites are numbered, 57—62. None left of those before numbered, but Caleb and Joshua, 63—65.

**AND** it came to pass <sup>a</sup>after the plague, that the LORD spake unto Moses, and unto Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, saying,

<sup>b</sup>Take the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, from twenty years old and upward, throughout their fathers' house, all that are able to go to war in Israel.

<sup>c</sup>And Moses and Eleazar the priest spake with them in <sup>e</sup>the plains of Moab, by Jordan near Jericho, saying,

<sup>d</sup>Take the sum of the people, from twenty years old and upward; as the LORD <sup>d</sup>commanded Moses and the children of Israel, which went forth out of the land of Egypt.

<sup>e</sup>¶ Reuben, <sup>e</sup>the eldest son of Israel: <sup>e</sup>the children of Reuben; Hanoch, <sup>e</sup>of whom cometh the family of the Hanochites: of Pallu, the family of the Palluites:

6 Of Hesron, the family of the

Hesronites: of Carmi, the family of the Carmites.

7 These *are* the families of the Reubenites: and they that were numbered of them were <sup>g</sup>forty and three thousand and seven hundred and thirty.

8 And the sons of Pallu; Eliab.

9 And the sons of Eliab; Nemuel, and Dathan, and Abiram. This *is that* Dathan and Abiram *which were* <sup>h</sup>famous in the congregation, who strove against Moses and against Aaron in the company of Korah, when they strove against the LORD;

10 And <sup>i</sup>the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, together with Korah, when that company died, what time the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men: and <sup>i</sup>they became a sign.

11 Notwithstanding, <sup>k</sup>the children of Korah died not.

12 ¶ The sons of Simeon, after their families: of <sup>l</sup>Nemuel, the family of the Nemuelites; of Jamin, the family of the Jaminites: of <sup>m</sup>Jachin, the family of the Jachinites:

13 Of <sup>n</sup>Zerah, the family of the Zarhites: of Shaul, the family of the Shaulites.

14 These *are* the families of the

## V. 6—18.

The more highly advanced in rank or authority offenders are, the deeper aggravation attends their crimes, and the more extensive is the influence of their pernicious example: it is therefore of vast importance, that judgment should be administered without respect of persons. Yet there have always been those, who would attempt to elude, outbrave, or bribe human justice. When this is the case, zeal for the honour of God, and the welfare of society, should excite all *invested with authority*, to disregard every personal consideration, in stepping forward, and bringing an overgrown offender to condign punishment. And they who, by any warrantable means, boldly attempt to check the progress of daring wickedness shall be honoured and recompensed by God, though they be censured and hated by men for so doing. None will be more surely and severely punished than they, who, after Satan's example, as his agents, and with his subtlety, tempt others to wickedness.—The Lord will chastise his offending people; but their tempters he will utterly destroy: and how dreadful the change to those, who sink together from the indulgence of sinful pleasure into the torments of hell-fire!—How infatuated are men, who wantonly provoke the vengeance of that God who can so easily destroy them!—But let us not close our reflections without looking to Jesus, who, in zeal for the Lord of hosts and love to his people,

made an atonement, not with the blood of others, but with his own blood, that we might not be consumed; and who is in consequence established in an everlasting priesthood after the order of Melchizedek, a High Priest upon the royal throne of universal and everlasting dominion.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXVI. V. 1, 2. (Notes, i. ii.)—The plague, above recorded, had swept away the last of that devoted generation, which provoked the Lord to “swear in his” “wrath that they should not enter” Canaan: and he commanded that the people should again be numbered, (this being the third time,) both to illustrate his faithfulness to his promises, and to prepare for the division of the promised land. Not only the tribes, but the families of Israel are here registered; that is, the names of those sons, or grandsons, of the patriarchs, who were the progenitors of the grand subdivisions in the several tribes.

V. 10. *Together with Korah.*] This verse seems to determine, that Korah was swallowed up with Dathan and Abiram. (Note, xvi. 28—34.)

V. 11. The sons of Korah, not consenting to their father's crime, or speedily repenting, were preserved when he was cut off, and afterwards became eminent in the service of the sanctuary. (Marg. Ref. k.)

V. 14. The immense decrease of this tribe renders it

<sup>e</sup> Decreased 27,100. i. 22, 23. ii. 12, 13.

Simeonites, <sup>a</sup> twenty and two thousand and two hundred.

<sup>p</sup> Gen. xvi. 16. Ziphun, Haggai, Shuni, Ezbai, Eri, Arodi, Areli.

15 ¶ The children of Gad, after their families: of <sup>b</sup> Zephon, the family of the Zephonites; of Haggi, the family of the Haggites: of Shuni, the family of the Shunites.

16 Of Ozni, the family of the Oznites: of Eri, the family of the Erites:

17 Of Arod, the family of the Arodites: of Areli, the family of the Arelites.

<sup>q</sup> Decreased 5150 i. 24, 25. ii. 14, 15.

18 These *are* the families of the children of Gad, according to those that were numbered of them, <sup>a</sup> forty thousand and five hundred.

<sup>r</sup> Gen. xxxviii. 1 —i0. xvi. 12 i Chr. ii. 3.

19 ¶ The sons of Judah *were* <sup>a</sup> Er and Onan: and Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan.

<sup>s</sup> Gen. xxxviii. 5. ii. 14, 26. i Chr. iv. 21.

<sup>t</sup> Gen. xxxviii. 27 —29. xvi. 12. Ruth iv. 18—22. i Chr. ii. 3, &c. Neh. xi. 4, 6. Perez. Matt. i. 3. Luke iii. 33. Pharez.

20 And the sons of Judah, after their families, *were*: of <sup>a</sup> Shelah, the family of the Shelanites; of <sup>a</sup> Pharez, the family of the Pharezites; <sup>a</sup> of Zerah, the family of the Zarhites.

<sup>u</sup> Gen. xxxviii. 30. xvi. 12. Zarah. i Chr. ii. 4. Neh. xi. 24.

21 And the sons of Pharez *were*: of Hezron, the family of the Hezronites: of Hamul, the family of the Hamulites.

<sup>x</sup> Increased 1900 i. 26, 27. ii. 3, 4.

22 These *are* the families of Judah, according to those that were numbered of them, <sup>a</sup> threescore and sixteen thousand and five hundred.

<sup>y</sup> Gen. xvi. 13. Tola. Phuvah. Job.

23 ¶ Of <sup>a</sup> the sons of Issachar, after their families: of Tola, the family of the Tolaite: of Pua, the family of the Punites:

24 Of Jashub, the family of the Jashubites; of Shimron, the family of the Shimronites.

<sup>z</sup> Increased 9900. i. 26, 29. ii. 5, 6.

25 These *are* the families of Issachar, according to those that were numbered of them, <sup>a</sup> threescore and four thousand and three hundred.

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xvi. 14.

26 ¶ Of <sup>a</sup> the sons of Zebulun, after their families: of Sered, the family of the Sardites: of Elon, the family of the Elonites: of Jahleel, the family of the Jahleelites.

<sup>b</sup> Increased 3100. i. 30, 31. ii. 7, 8.

27 These *are* the families of the Zebulunites, according to those that were numbered of them, <sup>a</sup> threescore thousand and five hundred.

28 ¶ The <sup>a</sup> sons of Joseph, after their families, *were* Manasseh and Ephraim.

29 Of the sons of Manasseh: of <sup>a</sup> Machir, the family of the Machirites: and Machir begat Gilead; of Gilead *come* the family of the Gileadites.

30 These *are* the sons of Gilead: of <sup>a</sup> Jeezer, the family of the Jeezerites: of Helek, the family of the Helekites:

31 And of Asriel, the family of the Asrielites: and of Shechem, the family of the Shechemites:

32 And of Shemida, the family of the Shemidaite: and of Hepher, the family of the Hepherites.

33 And <sup>a</sup> Zelophehad the son of He-<sup>c</sup> pher had no sons, but daughters: and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad *were* Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

34 These *are* the families of Manasseh, and those that were numbered of them, <sup>a</sup> fifty and two thousand and seven hundred.

35 These *are* the sons of Ephraim, after their families: of Shuthelah, the family of the Shuthalhites: of <sup>a</sup> Becher, the family of the Bachrites: of Tahan, the family of the Tahanites.

36 And these *are* the sons of Shuthelah: of Eran, the family of the Eranites.

37 These *are* the families of the sons of Ephraim, according to those that were numbered of them, <sup>a</sup> thirty and two thousand and five hundred. These *are* the sons of Joseph after their families.

38 ¶ The <sup>a</sup> sons of Benjamin, after their families: of Bela, the family of the Belaites; of Ashbel, the family of the Ashbelites: of <sup>a</sup> Ahiram, the family of the Ahiramites.

39 Of <sup>a</sup> Shupham, the family of the Shuphamites: of Hupham, the family of the Huphamites.

40 And the sons of Bela *were* <sup>a</sup> Ard and Naaman: of <sup>a</sup> Ard, the family of the Ardites: and of Naaman, the family of the Naamites.

41 These *are* the sons of Benjamin,

probable, that, influenced by the example of Zimri, the Simeonites had been peculiarly criminal in the late wick-

edness; and that multitudes of them had died by the plague. (Marg.)

after their families: and they that were numbered of them *were* <sup>a</sup> forty and five thousand and six hundred.

<sup>a</sup> Increased 10,200.  
i. 36, 37. ii. 22, 23.

42 ¶ These *are* the sons of Dan, after their families: of <sup>o</sup> Shuham, the family of the Shuhamites. These *are* the families of Dan, after their families.

<sup>o</sup> Gen. xvi. 23.  
Hushim.

43 All the families of the Shuhamites, according to those that were numbered of them, *were* <sup>p</sup> threescore and four thousand and four hundred.

<sup>p</sup> Increased 1700.  
i. 38, 39. ii. 25, 26.

44 ¶ Of <sup>q</sup> the children of Asher, after their families: of Jimna, the family of the Jimnites: of Jesui, the family of the Jesuites: of Beriah, the family of the Beriites.

<sup>q</sup> Gen. xvi. 17.  
Jimnah. Ishuah.  
Jesui. i Chr. vii.  
80. Jimnah. Ishuah.  
Ishuai.

45 Of the sons of Beriah: of Heber, the family of the Heberites: of Malchiel, the family of the Malchielites.

46 And the name of the daughter of Asher *was* <sup>r</sup> Sarah.

<sup>r</sup> Gen. xvi. 17.  
Sera.

47 These *are* the families of the sons of Asher, according to those that were numbered of them, *who were* <sup>s</sup> fifty and three thousand and four hundred.

<sup>s</sup> Increased 11,900.  
i. 40, 41. ii. 27, 28.

48 ¶ Of <sup>t</sup> the sons of Naphtali, after their families: of Jahzeel, the family of the Jahzeelites: of Guni, the family of the Gunites:

<sup>t</sup> Gen. xvi. 24.

49 Of Jezer, the family of the Jezerites: of <sup>u</sup> Shillem, the family of the Shillemites.

<sup>u</sup> i Chr. vii. 13.  
Shallum.

50 These *are* the families of Naphtali, according to their families: and they that were numbered of them *were* <sup>x</sup> forty and five thousand and four hundred.

<sup>x</sup> Decreased 8000.  
i. 42, 43. ii. 29, 30.

51 These *were* the numbered of the children of Israel, <sup>y</sup> six hundred thousand and a thousand seven hundred and thirty.

<sup>y</sup> Sum total decreased 1820.  
i. 46. ii. 32. Job  
xii. 20—23.

52 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

53 Unto <sup>z</sup> these the land shall be divided for an inheritance, according to the number of names.

<sup>z</sup> Josh xi. 23. xiv.  
i Pa. cv. 44.

54 To <sup>a</sup> many thou shalt <sup>a</sup> give the more inheritance, and to few thou shalt <sup>a</sup> give the less inheritance: to every <sup>a</sup> one shall his inheritance be given, according to those that were numbered of him.

<sup>a</sup> xxxiii. 54.  
Heb. multiply  
his inheritance.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. diminish  
his inheritance.

55 Notwithstanding, the land shall be divided <sup>b</sup> by lot: according to the names of the tribes of their fathers they shall inherit.

<sup>b</sup> 56. xxxiii. 54.  
xxxiv. 18. Josh.  
xiv. 2. xvii. 14.  
xviii. 6. 10, 11.  
xix. 1. 10. 17.  
24. 32. 40. Prov.  
xvi. 33. xviii. 18.  
Acta i. 26.

56 According to the lot shall the possession thereof be divided between many and few.

57 ¶ And <sup>c</sup> these *are* they that were numbered of the Levites, after their families: <sup>d</sup> of Gershon, the family of the Gershonites: of Kohath, the family of the Kohathites: of Merari, the family of the Merarites.

<sup>c</sup> Gen. xvi. 11.  
Ex. vi. 16—19.  
i Chr. vi. 1, &c.

<sup>d</sup> See on iii. iv.

58 These *are* the families of the Levites: the family of the Libnites, the family of the Hebronites, the family of the Mahlites, the family of the Mushites, the family of the Korathites. And Kohath begat Amram.

59 And the name of Amram's wife *was* <sup>e</sup> Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, whom *her mother* bare to Levi in Egypt: and she bare unto Amram, Aaron and Moses, and Miriam their sister.

<sup>e</sup> Ex. ii. 1, 2 vi.  
20.

60 And <sup>f</sup> unto Aaron was born Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.

<sup>f</sup> iii. 2.

61 And <sup>g</sup> Nadab and Abihu died, when they offered strange fire before the LORD.

<sup>g</sup> iii. 4. Lev. x. 1,  
2. i Chr. xxiv.  
1. 2.

62 And <sup>h</sup> those that were numbered <sup>h</sup>

<sup>h</sup> Increased 1000.  
iii 39. iv. 47, 48.

V. 51. The increase or decrease of each tribe, and of the whole multitude, having been noticed in the margin, further annotation is rendered needless.

V. 53—56. The division of Canaan was to be made according to the register now formed; and the quantity of land was to be proportioned to the numbers of each tribe: but the situation was to be determined by lot, both to the tribes and to individuals. Thus the decreasing of any tribe in the wilderness, proved the decrease of their future political importance and affluence, in all succeeding ages. (Notes, Josh. xiv. 3—5. xviii. xix.)

VOL. I.

V. 57—61. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. vi. 14—20 Lev. x. 1, 2.

V. 62—65. As the Levites were not numbered from twenty years of age, they were not here included.—Upon exact enquiry, it was found that not one man remained of those, concerning whom the LORD had “sworn in his “wrath that they should not enter into his rest.” Thus his word was magnified, and an intimation was given that a speedy entrance into Canaan might be expected. We may entertain a pleasing hope, that the temporal punishment was sanctified to multitudes, to bring them to re-

3 R

of them, were twenty and three thousand, all males from a month old and upward: for <sup>1</sup>they were not numbered among the children of Israel, <sup>2</sup>because there was no inheritance given them among the children of Israel.

63 These <sup>1</sup>are they that were numbered by Moses and Eleazar the priest, who numbered the children of Israel in the plains of Moab, by Jordan *near* Jericho.

64 But among these, <sup>2</sup>there was not a man of them whom Moses and Aaron the priest numbered, when they numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai.

65 For the LORD had said of them, <sup>3</sup>"They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them; <sup>4</sup>save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.

#### CHAP. XXVII.

The daughters of Zelophehad ask for their father's inheritance, 1—5. The law of inheritance, 6—11. Moses is warned of his approaching death; and, in

answer to his prayer, Joshua is appointed to succeed him, 12—23.

THEN came the daughters of <sup>a</sup>Zelophehad, the son of Hephher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph: and these *are* the names of his daughters; Mahlah, Noah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Tirzah.

2 And <sup>b</sup>they stood before Moses, and before Eleazar the priest, and before the princes and all the congregation, *by* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying,

3 Our father <sup>c</sup>died in the wilderness, and he was not <sup>d</sup>in the company of them, that gathered themselves together against the LORD in the company of Korah; but <sup>e</sup>died in his own sin, and had no sons.

4 Why <sup>f</sup>should the name of our father be <sup>g</sup>done away from among his family, because he hath no son? <sup>h</sup>Give unto us *therefore* a possession among the brethren of our father.

<sup>i</sup> See on L. 49.

<sup>k</sup> xviii. 20—24.  
xxxv. 2—8.  
Deut. x. 9. xiv. 27—29. xviii. 1.  
2. Josh. xiii. 14.  
33. xiv. 3.

<sup>l</sup> See on 3.

<sup>m</sup> i. ii. Deut. ii. 14, 15.

<sup>n</sup> xiv. 26, 29.  
Deut. xxxii. 49.  
50. Ps. xc. 3—7.  
1 Cor. x. 5, 6.  
Heb. iii. 17, 18.  
Jude 5.

<sup>o</sup> See on xiv. 38.

<sup>p</sup> xxvi. 33. xxxvi. 1—12. Josh. xvi. 8—6. 1 Chr. vii. 15.

<sup>q</sup> xv. 23, 24. Ex. xviii. 13, 14. 19—26. Deut. xvii. 9—10.

<sup>r</sup> xiv. 26. xxvi. 64, 65.  
<sup>s</sup> xvi. 1—3. 19. 32—35. 49. xxv. 9, 10.

<sup>t</sup> Ex. xviii. 4.  
Rom. v. 12. 21. vi. 23.

<sup>u</sup> Ps. cxv. 13. Prov. xiii. 9.  
<sup>v</sup> Heb. diminished.

<sup>w</sup> Josh. xvii. 4.

penitance before they died; and so became the means of their eternal salvation, as a blessed effect of the respite granted them. Of all this multitude there was not one man aged sixty, except Moses, Caleb, Joshua, and some of the Levites.—It is not expressly said whether the women were, or were not, involved in the sentence.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Death is continually making awful havock of the human species, and causing surprising revolutions in families and nations; yet all is appointed in perfect wisdom, justice, and truth. This should excite us to meditate upon the odious nature and destructive tendency of sin, the deserving cause of all these devastations; and to take occasion to renew repentance, to seek forgiveness, to value the salvation of Christ; to remember how frail we are, to prepare for the approaching summons, and to fill up our remaining days in "serving our generation according to the will of God." Then death will be disarmed of his sting, become our friend, and convey us to heaven, when our appointed period on earth is finished.—But unrepented sin arms death with unutterable horrors: and lasting infamy perhaps in this world, and everlasting shame, contempt, and misery in another, will be the doom of those who are "driven away in their wickedness," however famous and renowned they were among their ill-judging fellow-sinners.—While the Lord punishes the iniquity of the fathers upon their unbelieving posterity, he preserves those, who do not imitate their parents in sin, from sharing

their punishment: and the infamy of the father only makes the piety and usefulness of the son more noticed. (*Notes*, Ez. xviii. 2—20.) The word of God will be surely performed; and the eye of the Lord can discern, and his arm can reach, every sinner in the midst of surrounding multitudes: yet respites give space and opportunity for repentance. The promises likewise are irrevocable, and they who follow the Lord fully, shall certainly at length have the comfort of it. In all our different situations in life, let us submit to the sovereignty of the Lord, admire his equity and wisdom, and be thankful for his goodness; and desire above all things an inheritance in the heavenly Canaan.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XXVII. V. 1—4. In the orders for the division of the land just given, no provision had been made for females, in case of the failure of male issue. (xxvi. 52—56.) The five daughters of Zelophehad, therefore, considered themselves as left destitute, having neither father nor brother, and being themselves entirely overlooked: and they agreed to refer the case to Moses and the rulers, whether it were not equitable that they should inherit their father's portion; especially as he had not incurred a forfeiture, any more than the other Israelites, who were all involved in one common sentence. There was therefore no sufficient reason, that his memory should be disgraced, as if his line were extinct, when he had left so many children. (*Marg. Ref.*)

<sup>n</sup> Ex xviii. 15—19. xxv. 22. Lev. xxiv. 12. 18. Prov. iii. 8, 9.

5 And <sup>a</sup> Moses brought their cause before the LORD.

6 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

<sup>i</sup> xxxvi. 2. Ps. lxxviii. 5. Jer. xlix. 11. Gal. iii. 28.

7 The daughters of Zelophehad speak right: 'thou shalt surely give them a possession of an inheritance among their father's brethren: and thou shalt cause the inheritance of their father to pass unto them.

8 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a man die, and have no son, then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass unto his daughter.

9 And if he have no daughter, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his brethren.

10 And if he have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his father's brethren.

<sup>k</sup> Lev. xxv. 25. 49. Ruth iv. 8. 6 Jer xxxii. 8.

11 And if his father have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his <sup>k</sup> kinsman that is next to him of his family, and he shall possess it: and it shall be unto the children of Israel <sup>a</sup> a statute of judgment; as the LORD commanded Moses.

<sup>l</sup> xxxv. 29. 1 Sam. xxx. 20.

<sup>m</sup> xxxviii. 40. 48. Deut. iii. 27. xxxii. 49. xxxiv. 1—4.

12 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, Get thee up into this <sup>m</sup> mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel.

V. 5—11. As no law had been given concerning females inheriting in defect of male issue, Moses consulted the Lord about it: and he not only allowed the justice of the claim made by the daughters of Zelophehad, but also gave "a statute of judgment," by which the magistrates might determine such causes, both in the division of Canaan, and in after ages.—It is generally supposed, that brothers and relations in the line of the *father* are exclusively meant; as one great object was to preserve the genealogies distinct.

V. 12—14. Either this order was repeated, or the performance of it was postponed till some time after, as a variety of events took place in the interval. (*Notes*, xx. 10—13. 22—28. Deut. xxxii. 45—52.)

V. 15—17. We find from another place, that Moses, on this occasion, earnestly requested to enter Canaan; but this prayer was not granted. (*Note*, Deut. iii. 23—28.) His chief concern however was about the congregation, that they might not be left without a magistrate to rule and judge them, or a commander to lead them against their enemies, lest they should be "as sheep without a shepherd." (*Marg. Ref.* t. u.—*Note*, Matt. ix. 36—38.) And, as the Lord "knew what was in man," (*John* ii. 25;) he alone could appoint them such an able, faithful, and affectionate ruler. (*Note*, xvi. 22.)

<sup>n</sup> xxxi. 2.—*See* Gen. xxv. 8. 17. o xx. 24—28. xxxiii. 38. Deut. x. 6. xxxvii. 50. p xx. 8—13. Deut. i. 37. xxxii. 51. 52. Ps. cvi. 32, 33. q xx. 1. 13. 24. Ex. xvii. 7. r xvi. 22. Heb. xii. 9.

13 And when thou hast seen it, <sup>a</sup> thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people; <sup>a</sup> as Aaron thy brother was gathered.

14 For <sup>a</sup> ye rebelled against my commandment in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, to sanctify me at the water before their eyes: that is the water of <sup>a</sup> Meribah in Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin.

15 And Moses spake unto the LORD, saying,

16 Let the LORD, <sup>a</sup> the God of the spirits of all flesh, <sup>a</sup> set a man over the congregation,

17 Which may <sup>a</sup> go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not <sup>a</sup> as sheep which have no shepherd.

18 And the LORD said unto Moses, <sup>a</sup> Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, <sup>a</sup> a man in whom is the Spirit, and <sup>a</sup> lay thine hand upon him;

19 And set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation: and <sup>a</sup> give him a charge in their sight.

20 And thou shalt <sup>b</sup> put some of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel <sup>c</sup> may be obedient.

V. 18. Joshua had long attended on Moses; and, being endowed with the Spirit of wisdom and courage, was eminent for faith and piety: but he had not hitherto been publicly recognized as his successor. (*Notes*, xi. 16. Ex. xvii. 8—13. xxiv. 12—14. xxxii. 17.) At this time, however, he was solemnly set apart for that important and arduous station, by imposition of Moses's hands; a ceremony frequently mentioned in Scripture, in designating men to a peculiar office, or giving authority to perform it. (*Marg. Ref.*)—It is very remarkable, that Moses never intimated a desire that one of his sons should succeed him, as Eleazar had succeeded Aaron; nor do we find that *they* had this expectation: on the contrary, they seem to have acquiesced in the Lord's determination, and without envy or murmuring, to have obeyed and honoured Joshua. (*Note*, 1 Chr. xxiii. 14.)

V. 19. *Give him a charge.*] That is, 'Seriously instruct him in the important duties of his place, warn him to be upon his guard against its temptations, and, in the most earnest manner, charge it upon his conscience to be diligent and faithful in it.' Such should *episcopal charges* be! (*Marg. Ref.*)—This was done before the high priest and all the congregation.

V. 20. Joshua was admitted to a present share in the authority, that the people might be accustomed to obey

d Josh. ix. 14.  
Judg. i. 1. xx.  
18. 23. 26-28.  
1 Sam. xxiii. 9.  
xxviii. 6. xxx. 7.  
e Ex. xxviii. 30.  
Lev. viii. 8.  
Deut. xxxiii. 8.  
1 Sam. xxviii. 6.  
Ezra ii. 63. Neh.  
vii. 65.  
f See on 17.—  
1 Sam. xxii. 10  
— 5.

21 And <sup>d</sup>he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask *counsel* for him, after the judgment of <sup>e</sup>Urim before the LORD: <sup>f</sup>at his word shall they go out, and at his word they shall come in, *both* he, and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation.

22 And Moses did as the LORD commanded him: and he took Joshua, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation.

23 And he laid his hands upon him, and <sup>g</sup>gave him a charge; as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.

g See on 19.—  
Deut. iii. 28.  
xxxi. 7, 8.

and honour him. (Note, Josh. i. 16—18.)—Moses lived, and was very busily employed, some time after this warning: and Joshua would be very useful to him, in easing him of the burden of the civil government, whilst he gave himself wholly to attend on the interests of religion.

V. 21. Moses asked counsel of the Lord himself immediately; but all the future rulers of Israel were directed to consult the Lord by the high priest. (Note, Ex. xxviii. 30.) No doubt Joshua obeyed this direction, though it is not particularly recorded. One instance however, in which he was negligent, is mentioned as an exception to his general conduct. (Note, Josh. ix. 14, 15.)—As none of the subsequent rulers of Israel descended from Moses, they had the less temptation unduly to magnify him; and their testimony concerning him becomes, on that account, the more unexceptionable.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The assured faith that the word of the Lord would be performed in due season, and the desire of an interest in the promised inheritance, which these young women manifested; together with the modest, open manner in which they preferred their petition; are well worthy of imitation. The readiness also of Moses to attend to their application, and to seek counsel from the Lord about it, should be copied by magistrates, ministers, and all entrusted with authority.—The earnestness likewise with which Moses, under the divine rebuke and on the verge of death, pleaded for the congregation; his anxiety for their welfare after his decease; and his disinterestedness, with the peaceful submission of his sons to the undistinguished lot of ordinary Levites; are excellent models for our spirit and conduct.—Even when we do not by impenitent wickedness exclude ourselves from the inheritance of heaven; all our sufferings in this world, and our final dissolution, must be considered as the effect of our sins (3).—The word of God is the only standard of faith and practice; yet sobriety and impartiality are requisite, to enable us to apply general rules to particular circumstances: but when difficulties, relative to practice, are fairly proposed and solidly resolved, they become adjudged cases, extensively and durably useful.—Jesus alone ever liveth to rule and protect his church; and all others have their subordinate and temporary services, which having finished, they must be “gathered to

#### CHAP. XXVIII.

Laws for the daily burnt-offerings, and those of the sabbath, 1—10: those of the new moons, 11—15: those of the Passover, and the feast of unleavened bread, 16—25: and those for the feast of Pentecost, 26—31.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Command the children of Israel, and say unto them, My offering, *and* <sup>a</sup>my bread for my sacrifices made by <sup>b</sup>fire, <sup>c</sup>for a <sup>d</sup>sweet savour unto me, shall ye observe to offer unto me <sup>e</sup>in their due season.

a Lev. iii. 11. xxi. 6. 8. Mal. i. 7. 12.  
b xv. 3. 7. 24. Ex. xxix. 18. Lev. i. 9. 18. 17. 2 Cor. ii. 15. Eph. v. 2. Phil. iv. 18.  
c Heb. savour of my rest. Gen. viii. 21. Ez. xvi. 19. xx. 41. marg. ix. 2. 3. 7. 13. Ex. xxiii. 15. Ps. lxxxi. 3.

“their fathers:” and though their dismissal may be with a rebuke for some miscarriages; the prospect of heaven, and the grace of the Holy Spirit, will induce a peaceful and submissive acquiescence.—Progressive sanctification always evidences itself by a proportionate regard to the interests of true religion, which will be enhanced by the evident approach of death: and the more any one hath experienced the burden of important stations, the more sensible will he be, that none but the Lord can furnish a man for such services, or support him in them. We should therefore with all earnestness apply to him who hath the fulness of the Spirit, to set suitable persons over his congregations: even such men, as by their example and instructions, and by the proper exercise of authority, may go before the people and take care of them, that they be not “as sheep which have no shepherd.” But no one can be fully qualified for any service in the church, who is destitute of the grace of the Holy Spirit, however learned, eloquent, ingenious, or sagacious he may otherwise be (18).—They who are appointed to publick stations, as magistrates or ministers, should be solemnly charged to attend to their duties; and the people should honour and obey them, and pray for them: and, thus supported, they need not fear the most difficult services; for the grace of the Lord shall be sufficient for them.—In Joshua’s succession we are likewise reminded, “that the law was given by Moses,” which by reason of our transgression could not bring any of us to heaven; “but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ,” to accomplish the salvation of every believer. (Note, John i. 17.)

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1, 2. The ceremonial worship had been greatly interrupted, during the continuance of the Israelites in the wilderness: and as a new generation had arisen, who were children or minors when the law was given; and as they were about to enter on the wars of Canaan, and to take possession of the promised land; it was proper to remind them not to neglect the ordinances of God, either in the hurry and peril of the one, or in the satisfactions of the other. Some things circumstantially new are contained in these chapters, intermingled with the repetition of former appointments; and they are regularly arranged, as they respected daily, weekly, monthly, and

3 And thou shalt say unto them, This is the offering made by fire which ye shall offer unto the LORD: <sup>d</sup>two lambs of the first year without spot, <sup>e</sup>day by day, for a continual burnt-offering.

4 The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, <sup>f</sup>and the other lamb shalt thou offer <sup>g</sup>at even.

5 And <sup>h</sup>a tenth part of an ephah of flour for a meat-offering, mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil.

6 It is <sup>i</sup>a continual burnt-offering, which <sup>j</sup>was ordained in mount Sinai for a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD.

7 And the drink-offering thereof shall be the fourth part of an hin for the one lamb: in the holy place shalt thou cause the strong wine <sup>k</sup>to be poured unto the LORD for a drink-offering.

8 And the other lamb shalt thou offer at even: as the meat-offering of the morning, and as the drink-offering thereof, thou shalt offer it, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

9 And on the <sup>l</sup>sabbath-day, two lambs of the first year without spot, and two tenth deals of flour for a meat-offering, mingled with oil, and the drink-offering thereof.

10 This is <sup>m</sup>the burnt-offering of every sabbath, beside <sup>n</sup>the continual burnt-offering, and his drink-offering.

11 ¶ And <sup>o</sup>in the beginnings of your months ye shall offer a burnt-offering unto the LORD; <sup>p</sup>two young bullocks

and one ram, seven lambs of the first year without spot.

12 And <sup>q</sup>three tenth-deals of flour, for a meat-offering mingled with oil, for one bullock; and two tenth-deals of flour for a meat-offering mingled with oil, for one ram;

13 And a several tenth-deal of flour, mingled with oil for a meat-offering, unto one lamb; <sup>r</sup>for a burnt-offering of a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD.

14 And their drink-offerings shall be half an hin of wine unto a bullock, and the third part of an hin unto a ram, and a fourth part of an hin unto a lamb: this is the burnt-offering of every month, throughout the months of the year.

15 And <sup>s</sup>one kid of the goats for a sin-offering unto the LORD shall be offered, <sup>t</sup>besides the continual burnt-offering, and his drink-offering.

16 ¶ And in <sup>u</sup>the fourteenth day of the first month is the passover of the LORD.

17 And in <sup>v</sup>the fifteenth day of this month is the feast: seven days shall unleavened bread be eaten.

18 In <sup>w</sup>the first day shall be an holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work therein.

19 But ye shall offer a sacrifice made by fire, for a burnt-offering unto the LORD; <sup>x</sup>two young bullocks, and one ram, and seven lambs of the first year: <sup>y</sup>they shall be unto you without blemish.

d Ex. xxix. 38, 39.  
Lev. vi. 9. Ez.  
xvii. 13—15.  
John i. 29. 1 Pet.  
i. 19, 20. Rev.  
xiii. 8.  
e Heb. in a day.  
Dan. viii. 13. xi.  
31. xii. 11.

f 1 Kings xviii. 29.  
36. Ezra ix. 4, 5.  
Ps. cxli. 2. Dan.  
ix. 21.

g Heb. between the  
two evenings. ix.  
3. Ex. xii. 6.  
marg.

h xv. 4. 5. Ex.  
xxix. 38—42.  
Lev. ii. 1.

i Ex. xxix. 42.  
Lev. vi. 9. 2 Chr.  
ii. 4. xxxi. 3.  
Ezra iii. 4. Ps. i.  
8. Ez. xvi. 14.  
Am. v. 25.

j Ex. xxiv. 18.  
xxix. 38—42.  
xxxi. 18.

k 14. 31. See on xv.  
5. 7. 10. Ex.  
xxix. 40. xxx. 9.  
Lev. xxiii. 13.  
Is. viii. 6. Joel  
i. 9. 13. ii. 14.  
Phil. ii. 17. Gr.

l Ex. xx. 8—11.  
Ps. xcii. 1—4.  
Is. lviii. 13. Ez.  
xx. 12. Rev. i.  
10.

m Ez. xvi. 4, 5.  
m 23. xxix. 6. 11.  
16. 19. 22. 25.  
31. 34. 38, 39.

n x. 10. 1 Sam.  
xx. 5. 2 Kings  
iv. 23. 1 Chr.  
xxiii. 31. 2 Chr.  
ii. 4. Ezra iii. 5.  
Neh. x. 33. Ps.  
xi. 6—8. lxxxix.  
3. Is. i. 13, 14.  
lxvi. 23. Ez. xiv.  
17, 18. xvi. 1. 6.  
Hos. ii. 11. Amos  
viii. 5. Gal. iv.  
10. Col. ii. 6. 16.  
o 19. Heb. x. 10—  
14.

p xv. 4—12. xxix.  
10. Ez. xvi. 8—  
7.

q See on 2.

r 22. xv. 24. Lev.  
iv. 23. xvi. 15.  
Rom. viii. 3.  
2 Cor. v. 21.  
s See on 3. 10.

t ix. 3—5. Ex. xii.  
2—11. 43—49.  
Lev. xxiii. 5—8.  
Deut. xvi. 1—8.  
Ez. xiv. 21—24.  
Matt. xxvi. 2. 17.  
Luke xxii. 7, 8.  
Acts xii. 3, 4.  
1 Cor. v. 7, 8.  
u Ex. xii. 15—17.  
xiii. 6. Lev. xxiii.  
6.

x Ex. xii. 16. Lev.  
xxiii. 7, 8.

y Ez. xiv. 21—25.  
z xxix. 8. Lev.  
xxii. 20. Deut.  
xv. 21. 1 Pet. i.  
19.

annual institutions. My bread. (2) Marg. Ref. a.—Note, Lev. iii. 11.

V. 3—8. The daily sacrifices no doubt were constantly offered in the wilderness, in the same manner as they were ordained, or offered, at mount Sinai: but it was proper here again to renew the appointment of them, with that of the other sacrifices, which might have been in part intermitted. (Note, Ex. xxix. 38—41.) The wine to be poured on the sacrifice must be the best of the kind; and wine is still the memorial of the blood of Christ, shed for the ransom of many for the remission of sins.—In the holy place. (7) At the altar, in the inner court of the tabernacle.

V. 9, 10. This was a new injunction, aptly significant of the extraordinary devotions which should distinguish the sabbath. Probably, two lambs were on that day offered in the morning, and two in the evening.

V. 11—15. (Marg. Ref. n.) The Lord having “ap-

pointed the moon for certain seasons,” required his worshippers to observe the new-moons, by offering several burnt-offerings, with the accustomed meat-offerings, and drink-offerings, and a sin-offering, in addition to the daily sacrifice. Thus they were taught to acknowledge the living and true God, at a season when idolaters in general were worshipping the moon itself, or some other abominable idol; (Notes, Deut. iv. 19. Job xxxi. 24—28. Ps. civ. 19. cxlviii. 3;) and to renew their dedication of themselves to his service, at the beginning of each month. St. Paul mentions the new moons among those institutions, that were a shadow of which Christ was the substance; yet nothing typical appears in them, except the numerous sacrifices then offered. (Note, Col. ii. 16, 17.)

V. 16—25. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xii. Lev. xxiii. 4—8.)—The several offerings for the passover, and the feast of unleavened bread, had not before been appointed;

20 And their meat-offering *shall be* of flour mingled with oil: three tenth-deals shall he offer for a bullock, and two tenth-deals for a ram;

21 A several tenth-deal shalt thou offer for every lamb, throughout the seven lambs:

<sup>a</sup> See on 15.

22 And <sup>a</sup> one goat *for* a sin-offering, to make an atonement for you.

<sup>b</sup> See on 8. 10.

23 Ye shall offer these, <sup>b</sup> beside the burnt-offering in the morning, which *is* for a continual burnt-offering.

24 After this manner ye shall offer daily, throughout the seven days, the meat of the sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD: it shall be offered beside the continual burnt-offering, and his drink-offering.

<sup>c</sup> Ex. xii. 16. xiii. 6. Lev. xxiii. 8. 18. 26. xxix. 1. 12. 36. Lev. xxiii. 3. 8. 21. 25. 35. 36.

25 And <sup>c</sup> on the seventh day ye shall have an holy convocation; <sup>d</sup> ye shall do no servile work.

<sup>e</sup> Ex. xxiii. 16. xxxiv. 22. Lev. xxiii. 10. 15—21. Deut. xvi. 9—11. Acts ii. 1. &c. 1 Cor. xv. 20. Jam. i. 18.

26 ¶ Also <sup>e</sup> in the day of the first-fruits, when ye bring a new meat-offering unto the LORD, after your weeks *be out*, ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work.

27 But ye shall offer the burnt-offering for a sweet savour unto the LORD; <sup>f</sup> two young bullocks, one ram, seven lambs of the first year;

<sup>f</sup> 11. 19. Lev. xxiii. 18, 19.

28 And their meat-offering of flour mingled with oil, three tenth-deals

unto one bullock, two tenth-deals unto one ram.

29 A several tenth-deal unto one lamb, throughout the seven lambs;

30 And <sup>g</sup> one kid of the goats, to make an atonement for you. <sup>g</sup> 15. 22. xv. 24. 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. iii. 13. 1 Pet. ii. 24. iii. 18.

31 Ye shall offer *them* beside the continual burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, (they shall be unto you <sup>h</sup> without blemish,) and their drink-offerings. <sup>h</sup> Mal. i. 13, 14.

## CHAP. XXIX.

The sacrifices to be offered at the feast of trumpets, 1—6: on the day of atonement, 7—11: at the feast of tabernacles, 12—40.

AND in the <sup>a</sup> seventh month, on the first *day* of the month, ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work: it is a day of <sup>b</sup> blowing the trumpets unto you. <sup>a</sup> Lev. xxiii. 24. 25. Ezra iii. 6. Neh. vii. 73. <sup>b</sup> x. 1—10. 1 Chr. xv. 28. Ps. lxxxii. 8. lxxxix. 15. 14. xxvii. 13. Zech. ix. 14. Mark xvi. 15, 16. Rom. x. 14—18. xv. 16—19.

2 And ye shall offer a burnt-offering for a sweet savour unto the LORD: <sup>c</sup> one young bullock, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year without blemish: <sup>c</sup> 8. 36. xxviii. 19. 27. Heb. x. 10—14.

3 And their meat-offering *shall be* of flour mingled with oil, three tenth-deals for a bullock, and two tenth-deals for a ram,

4 And one tenth-deal for one lamb, throughout the seven lambs:

5 And <sup>d</sup> one kid of the goats *for* a <sup>d</sup> See on xxviii. 15. 22. 30.

among which the “goat for sin-offering to make an atonement for you,” should not be overlooked. (22. 30. xxix. 5. 11. 16. 19. 22. 25. 28. 31. 34. 38.) The daily burnt-offering must not be omitted, though so many other sacrifices were required. (24. 31.)

V. 26—31. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xxiii. 14—18. Lev. xxiii. 15—21.*

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We are again reminded of the perpetual efficacy of the one sacrifice of Christ, and of our continual need of it: and also of the constancy with which the Christian should wait upon God in his ordinances, both as means of deriving grace from the fulness of Christ, and of rendering to the Lord the glory due unto him, as our Creator, our providential Benefactor, and the God of our salvation. These subjects indeed are not new to us, yet they may stir up our minds by a salutary repetition.—No hurrying employments, or perilous situations, or prosperous circumstances, should induce slackness in religious exercises; nay, they should excite greater diligence in seeking help from the Lord, or in giving thanks to him. And when young persons are about to settle in life, and remove to habitations of their own, it is peculiarly the duty of ministers, parents,

and pious friends, to admonish them from the first to establish the worship of God in their families; which will prevent much subsequent trouble, and bring a blessing on them, and on all that they uprightly engage in. Every day should at least begin and end with prayer and praise: sabbaths call for a double measure of personal and family-religion; and seasons of peculiar humiliation for sin, of seeking any special blessing, of solemn self-examination previous to approaching the Lord's table, or of remembering signal mercies received, require time still more entirely set apart for such purposes. But we must take care that one duty does not preclude another; and that all be accompanied with the exercise of repentance, faith, and love to the Lord Jesus; and with righteousness and true holiness in our whole conduct: otherwise God will abhor our most solemn services and abundant devotions. (*Note, xxiii. 4—6.*)

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXIX. V. 1—6. There were more solemnities in the seventh month than in any of the other months. It formed a kind of vacation between the harvest and the ensuing seed-time; and these solemnities during that season might intimate, that the ordinances of God are the

sin-offering, to make an atonement for you :

<sup>e</sup> See on xxxiii. 11—15.  
<sup>f</sup> See on xxviii. 3—8.—Ex. xxix. 38—42. Lev. vi. 9.  
<sup>g</sup> 18, 21. ix. 14. xv. 24.  
6 Beside <sup>e</sup>the burnt-offering of the month, and his meat-offering, and <sup>f</sup>the daily burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, <sup>g</sup>according unto their manner, for a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD.

<sup>h</sup> Lev. xvi. 20—31. xxiii. 27.  
<sup>i</sup> Lev. xvi. 20. Ezra viii. 21. Ps. xxxv. 13. cxvii. 5, 6. Ia. xxi. 12. lvi. 3—5. Zech. vii. 3. xii. 10. Matt. v. 4. Luke xiii. 3. 5. Acts xxvii. 9. Rom. vi. 6. 1 Cor. ix. 27. 2 Cor. vii. 9.—11. Jam. iv. 8.—10.  
2. 13. xxviii. 19.

7 ¶ And ye shall have <sup>h</sup>on the tenth day of this seventh month an holy convocation; and ye shall <sup>i</sup>afflict your souls: ye shall not do any work *therein*.  
8 But ye shall offer a burnt-offering unto the LORD *for* a sweet savour; one young bullock, one ram, *and* seven lambs of the first year; they shall be unto you <sup>j</sup>without blemish:

<sup>k</sup> See on xv. 3—12.  
9 And their <sup>k</sup>meat-offering *shall be* of flour mingled with oil, three tenth-deals to a bullock, *and* two tenth-deals to one ram,

10 A several tenth-deal for one lamb, throughout the seven lambs:

11 One kid of the goats *for* a sin-offering, <sup>l</sup>beside the sin-offering of atonement, and <sup>m</sup>the continual burnt-offering, and the meat-offering of it, and their drink-offerings.  
<sup>l</sup> Lev. xvi. 3. 5. 9. Ia. liii. 10. Dan. ix. 24—26. Heb. vii. 27. ix. 23—28.  
<sup>m</sup> See on 6. xxviii. 3. 8.

<sup>n</sup> Ex. xxiii. 16. xxxiv. 22. Lev. xxiii. 34—43. Deut. xvi. 13, 14. Neh. viii. 14. 18. Ez. xiv. 25. Zech. xiv. 16—19. John i. 14. Heb. xi. 9—13.  
12 ¶ And on <sup>n</sup>the fifteenth day of the seventh month ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work, and ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days.

13 And ye shall offer a burnt-offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD; <sup>o</sup>thirteen young bullocks, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs of the first year; they shall be without blemish:

<sup>o</sup> 2. 8. xxviii. 11. 19. 27. Ezra iii. 4. Heb. x. 12—14.  
14 And their meat-offering *shall be* of flour mingled with oil, three tenth-deals unto every bullock of the thirteen bullocks, two tenth-deals to each ram of the two rams,

15 And a several tenth-deal to each lamb of the fourteen lambs;

16 And <sup>p</sup>one kid of the goats *for* a sin-offering, beside the continual burnt-offering, his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.

17 And on the second day *ye shall offer* <sup>q</sup>twelve young bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without spot:

18 And their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, <sup>r</sup>after the manner;

19 And one kid of the goats *for* <sup>s</sup>a sin-offering, beside the continual burnt-offering, and the meat-offering thereof, and their drink-offerings.

20 And on the third day eleven bullocks, two rams, fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

21 And their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner;

22 And one goat *for* a sin-offering, beside the continual burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, and his <sup>t</sup>drink-offering.

23 And on the fourth day ten bullocks, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

24 Their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner;

25 And one kid of the goats *for* a sin-offering, beside the <sup>u</sup>continual burnt-offering, his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.

26 And on the fifth day nine bullocks, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs of the first year without spot:

27 And their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be*

rational refreshment from the fatigue of business; and that religion does not at all interfere with our true interest even in this world.—They had all been before appointed, but the sacrifices to be severally offered on them were at this time very particularly prescribed. (Note, Lev. xxiii. 24, 25.)

V. 7—11. (Notes, Lev. xvi. xxiii. 26—32.) Even on

the day of atonement, “the kid of the goats for” an additional “sin-offering,” and the morning and evening burnt-offering, must not be omitted.

V. 12—37. (Notes, Lev. xxiii. 34—36. 39—43.) The decrease of the number of bullocks, which were sacrificed on the several days of this feast, until on the last and great day only one was offered, is the most observable circumstance

according to their number, after the manner;

28 And one goat *for* a sin-offering, beside the continual burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.

29 And on the sixth day eight bullocks, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

30 And their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner:

31 And one goat *for* a sin-offering, besides the continual burnt-offering, his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.

32 And on the seventh day seven bullocks, two rams, *and* fourteen lambs of the first year without blemish:

33 And their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullocks, for the rams, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner;

34 And one goat *for* a sin-offering, beside the continual burnt-offering, his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.

35 On the <sup>8</sup> eighth day ye shall have

<sup>x</sup> Lev. xxiii. 36.  
John vii. 37—39.  
Rev. vii. 9—17.

a solemn assembly, ye shall do no ser vile work *therein*.

36 But ye shall offer a burnt-offering, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD; one bullock, one ram, seven lambs of the first year without blemish:

37 Their meat-offering, and their drink-offerings, for the bullock, for the ram, and for the lambs, *shall be* according to their number, after the manner;

38 And one goat *for* a sin-offering, beside the continual burnt-offering, and his meat-offering, and his drink-offering.

39 ¶ These *things* ye shall <sup>\*</sup> do unto <sup>\*</sup> Or, offer. the LORD in your <sup>7</sup> set feasts, <sup>\*</sup> besides y Lev. xxiii. 2. 1 Chr. xxiii. 31. 2 Chr. xxxi. 8. Ezra iii. 6. Neh. x. 33. Is i. 14. 2 vi. 21. Lev. vii 11, &c. xxii. 21 —23. xxiii. 38. Deut. xii. 6 1 Cor. x. 31.

40 And <sup>\*</sup> Moses told the children of Israel, according to all that the LORD commanded Moses. Ex. xl. 16. Deut. iv. 5. Matt. xxviii. 20. Acts xx. 27. 1 Cor. xv. 8. Heb. iii. 2 &c.

### CHAP. XXX.

Vows not to be broken, 1, 2. Those of a minor daughter might be disallowed by her father, 3—5. Those of a wife by her husband, 6—8 The vows of a widow, and of a divorced woman, 9—16.

in this law. And the reason of this regulation is not evident; unless it be intimated that the Mosaick institution would gradually wax old, and at length vanish away, when the promised Messiah came. (*Note, Heb. viii. 7—13.*)

V. 38. The sin-offering was offered along with the other sacrifices, at all these solemn feasts; ‘being a shadow of the passion of Christ, for whose sake all our sacrifices are acceptable unto God the Father.’ *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 39. The peace-offerings were always the voluntary oblations of individuals; and therefore none were required as publick sacrifices of the congregation, on any of the festivals; though pious princes and others frequently brought them. (1 *Kings* viii. 63—65. 2 *Chr.* xxx. 21—25. *Ezra* iii. 5, 6.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If we would well understand the Scriptures, we must bestow pains in comparing one part with another; for the Lord seems to have arranged them purposely, to exercise our diligence, and to distinguish those who value the knowledge of the truth from such as do not. (*Prov.* ii. 1—9.)—We are here again reminded that the trumpet of the gospel, even the glad tidings of salvation, calls us to mourn for sin, and to receive the atonement, before we can truly rejoice in the Lord; and to be strangers and pilgrims upon

earth, constantly bringing our “spiritual sacrifices, which “are through Christ Jesus to the praise and glory of God.” The more consolation we receive, the more abundant and unwearied should we be in serving him; and a spiritual mind will be refreshed and recreated by the ordinances of God, after the fatigue of worldly care and labour, more than any carnal person can be with festivity and dissipation. The spiritually minded therefore will value leisure and opportunity of attending at the courts of God, as a privilege, while the worldly seek for excuses; they will not suppose that publick ordinances render secret devotion unnecessary, or that the prayers of the minister supersede the necessity of their own; much less will they imagine that the merits of Christ, and his sacrifice for them, render their personal obedience and good works unnecessary.—Every thing reminds us of our sinfulness: our very repentance and faith in Christ, being imperfect, need forgiveness through him; and whether we mourn for sin, or rejoice in the Lord and praise him for his mercies, “the “life that we live in the flesh” must be “by the faith of “the Son of God” and attended with a constant reliance on his atoning sacrifice; until at the close we go to be with him, behold his glory, and extol his mercy, “who hath “loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood;” “to whom be honour, and glory for ever. Amen.”

a & 4-16 vil. 2.  
xxxiv. 17-28.  
Ex. xvi. 25.  
Deut. i. 13-17.

**AND** Moses spake unto <sup>a</sup>the heads of the tribes, concerning the children of Israel, saying, This *is* the thing which the LORD hath commanded.

b xxi. 2. Gen.  
xxviii. 20-22.  
Lev. xxvii. 2.  
&c. Deut. xxiii.  
21, 22. Judg. xi.  
11, 30, 31. 35.  
39. Ps. lvi. 12.  
lxxvi. 11. cxix.  
106. Prov. xx.  
25.

2 If a man <sup>b</sup>vow a vow unto the LORD, or <sup>c</sup>'swear an oath <sup>d</sup>to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not <sup>e</sup>'break his word, <sup>f</sup>'he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.

c Ex. xx. 7. Lev.  
v. 4. Matt. v. 33.  
34. xiv. 7. Acts  
xxiii. 12. 2 Cor.  
i. 28. xi. 9-11.  
d 3, 4. 10. Matt.  
xxiii. 16. 18. Gr.  
Acts xxiii. 12.  
14. 21.

3 ¶ If a woman also vow a vow unto the LORD, and bind *herself* by a bond, *being* in her father's house in her youth;

e Heb. *profane*.  
Ps. lv. 20. *marg.*  
f Job xxiii. 27. Ps.  
xxii. 25. i. 14.  
lxvii. 13. 14. cxvi.  
14. 18. Ec. v. 4.  
5. Nah. i. 18.  
g See on 2.

4 And her father hear her vow, and her <sup>g</sup>'bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his peace at her; then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand.

h Hos. vi. 6. Matt.  
xv. 4-6. Mark  
vii. 10-13. Eph.  
vi. 1.

5 But if <sup>h</sup>'her father disallow her in the day that he heareth; not any of her vows, or of her bonds, wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand: and the LORD shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her.

i Heb. *her vows*  
were upon *her*.  
Ps. lvi. 12.

6 And if she had at all an husband when <sup>i</sup>'she vowed, or uttered ought out of her lips, wherewith she bound her soul;

7 And her husband heard *it*, and held his peace at her in the day that

he heard *it*: then her vows shall stand, and her bonds wherewith she bound her soul shall stand.

8 But if <sup>h</sup>her husband disallowed her on the day that he heard *it*; then he shall make her vow which she vowed, and that which she uttered with her lips, wherewith she bound her soul, of none effect: and the LORD shall forgive her.

h Gen. iii. 16.  
1 Cor. vii. 4.  
Eph. v. 22-24.

9 ¶ But every vow of <sup>i</sup>a widow, and of her that is divorced, wherewith they have bound their souls, shall stand against her.

i Luke ii. 37. Rom  
vii 2

10 And if she vowed in her husband's house, or bound her soul by a bond with an oath;

11 And her husband heard *it*, and held his peace at her, *and* disallowed her not: then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she bound her soul shall stand.

12 But if her husband hath utterly made them void on the day he heard *them*; *then* whatsoever proceeded out of her lips concerning her vows, or concerning the bond of her soul, shall not stand: her husband hath made them void; and the LORD shall forgive her.

13 Every vow, <sup>j</sup>and every binding

j 1 Cor. xi. 3. a  
1 Pet. iii. 1-6.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXX. V. 1. *Heads.*] *Marg. Ref. a.*—The elders, or magistrates, were required to make these laws known through their respective tribes.

V. 2. (*Notes, Lev. xxvii. 1-29.*) If a man vow to do any thing sinful in itself, he ought deeply to repent of the sin which he has committed; for no vow or oath can bind him to break the command of God. (*Notes, Judg. xi. 30, 31. Ec. v. 4-7. Acts xxiii. 12-22.*)—Some vows relate to the performance of what was previously our indispensable duty: and such a vow is implied in our attendance on the Lord's table. But there are things of a discretionary nature; as Jacob's vow concerning the proportion of his substance, which he would set apart for religious purposes; (*Note, Gen. xxviii. 20-22;*) Paul's solemn determination to take nothing of the Corinthians; the Nazarites' vow; the vows concerning undemanded sacrifices; and vows of abstinence in respect of things lawful, for a limited season. Vows in such things may on some occasions be properly made; but they are a kind of promissory oaths, and should be formed with solemnity, and religiously observed; seeing the *life* or *soul* is bound as a surety for the performance of them.

V. 3-5. An unmarried woman in her father's house

VOL. I.

was required to notify her vows to her father: and if he did not refuse his consent, she was bound by them; but if he did, they were disannulled, and the obligation ceased. If she had vowed discreetly and properly, "she had done well that it was in her heart," and her willing mind would be accepted; if otherwise, her fault would be forgiven.—In many instances such vows might not only be disagreeable to a parent, but prejudicial to the whole family.—It is supposed by many expositors, that, by parity of reason, minor sons were under the same restriction in respect of their vows: but if they were intended also, it is extraordinary that daughters exclusively should be mentioned. The males were certainly allowed more liberty in various cases than the females: the vows of the latter might be adjudged more prejudicial to families; or the sons, being more immediately under the father's tuition, might be thought less liable to be inveigled into rash engagements of this kind.

V. 6-8. Married women were under the same law, as unmarried young women, for reasons at least equally cogent.

V. 9-16. The vows made by a widow, or a divorced woman, even if she had returned to live in her father's house, could not be disannulled by him.—The vows made by a married woman were obligatory on her when she be-

<sup>k</sup> See on xxix. 7. oath <sup>k</sup> to afflict the soul, her husband may establish it, or her husband may make it void.

14 But if her husband altogether hold his peace at her from day to day; then he establisheth all her vows, or all her bonds, which *are* upon her; he confirmeth them, because he held his peace at her, in the day that he heard *them*.

15 But if he shall any ways make them void, after that he hath heard *them*; then <sup>l</sup> he shall bear her iniquity.

16 These <sup>m</sup> are the statutes which the LORD commanded Moses, between a man and his wife, between a father

and his daughter, *being yet* in her youth in her father's house.

### CHAP. XXXI.

The Israelites, by divine command, war against the Midianites; slay the men, with their kings, and Balaam; and take the women and children with much spoil, 1—12. Moses is wroth with the officers for sparing the women; and orders them with the male children to be slain, 13—18. The warriors, captives, and spoil are purified, 19—24. The partition of the cattle and the captives, 25—47. The oblation of the officers and soldiers, 48—54.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 <sup>a</sup> Avenge the children of Israel of <sup>b</sup> the Midianites; afterward shalt thou be <sup>c</sup> gathered unto thy people.

a 3. xxv. 17, 19  
Deut. xxxii. 35.  
Judg. xvi. 24, 28  
—30. Ps. xciv. 1  
—3. Is. i. 24.  
Nah. i. 2. Luke  
xxi. 22. Rom.  
xii. 19. xiii. 4.  
1 Thes. iv. 6.  
Heb. x. 30. Rev.  
vi. 10. xviii. 20.  
xix. 2.  
b xxv. 6. 14—18.  
Gen. xxv. 1—4.  
Ex. ii. 16.  
c xxvii. 18. Gen.  
xv. 15. xxv. 8.  
17. Judg. ii. 10.  
Acts xiii. 36.

1 53. 12. Lev. v  
1.

m v. 29, 30. Lev.  
xi. 46, 47. xiii.  
59. xiv. 54—57.  
xv. 32, 33.

came a widow, or was divorced, if her husband had allowed of them; but not if he had disannulled them.—The words to *afflict her soul*, (*Marg. Ref. k.*) imply that such vows had often respect to seasons of fasting and abstinence.—If a husband at first seemed to allow his wife's vow, and afterwards hindered her from performing it, the guilt became his, and he might expect to be punished for the violation of his wife's vow.—With this chapter before our eyes, we may form a judgment of the impiety, injustice, and absurdity of the vows of celibacy and chastity, which children, and even wives, are encouraged to take, and required to observe, in the Romish church, *without*, and even *against*, the consent of parents and husbands!

### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We cannot too strictly engage ourselves to be the Lord's, and in all things to live to his glory: but we may inconsiderately vow things impracticable, inexpedient, not within our own choice, or not consistent with relative duties.—The peace, comfort, and true interest of families, and the exercise of the parental and conjugal authority, are of such consequence to communities and to religion, that the Lord will sooner disannul a solemn vow, than authorize any thing that is inconsistent with them. What regard therefore should all persons, especially those in inferior relations, pay to these important obligations! and how willing should they be to give up every personal inclination in observing them! Blind guides indeed, in all ages, have attempted "to make the commandments of God of none effect through their traditions;" and, that they might finger the *corban*, (the money given to God, and to them as his receivers,) have authorized disobedience to parents, to husbands, and to magistrates. (*Notes, Matt. xv. 3—6. Mark vii. 11, 12.*) But the whole Scripture teaches us, and divine grace induces every individual, from the highest motives, and with the greatest encouragements, to act properly in the several relations of life for the Lord's sake. We should then attend carefully to those duties, to which we are solemnly engaged by our very profession of Christianity: and from the performance of these vows no authority of husbands, parents, or magistrates can release any one; for "we must obey God rather than man." And in

respect of the rest, we should be cautious and circumspect, and seek counsel of the Lord in prayer: "for it is better "not to vow, than to vow and not pay."—But if we have engaged ourselves, let us never think of going back, because we have altered our mind, or become averse from the thing engaged in; for our souls are bound for the performance, and the Lord abhors our trifling in such holy and sacred concerns. (*Notes, Gen. xxxv. 1. Ps. lvi. 12. lxi. 13, 14.*)

### NOTES.

CHAP. XXXI. V. 2: Vengeance belongeth only to God, and to those whom he deposes to be his ministers of vengeance, as magistrates in ordinary cases; and they who, without commission from him, execute *private revenge*, or out of ambition, avarice, or resentment, wage war and desolate kingdoms, must one day answer for it. (*Notes, Deut. xxxii. 34, 35. Rom. xii. 17—21. xiii. 3—5.*) If however the Lord, instead of punishing sinners by earthquakes, pestilences, or famines, is pleased expressly to command any person or people to avenge his cause (3), this commission *justifies*, nay *sanctifies*, war, massacre, or devastation. None can at present shew such commission; but the Israelites could: for the publick miracles wrought among them, and for their benefit, were as the broad seal of heaven ratifying this commission, and vindicating all which they did by virtue of it. It is therefore absurd to censure Moses, Joshua, and Israel, for the dreadful slaughter made by them. God himself passed sentence of condemnation, and employed them merely as executioners: and unless it could be proved that the criminals did not deserve their doom, or that the Lord had no right to punish his rebellious creatures, and dispose of them and their property as he pleased; such objectors only shew their enmity to God, by becoming the unsolicited advocates of his enemies. The knowledge of the inexpressible evil of sin, of which men make light, but which God infinitely abhors, produces proportionable acquiescence in all the terrible judgments executed on the nations, which had filled up the measure of their iniquities.—The conduct of the leaders in these wars was regulated by the express command of God; and the executioners were more than once

3 And Moses spake unto the people, saying, <sup>d</sup> Arm some of yourselves unto the war, and let them go against the Midianites, and <sup>e</sup>avenge the LORD of Midian.

4 <sup>e</sup> Of every tribe <sup>f</sup> a thousand, throughout all the tribes of Israel, shall ye send to the war.

5 So there were delivered out of the thousands of Israel, a thousand of every tribe, twelve thousand armed for war.

6 And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand of every tribe, them and <sup>g</sup> Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, to the war, with <sup>h</sup> the holy instruments, and the trumpets <sup>i</sup> to blow in his hand.

7 And they warred against the Midianites, as the LORD commanded Moses; and they <sup>j</sup> slew all the males.

8 And they slew <sup>k</sup> the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; *namely*, Evi, and Rekem, and <sup>l</sup> Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: <sup>m</sup> Balaam also, the son of Beor, they slew with the sword.

9 And the children of Israel took *all* <sup>n</sup> the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods,

10 And they <sup>o</sup> burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt, and all their goodly castles, with fire.

reproved for being too lenient, but never for being too severe: (Notes, 14—18. 1 Sam. xv. 8—19. 32, 33:) and yet man's natural compassion recoils from the consideration of the slaughter which they made: as indeed the execution of justice is never intended to gratify the finer feelings of benevolence, but to excite dread and horror. Hence we may draw a very forcible argument, that the consequence of "the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God," will by no means accord to those rules which men, ignorant of the evil of sin and proud of their own benevolence, have devised for him; and which they would wrest the Scriptures to countenance, though evidently contrary to the constant tenour of them. If they cannot reconcile with their own ideas of justice and goodness, the severities inflicted upon the Midianites, Canaanites, and Amalekites, by the express command of a just and good God; let them allow that they are incompetent to determine what conduct becomes the Judge of the world; and that it is more safe, wise, and humble, simply to believe his testimony, and "to flee from the wrath to come," leaving the government of the universe to him, than rashly to dispute about things which are evidently out of their province, and of which they know nothing further than the Lord is pleased to inform them. (Note, Deut. xxix. 29.) Death in every case is the wages of sin, and all diseases fulfil the counsels of God: why then may he not employ the sword of a warrior, as well as a fever, in depriving sinners of their forfeited life? Or why should it be unjust or cruel in Moses or Joshua to obey the command of God in this respect, and yet righteous and holy in an angel to obey a similar command; as when the angel slew 185,000 men of Sennacherib's vast army? (Note, 2 Kings xix. 35.)—Moses had beheld with grief and indignation the temptation, the sin, and the punishment of Israel: and in witnessing the success of this war, just before his death, he saw a specimen of the Lord's vengeance on the enemies of Israel, and of his kindness to his people.—The Midianites had been most criminal, and therefore at the present the vengeance was restricted to them. (Note, xxv. 17, 18.)

V 3. The Israelites were reminded by this language not to indulge private resentment, but to be influenced by

zeal for the glory of God; and to act as his servants in inflicting punishment on his enemies. (Note, Judg. xvi. 28.)

V. 4—6. Twelve thousand was a small number, in proportion either to all Israel, or to the forces with which they were to encounter; for the Lord would teach them not to trust in an arm of flesh, but in his almighty power and faithful promise. As they were under the conduct of the captains of thousands, and of hundreds, they probably had no general, and therefore Joshua is not mentioned. Phinehas, the zealous avenger of the insulted honour of God, (Notes, xxv. 6—13,) was ordered to accompany them with "the holy instruments," by which some understand the silver trumpets; but others suppose that the second priest, the high priest's deputy and successor, consulted the Lord on such occasions with the breast-plate of judgment; or that the ark was carried with them. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 7. *They slew all the males.* The victorious Israelites did not extirpate the nation of Midian, which subsisted and was powerful long after: but they slew all the males, without giving quarter, as far as they proceeded, which probably was as far as those tribes reached from which the tempters chiefly came.

V. 8. (Marg. Ref. k, l.)—Balaam, blinded by covetousness, and "hardened by the deceitfulness of sin," perished among the enemies of Israel; which some think he foreboded, when he wished "to die the death of the righteous." Thus "he went to his own place," as Judas afterwards did; and their characters have a great resemblance to each other. (Notes, xxii. 5. xxv. 1—3. Acts i. 16—18. 25.)—Whatever information Moses might receive concerning Balaam and Balak, he doubtless received it more exactly by inspiration from God: and it was very proper that it should be thus circumstantially recorded, for the information, encouragement, and caution of God's people in all ages, concerning the secret machinations of their enemies; and for the warning of those who unite in wicked counsels against them.

V. 10. The Israelites were not allowed at present to inherit any part of that country; and therefore they in this manner disabled the Midianites from rallying their forces and renewing the war, as well as executed the vengeance of the Lord upon them.

p Josh. viii. 2.

11 And they <sup>p</sup>took all the spoil, and all the prey, *both* of men and of beasts.

q See on xxii. 1.

12 And they brought the captives, and the prey, and the spoil, unto Moses and Eleazar the priest, and unto the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the camp at <sup>q</sup>the plains of Moab, which *are* by Jordan, *near* Jericho.

r Gen. xiv. 17.

1 Sam. xv. 12.

xxx. 21.

12. 22-24. v. 2.

xix. 11.

xii. 3. Ex. xxxii.

19. 22. Lev. x.

16. 1 Sam. xv.

13. 14. 1 Kings

xx. 42. 2 Kings

xiii. 19. Eph. iv.

26.

Heb. *host of*

war.

u Deut. ii. 34. xx.

16-18. Josh. vi.

21. viii. 28. x.

40. xi. 14.

1 Sam. xv. 3.

Pa. cxxxvii. 8, 9.

Jer. xlviii. 10.

Ez. ix. 6.

x xxv. 1-3. Prov.

xxiii. 27. Ec. vii.

26. 2 Pet. ii. 15.

Rev. ii. 14.

y xxv. 18. Deut.

iv. 3. Josh. xxii.

17.

z xxv. 9.

a Judg. xxi. 11,

12.

+ Heb *a male*.

13 ¶ And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and all the princes of the congregation, <sup>r</sup>went forth to meet them <sup>r</sup>without the camp.

14 And Moses was <sup>r</sup>wroth with the officers of the host, *with* the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the <sup>r</sup>battle.

15 And Moses said unto them, <sup>r</sup>Have ye saved all the women alive?

16 Behold, <sup>r</sup>these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD <sup>r</sup>in the matter of Peor, <sup>r</sup>and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.

17 Now therefore, <sup>r</sup>kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with <sup>r</sup>him.

18 But all the women-children that

have not known a man by lying with him, <sup>b</sup>keep alive for yourselves.

19 And do ye <sup>c</sup>abide without the camp seven days: whosoever hath killed any person, and whosoever hath touched any slain, purify *both* yourselves and your captives on the third day, and on the seventh day.

20 And purify all <sup>d</sup>your <sup>d</sup>raiment, and all <sup>d</sup>that is made of skins, and all work of goats' *hair*, and all things made of wood.

21 And Eleazar the priest said unto the men of war which went to the battle, <sup>e</sup>This *is* the ordinance of the law which the LORD commanded Moses;

22 Only the gold, and the silver, the brass, the iron, the tin, and the lead,

23 Every thing that may <sup>f</sup>abide the fire, ye shall make *it* go through the fire, and it shall be clean; nevertheless <sup>f</sup>it shall be purified with the water of separation: and all that abideth not the fire <sup>g</sup>ye shall make go through the water.

24 And <sup>h</sup>ye shall wash your clothes on the seventh day, and ye shall be clean, and afterward ye shall come into the camp.

b Lev. xxv. 44.

Deut. xx. 14.

xii. 10-14.

2 Chr. xxviii. 8

-10. 1s. xiv. 2.

c v. 2. xix. 11, &amp;c.

1 Chr. xxii. 8.

d xix. 14-16. 22.

Gen. xxxv. 2.

Ex. xix. 10.

e Heb. *instrument,*or, *vessel of*

skins

f See on xxx. 16.

g Is. xlviii. 2. Zech.

xiii. 9. Mal. ii.

2. 3. Matt. iii.

11. 1 Cor. iii. 13

1 Pet. i. 7. iv.

12. Rev. iii. 18.

h Lev. xi. 32. xv.

17. Eph. v. 26.

Tit. iii. 5, 6.

1 Pet. iii. 21.

i xix. 19. Lev. xi.

25. xiv. 9. xv.

13.

V. 14—18. The sword of war should spare women and children, as incapable of resisting; but the sword of justice knows no distinction, except that of guilty or not guilty, and more or less guilty.—This war was the execution of a righteous sentence upon a *guilty* nation, in which the women were the principal criminals; and perhaps particular instructions had been given on this head: therefore Moses was angry, when he found that the women had been spared. If those concerned in the detestable project of Balaam, had been preserved as captives, they would have been a constant temptation to the people; and they could not be known from the rest except by miracle. Orders were therefore given to put all the women to death, and the male children; and only to spare the female children, who could not be supposed to have been culpable; and who, being brought up among the Israelites, would not tempt them to idolatry.—It has been groundlessly asserted that Moses authorized the Israelites to make concubines of the whole number of female children, or even promiscuously to debauch them; and a formidable objection against his writings has been grounded on this strange supposition. But the whole tenour of the law, and especially a statute hereafter to be considered, proves the contrary. (Note, Deut. xxi. 10—14.) They were merely *permitted* to possess them as female slaves; while all the laws concerning marriage and concubinage, and against fornication and whoredom, were in full force, in this as well as

in other cases.—But what shall we say of the execution of all the male infants, who could not be personally guilty in this matter? The Lord commanded it, in this and many other instances: and “shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” Had they lived, they might have conspired to avenge the death of their parents on Israel: and the example was thus rendered more tremendous, warning parents not to imitate the guilt of the Midianites, lest they should involve their beloved offspring in destruction. (Notes, Ex. xx. 5. 2 Kings ii. 23, 24.) The Scripture addresses men’s natural affection by promises and threatenings, in which their children also are included; and in a future state the Lord may, for what we know, turn the temporal sufferings of children into an infinite mercy to them.—It should also be remembered that children are constantly involved in the desolations occasioned by famines, pestilences, and earthquakes. (Notes, xvi. 27—34. Jon. iv. 9—11.)

V. 19—24. The Israelites had acted by the Lord’s commission; yet they had contracted pollution by touching the dead: and the spoil, having been used by idolaters, must be purified also in the prescribed manner; which would form a pattern for succeeding wars. Thus the law was reduced to practice under the inspection of the lawgiver. (Marg. Ref.—xix. 11—19.)—All the metals known, till these modern times, are here mentioned together.

25 ¶ And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

\* Heb. of the captivity. 26 Take the sum of the prey \* that was taken, *both* of man and of beast, thou, and Eleazar the priest, and the chief fathers of the congregation:

k Josh. xxii. 8. 1 Sam. xxx. 24. 25. Ps. lxxviii. 12. 27 And divide the prey into <sup>k</sup> two parts, between them that took the war upon them, who went out to battle, and between all the congregation;

l Gen. xiv. 20. Josh. vi. 19. 24. 2 Sam. viii. 11. 12. 1 Chr. xviii. 11. xxvi. 26, 27. Prov. iii. 9, 10. Is. xlviii. 7. xxiii. 18. lx. 9. Matt. xxii. 21. m 30. 47. 28 And <sup>l</sup>levy a tribute unto the LORD of the men of war which went out to battle: <sup>m</sup>one soul of five hundred, *both* of the persons, and of the beeves, and of the asses, and of the sheep.

n xviii. 26. Ex. xxix. 27. Deut. xii. 12. 19. 29 Take *it* of their half, and give *it* unto Eleazar the priest, *for* <sup>n</sup>an heave-offering of the LORD.

o 28. xviii. 24—28. 30 And the children of Israel's half, thou shalt take one portion of fifty, of the persons, of the beeves, of the asses, and of the <sup>o</sup>flocks, of all manner of beasts, <sup>o</sup>and give them unto the Levites, which <sup>o</sup>keep the charge of the tabernacle of the LORD.

p iii. 7, 8, 26, &c. xviii. 1—5. 23. 1 Chr. ix. 27—29. xxiii. 32. xxvi. 20—27. Acts xx. 28. 1 Cor. iv. 2. Col. iv. 17. Heb. xiii. 17. 31 And Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the LORD commanded Moses.

32 And the booty, *being* the rest of the prey which the men of war had caught, was six hundred thousand and seventy thousand and five thousand sheep,

33 And threescore and twelve thousand beeves,

34 And threescore and one thousand asses,

35 And thirty and two thousand persons in all, of women that had not known man by lying with him.

36 And the half, *which was* the portion of them that went out to war, was

in number three hundred thousand and seven and thirty thousand and five hundred sheep:

37 And the LORD's tribute of the sheep was six hundred and threescore and fifteen.

38 And the beeves *were* thirty and six thousand, of which the LORD's tribute *was* threescore and twelve.

39 And the asses *were* thirty thousand and five hundred, of which the LORD's tribute *was* threescore and one.

40 And the persons *were* sixteen thousand, of which the LORD's tribute *was* thirty and two persons.

41 And Moses gave the tribute *which was* the LORD's heave-offering unto <sup>q</sup>Eleazar the priest; as the LORD commanded Moses.

42 And of the children of Israel's half, which Moses divided from the men that warred,

43 (Now the half *that pertained unto* the congregation, was three hundred thousand and thirty thousand *and* seven thousand and five hundred sheep,

44 And thirty and six thousand beeves,

45 And thirty thousand asses and five hundred,

46 And sixteen thousand persons.)

47 Even of the children of Israel's half, Moses took one portion of fifty, *both* of man and of beast, and gave them unto <sup>r</sup>the Levites which <sup>r</sup>kept the charge of the tabernacle of the LORD; as the LORD commanded Moses.

48 ¶ And the officers which *were* over thousands of the host, the captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds, came near unto Moses:

49 And they said unto Moses, Thy

V. 25—31. To prevent dispute, and for a rule to after times, the Lord ordered the distribution of the cattle and the female captives, between the soldiers and the congregation; and that a portion from each should be reserved for the priests and Levites. The Levites received ten times as much as the priests, being vastly more numerous; and the twelve thousand soldiers had more than all the rest of Israel. The arrangement seems to have given universal satisfaction.—No horses or camels are mentioned. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 35. The number of the female children, when considered as bearing proportion to the men, women, and male children, who were slain, suggests an awful idea of the

terrible vengeance, which God took upon the enemies of him, and of his people! Amalek, who first warred with Israel, was long spared; but Midian, who first tempted them to idolatry, was speedily and most tremendously punished.

V. 47. It does not appear, that a single ox, or sheep, or ass, was required by Moses, as his portion; or given to him by the people: yet he had a family, as well as others, for which no provision had been made, above the common lot of Levites! (*Notes*, xvi. 15.)

V. 48—54. The success of this detachment had been extraordinary; so small a company overcoming and cutting off such immense multitudes, and taking so large a spoil;

servants have taken the sum of the men of war which *are* under our charge, and there lacketh not one man of us:

\* Heb. *band*.  
† 1 Sam. xix. 18,  
19. Ps. lxxii. 14.  
John xviii. 9.

‡ Ps. cvii. 15. 21,  
22. cxvi. 12. 17.

§ Heb. *found*.

‖ Ex. xxx. 12. 15,  
16. Lev. xvii. 11.

¶ vii 2—6.

50 We have therefore brought an oblation for the LORD, what every man hath gotten, of jewels of gold, chains, and bracelets, rings, ear-rings, and tablets, to make an atonement for our souls before the LORD.

51 And Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold of them, *even* all wrought jewels.

52 And all the gold of the offering that they offered up to the LORD, of the captains of thousands, and of the captains of hundreds, was sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels.

Heb. *heave-offering*.

53 (For the men of war had taken spoil, every man for himself.)

Deut. xx. 14.

54 And Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold of the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it into the tabernacle of the congregation, for a memorial for the children of Israel before the LORD.

xvi. 40. Ex. xxx.  
16. Josh. iv. 7.  
Ps. xviii. 49. ciii.  
1, 2. cxv. 1. cxlv.  
7. Zech. vi. 14.  
Luke xxii. 19.  
Acts x. 4.

but their preservation was still more remarkable; not one individual having been slain, or even wounded that we find! In acknowledgment of this, the officers presented the wrought gold, (all of it probably,) which they had found among the spoil, as an oblation to the Lord, "to make an atonement for their souls;" or to be employed in that service of God, by which atonement was typically made. (Note, Ex. xxx. 11—16.) Thus they confessed, that, instead of claiming a reward, they needed forgiveness of what had been sinful; and desired thus to express their gratitude for the preservation of their lives which might justly have been taken away.—Some think the private soldiers had taken a booty of this kind, which they reserved to themselves; and others, that the officers presented the offering in the name of the soldiers also.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—12.

"The triumphing of the wicked is short." The pleasures and advantages of sin are bought at an enormous price; and the vengeance of the Lord is always sure, and sometimes speedy and sudden.—"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;" (Note, Heb. x. 28—31;) and if his temporal judgments are so dreadful, what will be the case of sinners "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ?" (Note, 2 Thes. i. 5—10.) Let us then take warning, and "flee from the wrath to come," to that Saviour, who alone is able to deliver us: and, depending on his assistance, let us declare war against every corrupt passion, by which we have been induced to dishonour God, and bring guilt and misery upon ourselves.—This is indeed a *holy war*, in which we must utterly destroy every one of the enemies of our souls, or they will certainly ruin us: to this the trumpet of the gospel calls and encourages us; and in it we may depend upon the Lord for counsel and assistance. Here we ought to indulge the deepest resentment; and, without thinking of peace or truce, should prosecute the quarrel to the utter extermination of our enemies, root and branch, with unrelenting severity; not sparing our strongest, nor overlooking our feeblest lusts, which, if not crucified, will soon become formidable and produce fatal effects.—In all our undertakings, we must not only make the Lord our Confidence, but adhere to his orders and instructions; and thus we may expect all desirable

success, notwithstanding interposing difficulties.—While we forgive and pray for all our enemies, we should entertain the deepest abhorrence of the conduct, and most carefully shun the company, of those who have once attempted to draw us into sin. Nor will any be more severely punished by the Lord than tempters, especially of his people; except it be those who, against the convictions of their own conscience, have counselled and encouraged them so to do.

##### V. 13—54.

There is no *natural* disposition of the heart which does not require to be moderated and regulated: for even our humanity and compassion, as well as our resentment, must be subjected to the command of God; or we shall spare and encourage those whom the Lord would have reprov'd, corrected, or treated with severity, and so bring anger from him upon ourselves: and surely, it must be highly criminal in the sight of God, for us to imagine ourselves more merciful and compassionate than he is. This is especially the case with magistrates, ministers, heads of families, and all entrusted with authority.—They who have been faithful in inferior stations may expect to be employed in more important services: but even when we have attended to our bounden duty, we need purifying in the blood of Christ, and by his grace, from the guilt and pollution adhering to our best performances. God so abhors murder, and would have us to abhor it, that he hath represented even that bloodshed which he commanded, as in some degree contaminating those concerned in it. He likewise approves and requires exact equity in all our transactions; nor should we dare to appropriate any gain, of which we cannot conscientiously devote a portion to that God, who "hates robbery by burnt-offering," and for which we cannot thank him as the Giver. This rule, if well observed, would render us incapable of fraud, extortion, oppression, or any kind of iniquity or sinful compliances. But besides the exact rules of honesty, we should liberally give to the Lord, and dispose of in pious and charitable uses, a proportion of all our acquisitions; particularly when commemorating special deliverances: and though the blood of Christ has made the effectual atonement for our souls, such oblations are proper evidences of our faith, and of the sincerity of our love: they are acknowledgments that we are unworthy of all our mercies; and expressions of our gratitude to God and zeal for his glory, and of our love to our fellow-Christians.

## CHAP. XXXII.

The tribes of Reuben and Gad request an inheritance eastward of Jordan, 1—5. Moses sharply remonstrates with them, 6—15. They explain; Moses is satisfied; and a conditional grant is made to them and half the tribe of Manasseh, 16—33. They rebuild the cities, &c. 34—42.

**NOW** \* the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle: and when they saw the land of <sup>b</sup> Jazer, and the land of Gilead, that, behold, ° the place *was* a place for cattle;

2 The children of Gad and the children of Reuben came and spake unto Moses, and to Eleazar the priest, and unto the princes of the congregation, saying,

3 <sup>d</sup> Ataroth, and Dibon, and Jazer, and ° Nimrah, and ° Heshbon, and Elealeh, and ° Shebam, and Nebo, and <sup>h</sup> Beon;

4 *Even* <sup>i</sup> the country which the LORD smote before the congregation of Israel, *is* a land for cattle and thy servants have cattle.

5 Wherefore, said they, ° if we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, *and* <sup>i</sup> bring us not over Jordan.

6 And Moses said unto the children of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, Shall your brethren go to war, and <sup>m</sup> shall ye sit here?

7 And ° wherefore ° discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel, from going over into the land which the LORD hath given them?

8 Thus did your fathers, ° when I

sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land.

9 For when they went up into <sup>p</sup> the valley of Eshcol, and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, that they should not go into the land which the LORD had given them.

10 And <sup>q</sup> the LORD's anger was kindled the same time, and he sware, saying,

11 Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt, ° from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob; because they have not ° wholly followed me;

12 Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, and Joshua the son of Nun: ° for they have wholly followed the LORD.

13 And the LORD's anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them ° wander in the wilderness forty years, ° until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the LORD was consumed.

14 And, behold, ye are risen up in your fathers' stead, ° an increase of sinful men, ° to augment yet the fierce anger of the LORD toward Israel.

15 For ° if ye turn away from after him, ° he will yet again leave them in the wilderness, and ° ye shall destroy all this people.

16 ¶ And they came near unto him, and said, ° We will build sheep-folds here for our cattle, and cities for our little ones;

17 But <sup>d</sup> we ourselves will go ready

a il. 10—15. xxvi. 5—7. 15—18. Gen. xxix. 32. xxx. 10, 11.

b 3. xxi. 32. Jazzer. Josh. xiii. 25. 2 Sam. xxiv. 5. Ia. xvi. 8, 9. c 26. Gen. xiii. 10. 11. Jer. i. 19. Mic. vii. 14. 1 John ii. 16.

d 1. 34—39. Josh. xiii. 17. Ia. xv. 2. —4. Jer. xlviii. 22. 23.

e 36. Beth-nimrah. Is. xv. 6. Nimrim.

f xxi. 25, 26. 28. Josh. xi. 26. Neh. ix. 22. Ia. xv. 4. xvi. 9, 9. Jer. xlviii. 2. 34. 45.

g 38. Shihmah. Josh. xiii. 19. Ia. xvi. 8. Jer. xlviii. 32. Shihmah.

h 38. Baal-meon. i Deut. ii. 24—35.

i Gen. xix. 19. Ruth ii. 10. 1 Sam. xx. 3. 2 Sam. xiv. 22. Esth. v. 2. Jer. xxxii. 2.

j Deut. i. 37. iii. 26. Josh. vii. 7.

m 2 Sam. xi. 11. 1 Cor. xii. 5. Phil. ii. 4.

n 9. xxi. 4. Deut. i. 23.

o Heb. break. Acts xxi. 13.

o See on xiii. 2—20.—xiv. 2. Deut. i. 22. 23. Josh. xiv. 6, 7.

p xiii. 23—38. xiv. 1—10. Deut. i. 24—28.

q xiv. 11. 23. Deut. i. 34—40. Ps. xcvi. 11. Ez. xx. 15. Heb. iii. 8—19.

r xiv. 29. xxvi. 2. 64, 65. Deut. ii. 14, 15.

† Heb. fulfilled after me.

s xiv. 24. 30. xxvi. 65. Deut. i. 36. Josh. xiv. 8, 9.

t xiv. 33—35. Deut. ii. 14. Ps. lxxviii. 33.

u xxvi. 64. Deut. ii. 15.

x Gen. v. 3. viii. 21. Neh. ix. 24.

—26. Job xiv. 4. Ia. i. 4. vii. 4.

Ez. xx. 21. Matt. xxiii. 31—33.

Luke xi. 48. Acts vii. 61, 62.

Deut. i. 34, 35. Ezra ix. 13, 14.

x. 10. z Lev. xxvi. 14—18. Deut. xxviii. 15, &c. xxx. 17.

—19. Josh. xxii. 16—18. 2 Chr. vii. 19—22. xv. 2.

a Num. xiv. 30—35.

b Jer. xxxviii. 23. Matt. xviii. 7.

Rom. xiv. 15. 20. 21. 1 Cor. viii. 11, 12.

c 34—42. Gen. xxxiii. 17.

d 29—32. Deut. iii. 18—20. Josh. iv. 12, 13.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXXII. V. 1—5. (*Marg. Ref.*) This proposal of the Reubenites and Gadites seemed to imply a disregard to the land of Canaan, a distrust of the Lord's promise, and a reluctance to encounter the difficulties and dangers of conquering and expelling the inhabitants. And indeed when we compare their petition "not to be brought over Jordan," with the earnestness with which Moses intreated to pass over; we cannot but conclude, that they did not behold in the rest of Israel in Canaan, that type of heaven, which he and other believers doubtless did. (*Note, Deut. iii. 23—28.*)

V. 6—15. (*Notes, xiii. xiv.*) It was very natural for Moses to suspect, that sloth and cowardice, the effects of unbelief, suggested the petition of the descendants of Gad

and Reuben; and he therefore remonstrated with them very plainly on their conduct. He feared that they "were risen up, an increase of sinful men," like those who provoked the Lord to "swear in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest." (*Notes, Ps. xcvi. 9—11. Heb. iii. 7—19. iv. 1, 2.*) Indeed he was apprehensive that their example would induce their brethren to renew the old provocation, and so to destroy the whole nation. But, though they were in some degree faulty, they were not so deeply criminal as he supposed.—It is not known on what account Caleb, or rather Jephunneh, is called the Kenezite: probably from some ancestor of the family, of whom nothing remains on record. (*Josh. xiv. 14.*)

V. 16—49. This proposal was very equitable, and it was honestly made and faithfully executed. It did not

armed before the children of Israel, until we have brought them unto their place: and our little ones shall dwell in the fenced cities, because of the inhabitants of the land.

<sup>e</sup> Josh. xxii. 4, 5. 18 We \* will not return unto our houses, until the children of Israel have inherited every man his inheritance.

<sup>f</sup> Gen. xlii. 10—12. <sup>g</sup> Josh. xii. 1—6. <sup>h</sup> Josh. i. 14, 15. 19 For ' we will not inherit with them on yonder side Jordan, or forward; \* because our inheritance is fallen to us <sup>b</sup> on this side Jordan eastward.

<sup>i</sup> Deut. iii. 18—20. <sup>j</sup> Josh. i. 13—15. <sup>k</sup> Josh. i. 14, 15. 20 And <sup>l</sup> Moses said unto them, If ye will do this thing, if ye will go armed before the LORD to war,

21 And will go all of you armed over Jordan before the LORD, until he hath driven out his enemies from before him,

<sup>k</sup> Josh. x. 20. 22 And the <sup>k</sup> land be subdued before the LORD; then afterward ye shall return, and <sup>l</sup> be guiltless before the LORD, and before Israel; and <sup>m</sup> this land shall be your possession before the LORD.

<sup>n</sup> Lev. xxvi. 14. <sup>o</sup> Gen. iv. 7. 23 But \* if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the LORD; and <sup>o</sup> be sure your sin will find you out.

24 Build ye cities for your little ones, and folds for your sheep; and do that which hath proceeded out of your mouth.

25 And the children of Gad and the children of Reuben spake unto Moses, saying, Thy servants will do as my lord commandeth.

26 Our little ones, our wives, our

flocks, and all our cattle, shall be there in the cities of Gilead.

27 But thy servants will pass over, every man <sup>r</sup> armed for war, before the LORD to battle, <sup>s</sup> as my lord saith.

28 So concerning them Moses commanded Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the chief fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel:

29 And Moses said unto them, <sup>r</sup> If the children of Gad and the children of Reuben will pass with you over Jordan, every man armed to battle before the LORD, and the land shall be subdued before you; then ye shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession:

30 But if they will not pass over with you armed, <sup>s</sup> they shall have possessions among you, in the land of Canaan.

31 And the children of Gad and the children of Reuben answered, saying, As the LORD hath said unto thy servants, so will we do.

32 We will pass over armed before the LORD *into* the land of Canaan, that the possession of our inheritance on this side Jordan *may be* our's.

33 And <sup>t</sup> Moses gave unto them, *even* to the children of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, and unto <sup>u</sup> half the tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, <sup>v</sup> the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land, with the cities thereof, in the coasts, *even* the cities of the country round about.

imply that all the men capable of bearing arms should go, and so leave their families and possessions defenceless; but a sufficient detachment: accordingly forty thousand went out of about a hundred thousand. (*Notes, Josh. i. 12—15. xxii. 1—5.*)

V. 20. From the expression, "before the LORD," it has been concluded, that the Israelites carried the ark with them in all the wars of Canaan.—It was very encouraging to represent the forces which they were about to attack, as the enemies of God, and God himself as leading Israel on to victory.—It does not appear, that the tabernacle and ark were permanently stationary, till after the land had been subdued. (*Note, Josh. xviii. 1.*)

V. 23. If the persons concerned prevaricated, and so imposed on men; or, if they afterward refused to fulfil their engagement; God would most certainly detect and expose their wickedness, and inflict condign punishment

on them for it.—Sin pursues the criminal, as the hound does the hunted animal; and will at length overtake him, seize on him, and destroy him. (*Note, Prov. xiii. 21.*)

V. 29. It was proper that this country, (which seems hitherto to have been possessed in common by the people,) should be allotted to some of the tribes; and Reuben and Gad having, perhaps too hastily, petitioned for it, it was granted them: but it was a situation very distant from the sanctuary; it greatly interrupted their intercourse with their brethren; it was very much exposed to their enemies, and uneasy to themselves; and they seem to have been dispossessed sooner than the other Israelites. (*Notes, 2 Kings xv. 29. 1 Chr. v. 25, 26.*)

V. 33. The country eastward of Jordan was, it seems, too large for the two tribes of Reuben and Gad alone; and therefore in consequence of the conquest of Gilead by the descendants of Machir, a division of the tribe of Manasseh

34 And the children of Gad built

<sup>x</sup> See on 3. xxi.  
29. xxxiii. 45,  
46.

<sup>x</sup> Dibon, and Ataroth, and <sup>y</sup> Aroer,

<sup>y</sup> Deut. ii. 26. 1a.  
xvii. 2.  
<sup>z</sup> 1 3. Jazer.

35 And Atroth, Shopan, and <sup>a</sup> Jaa-  
zer, and Jogbehah,

<sup>a</sup> See on 3. Nim-  
rah.  
<sup>b</sup> 24

36 And <sup>a</sup> Beth-nimrah, and Beth-  
aran, <sup>b</sup> fenced cities; and folds for  
sheep.

37 And the children of Reuben built

<sup>c</sup> See on 3. xxi  
27. 1a. xv. 4.

<sup>c</sup> Heshbon, and Elealeh, and Kirja-  
thaim.

38 And Nebo, and Baal-meon, (their  
names being changed,) and Shibmah:  
and <sup>e</sup> gave <sup>e</sup> other names to the cities  
which they builded.

<sup>e</sup> Heb. they called  
by names the  
names of the ci-  
ties.

<sup>d</sup> Gen. xxvi. 18.  
Ex. xxviii. 13.  
Josh. xxiii. 7.  
Pa. xvi. 4. 1a.  
xvi. 1.

39 And the children of <sup>e</sup> Machir the  
son of Manasseh went to Gilead, and  
took it, and dispossessed the Amorite  
which *was* in it.

<sup>e</sup> xxvi. 29. Gen.  
1. 23. Josh. xvii.  
1.

<sup>f</sup> Deut. iii. 13—15.  
Josh. xiii. 29—  
31.

40 And Moses <sup>f</sup> gave Gilead unto  
Machir the son of Manasseh; and he  
dwelt therein.

41 And <sup>g</sup> Jair the son of Manasseh <sup>g</sup> 1 Chr. ii. 21—23.  
went and took the small towns thereof,  
and called them <sup>b</sup> Havoth-jair.

<sup>b</sup> Judg. x. 4  
1 Kings iv. 13.

42 And Nobah went and took Ke-  
nath, and the villages thereof, and  
called it Nobah, after his own name.

### CHAP. XXXIII.

A record of forty-two journeys of Israel, 1—49. A  
charge to destroy the Canaanites and their idols, 50  
—56.

**THESE** are the journeys of the chil-  
dren of Israel, which went forth out of  
the land of Egypt, <sup>a</sup> with their armies, <sup>a</sup> Ex. xii. 37. 61.  
<sup>b</sup> under the hand of Moses and Aaron. <sup>b</sup> Josh. xxiv. 5.  
1 Sam. xii. 8. 1a.  
Ixxvii. 20. Mic.  
vi. 4.

2 And Moses wrote their goings out  
according to their <sup>c</sup> journeys, by the  
commandment of the Lord: and these  
are their journeys according to their  
goings out. <sup>c</sup> ix. 17—23. x. 6.  
13. Deut. i. 2.  
x. 11.

likewise had their inheritance there, probably by their own  
consent. (39—42.—Notes, Josh. xiii. 7—33.)

V. 38. [Their names being changed.] When the people  
rebuilt the cities for their own habitations, they changed  
the names of such of them, as were called after the idols  
of the former inhabitants. Yet several of them seem  
afterwards to have recovered their old names, and indeed  
to have been seized on by the Moabites and others.

V. 41. Jair was the descendant of Machir and Manasseh  
in the female line; but from Judah in the male line.  
(Notes, 1 Chr. ii. 21—23.) Yet joining himself to the  
Manassites on this occasion, his posterity was ever after  
reckoned among them. (Note, Deut. iii. 14.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Covetousness, ambition, impatience, or other carnal in-  
ducements, influence most men in choosing their worldly  
settlements; whereas they ought to consider in the first  
place, whether they are likely to be convenient for attend-  
ing on the ordinances of God, and favourable to com-  
munion with his people. If, however, Christians are  
betrayed into such an improper conduct, their iniquity will  
correct them, and they will surely suffer for their folly.  
(Notes, and P. O. Gen. xiii. xiv.) But men in general,  
even when called Christians, have not that faith which ex-  
plores the unseen world, or that spiritual mind which su-  
premely values heavenly blessings. Earthly things suit  
their carnal minds, and are apprehended by their senses;  
these they prefer as their portion: but it proves unsatisfac-  
tory and vexatious, they are speedily driven out of it; and  
having no inheritance beyond the grave, they will eternally  
bemoan their wretched choice, while believers eternally re-  
joice in their's.—We are utterly inexcusable, if we do not  
profit by the examples of those, whose sins and punish-  
ments are recorded for our warning. Yet so depraved is  
human nature, that one generation rises up after another,  
“an increase of sinful men” walking in the steps of those  
who perished before them, and thus still more and more

augmenting the fierce anger of the Lord. Nor does the  
wickedness of men merely destroy their own souls; for it  
murders those of others also, while their examples, in-  
fluence, and persuasions, encourage numbers in sin, or  
discourage them from serving the Lord; and while the  
crimes of professed Christians increase the prejudices or  
harden the hearts of Jews, Mohammedans, and Gentiles  
against the gospel. (Note, Matt. xviii. 7—9.) They, how-  
ever, who are deeply acquainted with the human heart,  
and have been long conversant with perverse and rebellious  
people, are sometimes too suspicious. But such suspicions  
frequently arise from zeal for the honour of God, and love  
to the souls of men: (2 Cor. xi. 2:) and it is generally  
best to disclose them, and to remonstrate with the sus-  
pected persons; for this may either withdraw them from  
their purpose, or give them an opportunity of explaining  
themselves. And even when they are faulty in some  
degree, we should be ready to accept of reasonable ex-  
cuses, and to accede to equitable proposals; yet with such  
express conditions and limitations as may supersede occa-  
sions of future contention.—All men ought to consider  
the interests of others as well as their own; and the law  
of love requires them reciprocally to labour, venture, and  
suffer for each other, as occasion requires. But especially  
it is becoming in the people of God to be disinterested and  
publick spirited: and they cannot consistently account any  
thing too great to forego, to endure, or to attempt, in op-  
posing the common enemies of the cause, in promoting  
the salvation of souls, and in securing the heavenly inheri-  
tance. If God hath formed us to this disposition, we shall  
avoid all appearance of evil, act with equity and love, have  
a sanctified and comfortable use of our worldly possessions,  
and so pass through things temporal, as not finally to lose  
the good things which are eternal.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIII. V. 1, 2. In this chapter the sacred  
historian has brought into one view the journeys and en-

d Gen. xlvii. 11  
Ex. i. 11. xii. 37.  
B. C. 1491.  
e Ex. xii. 2 xiii. 4.

3 And <sup>d</sup> they departed from Rameses <sup>e</sup> in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month: on the morrow after the passover, the children of Israel went out <sup>f</sup> with an high hand, in the sight of all the Egyptians.

f Ex. xiv. 8. Ps. cv. 33. Is. lii. 12. Mic. ii. 13.

g Ex. xii. 29, 30. Ps. cv. 36.

4 For the Egyptians <sup>g</sup> buried all *their* first-born, which the LORD had smitten among them: <sup>h</sup> upon their gods also the LORD executed judgments.

h Ex. xii. 12. xviii. 11. Is. xix. 1. Zeph. iii. 11. Rev. xii. 7, 8. i Ex. xii. 37.

5 And the children of Israel <sup>i</sup> removed from Rameses, and pitched in Succoth.

j Ex. xiii. 20.

6 And <sup>j</sup> they departed from Succoth, and pitched in Etham, which *is* in the edge of the wilderness.

k S. Ex. xiv. 2, 9.

7 And <sup>k</sup> they removed from Etham, and turned again into Pi-hahiroth, which *is* before Baal-zephon; and they pitched before Migdol.

l Ex. xiv. 22, &c. xv. 22—26.

8 And <sup>l</sup> they departed from before Pi-hahiroth, and passed through the midst of the sea into the wilderness, and went three days' journey in the wilderness of Etham, and pitched in Marah.

m Ex. xv. 27.

9 And <sup>m</sup> they removed from Marah and came unto Elim: and in Elim *were* twelve fountains of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees: and they pitched there.

n Ex. xvi. 1. xvii. 1.

10 And they removed from <sup>n</sup> Elim, and encamped by the Red Sea.

11 And they removed from the Red Sea, and encamped in the wilderness of Sin.

12 And they took their journey out of the wilderness of Sin, and encamped in Dophkah.

13 And they departed from Dophkah, and encamped in Alush.

14 And they removed from Alush, and encamped at <sup>o</sup> Rephidim, where <sup>o</sup> Ex. xvii. 1—8. was no water for the people to drink.

15 And <sup>p</sup> they departed from Rephidim, and pitched in the wilderness of Sinai. <sup>p</sup> Ex. xix. 1, 2. B. C. 1490.

16 And <sup>q</sup> they removed from the desert of Sinai, and pitched at <sup>q</sup> Kibroth-hattaavah. <sup>q</sup> Ex. xix. 11—13. 33. Deut. i. 6. That is, the graves of lust. xi. 4. 34.

17 And <sup>r</sup> they departed from Kibroth-hattaavah, and encamped at Hazeroth. <sup>r</sup> xi. 35.

18 And <sup>s</sup> they departed from Hazeroth, and pitched in Rithmah. <sup>s</sup> xii. 16.

19 And they departed from Rithmah, and pitched at Rimmon-parez.

20 And they departed from Rimmon-parez, and pitched in Libnah.

21 And they removed from <sup>t</sup> Libnah, and pitched at Rissah. <sup>t</sup> Dent. i. 1. Laban.

22 And they journeyed from Rissah, and pitched in Kehelathah.

23 And they went from Kehelathah, and pitched in mount Shapher.

24 And they removed from mount Shapher, and encamped in Haradah.

25 And they removed from Haradah, and pitched in Mackheloth.

26 And they removed from Mackheloth, and encamped at Tahath.

27 And they departed from Tahath, and pitched at Tarah.

28 And they removed from Tarah, and pitched in Mithcah.

29 And they went from Mithcah, and pitched in Hashmonah.

campments of Israel, from Egypt to the banks of Jordan.—The clause “by the commandment of the LORD,” may refer either to the *journeys* which were all taken at his word, or to the register of them which was written by his express direction. The Jews in general explain it of the latter, and suppose that it was intended to encourage them in their present dispersions and wanderings; which they persuade themselves will likewise terminate in their settlement in Canaan, under the rule of their expected Messiah: and this, though not exactly as they suppose, will eventually be the case. But one of their Rabbies has truly said, that ‘their Redeemer was born before him who reduced them to this last captivity;’ an opinion which is well worthy of their serious consideration!

V. 3—7. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xii. 29—42.—xiii. 20. xiv. 2—9.*

*Buried, &c.* (4) This mournful employment took off

the thoughts of the Egyptians, from the pursuit of Israel, for a time.

V. 8. The wilderness of Etham seems to have extended considerably on each side of the Red Sea, and round the bay, in which that sea terminates. (*Note, Ex. xiv. 24, 25.*)

V. 9—14. (*Notes, Ex. xv. 22—24. 27. xvi. 1. xvii. 1, 2.*) Dophkah and Alush are not mentioned elsewhere; probably nothing remarkable occurred at these places.

V. 15. (*Note, Ex. xix. 1, 2.*) The subsequent continuance of Israel, in the wilderness of Sinai, comprises all the remaining part of Exodus, all the Leviticus, and to the tenth chapter of this book. (*Note, x. 11—13.*)

V. 16—18. (xi. 33—35. xii. 16.)—*Rithmah* seems to have been in the wilderness of Paran, near Kadesh-barnea.

V. 19—29. We read nothing elsewhere of the encampments mentioned in these verses.



COAST OF THE RED SEA, NEAR REPHIDIM AND DOPKHAH.

NUMBERS xxxiii. 13, 14.



<sup>a</sup> Deut. x. 6. Mosera. 30 And they departed from Hashmonah, and encamped at <sup>a</sup> Moseroth.

<sup>x</sup> 1 Chr. i. 42. 31 And they departed from Moseroth, and pitched in <sup>a</sup> Bene-jaaken.

<sup>y</sup> Deut. x. 7. Gutgadah. 32 And they removed from Bene-jaaken, and encamped at <sup>y</sup> Hor-hagidgad.

<sup>z</sup> Deut. x. 7. Jotbath. 33 And they went from Hor-hagidgad, and pitched in <sup>z</sup> Jotbathah.

34 And they removed from Jotbathah, and encamped at Ebronah.

35 And they departed from Ebronah, and encamped at <sup>a</sup> Ezion-gaber.

<sup>a</sup> xiv. 25. Deut. ii. 8. 1 Kings ix. 26. xxii. 49. Ezion-gaber. 36 And they removed from Ezion-gaber, and pitched in <sup>b</sup> the wilderness of Zin, which is Kadesh.

<sup>b</sup> xiii. 21. xx. 1. xxvii. 14. Deut. xxxv. 51. 37 And they removed from <sup>c</sup> Kadesh, and pitched in mount Hor, in the edge of the land of Edom.

<sup>d</sup> xx. 22, 23. xxi. 4. 38 And <sup>d</sup> Aaron the priest went up into mount Hor, at the commandment of the Lord, and died there in the fortieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the first day of the fifth month.

39 And Aaron was an hundred and twenty and three years old when he died in mount Hor.

<sup>e</sup> See on xxi. 1—3. 40 And <sup>e</sup> king Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the children of Israel.

<sup>f</sup> xxi. 4. 41 And <sup>f</sup> they departed from mount Hor, and pitched in Zalmonah.

42 And they departed from Zalmonah, and pitched in Punon.

<sup>g</sup> xxi. 10. 43 And they departed from Punon, and <sup>g</sup> pitched in Oboth.

44 And they departed from Oboth,

and pitched in <sup>a</sup> Ije-abarim, in the border of Moab. <sup>Or, heaps of Abarim. xxi. 11.</sup>

45 And they departed from Iim, and pitched in Dibon-gad.

46 And they removed from <sup>b</sup> Dibon-gad, and encamped in <sup>b</sup> Almon-diblathaim. <sup>xxiii. 24. Is. xv. 2. Jer. xlviii. 18. Jer. xlviii. 22. Beth-diblathaim. Ez. vi. 14. Dibiath.</sup>

47 And they removed from Almon-diblathaim, and pitched in <sup>c</sup> the mountains of Abarim, before Nebo. <sup>x. 20. Deut. xxxii. 49. xxxiv. 1.</sup>

48 And they departed from the mountains of Abarim, and pitched <sup>d</sup> in the plains of Moab, by Jordan near Jericho. <sup>See on xxii. 1.</sup>

49 And they pitched by Jordan, from <sup>e</sup> Beth-jesimoth even unto <sup>e</sup> Abel-shittim, in the plains of Moab. <sup>m. Josh. xiii. 20. Ez. xxv. 9. Or, the plains of Shittim. xxv. 1—9. Ex. xxv. 8. 10. 23. Josh. ii. 1. n. 48, 49.</sup>

50 ¶ And the Lord spake unto Moses <sup>f</sup> in the plains of Moab, by Jordan near Jericho, saying,

51 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, <sup>o</sup> When ye are passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan;

52 Then <sup>p</sup> ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places.

53 And ye shall dispossess <sup>q</sup> the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein: <sup>q</sup> for I have given you the land to possess it. <sup>q. Deut. xxxii. 8. Ps. xxiv. 1, 2. cxv. 16. Jer. xxvii. 5, 6. Dan. iv. 17. 25. 32. Matt. xx. 15. See on xxvi. 63—66. Heb. multiply his inheritance. xxvi. 64. Heb. diminish his inheritance. Josh. xv. 1—12. xvi. 1, &c. xvii. 1, &c. xviii. 11, &c. xix. 1—48.</sup>

54 And <sup>r</sup> ye shall divide the land by lot for an inheritance among your families, and to the more ye shall <sup>r</sup> give the more inheritance, and to the fewer ye shall <sup>r</sup> give the less inheritance: every man's inheritance shall be <sup>r</sup> in the place

matter of Baal-peor, to express the lamentation made on that account.—Probably the Israelites first gave names to many of the places in the desert, by which they were afterwards known.

V. 51—53. (Marg. Ref. p, q. Note, Ex. xxxiv. 11—17.) This repeated command rendered it the indispensable duty of the Israelites, to extirpate the Canaanites by every means in their power, and as fast as they could subdue them; neither yielding to cowardice, sloth, or self-indulgence; nor setting up their own notions of clemency in opposition to the sentence of the righteous Judge, which they were commissioned to execute.—But they must also destroy all monuments of their abominable idolatries, however precious the materials, or curious the workmanship.—Groves, altars, and images, on hills and mountains, were called “high places.”

V. 30, 31. It is said elsewhere, (Note, Deut. x. 6, 7,) “They took their journey from Beeroth of the children of Jaakan to Mosera:” yet here this seems reversed, “they departed from Moseroth, and pitched in Bene-jaakan,” or, the sons of Jaakan.—Either different places are meant, or the people journeyed back again nearly to the same place.—Probably no mention is made of any but their principal stations.

V. 32—34. Marg. Ref. V. 35, 36. Marg. Ref.—Notes, xiii. 21, 22. xx. 1. V. 37—39. xxi. 4. Ex. vii. 7.—Notes, xx. 22—28. V. 40. Note, xxi. 1—3. V. 43, 44. Note, xxi. 10. V. 45—49. (Marg. Ref.) The word “Abel” signifies also mourning; and perhaps it was added to the name Shittim, where Israel grievously sinned and suffered in the

373

where his lot falleth: according to the tribes of your fathers ye shall inherit.

55 But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them <sup>t</sup> shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell.

56 Moreover, it shall come to pass, <sup>u</sup> that I shall do unto you, as I thought to do unto them.

#### CHAP. XXXIV.

The boundaries of Canaan, 1—15. The names of the men who were chosen to divide the land, 16—29.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

2 Command the children of Israel,

and say unto them, When ye come into the land of Canaan; (<sup>a</sup> this is the land that shall fall unto you for <sup>b</sup> an inheritance, *even* the land of Canaan with the coasts thereof:)

3 Then your <sup>c</sup> south quarter shall be from the wilderness of Zin, along by the coast of Edom, and your south border shall be the outmost coast of the <sup>d</sup> salt sea eastward.

4 And your border shall turn from the south to the ascent of <sup>e</sup> Akrabbim, and pass on to <sup>f</sup> Zin: and the going forth thereof shall be from the south to <sup>g</sup> Kadesh-barnea, and shall go on to <sup>h</sup> Hazar-addar, and pass on to Azmon.

5 And the border shall fetch a compass from Azmon unto <sup>i</sup> the river of Egypt, and the goings out of it shall be at <sup>k</sup> the sea.

<sup>t</sup> Deut. vii. 4. 16.  
Josh. xxiii. 13.  
Judg. i. 21—33.  
11. 3. Ps. cvii. 34—  
36. Ez. xxviii.  
24

<sup>u</sup> Lev. xviii. 28.  
xx. 23. Deut.  
xxviii. 63. xxxix.  
28. Josh. xxii.  
15, 16. 2 Chr.  
xxxvi. 17—20.  
Ez. xxxiii. 24—  
29. Luke xxi.  
23, 24.

<sup>a</sup> xxxiii. 51. 52.  
Gen. xli. 6. 7.  
xiii. 15—17. xv.  
16—21. xvii. 8.  
Deut. i. 7. 8. Ps.  
lxxviii. 35. cv.  
11. Ez. xlvii. 14  
Acta xxv. 26.  
<sup>b</sup> Ps. xvi. 5, 6.  
Jer. iii. 19. Acta  
xxvi. 18. Eph. i.  
14. 18. 1 Pet. i.  
3, 4.  
<sup>c</sup> Ez. xxxiii. 31.  
Josh. xv. 1—12.  
Ez. xlvii. 19.

<sup>d</sup> Gen. xiv. 8.  
Josh. iii. 16. xv.  
2. Ez. xlvii. 8.  
18.  
<sup>e</sup> Josh. xv. 3. Judg.  
i. 36.  
<sup>f</sup> 3. xiii. 21. xx. 1.  
xxxiii. 36, 37.

<sup>g</sup> xiii. 26. xxxii. 8.  
<sup>h</sup> Josh. xv. 3, 4.

<sup>i</sup> Gen. xv. 19.  
Josh. xv. 4. 47.  
1 Kings viii. 65.  
Is. xxvii. 12.  
<sup>k</sup> 6, 7.

V. 55, 56. The general duty of Israel became the particular duty of each tribe, after the division of the land, in that portion allotted to them: and the subsequent history proves that these denunciations were real *prophecies*, which have been wonderfully accomplished even to this day.—During many ages, the remnant of the devoted nations were exceedingly troublesome to the Israelites, even “as pricks in the eyes and thorns in the side,” which would be a constant and almost intolerable torture: (*Marg. Ref. t. Note, Josh. xxiii. 13*;) and at length, as they persisted in imitating their idolatries and atrocious crimes, they were punished as the Lord proposed to punish the Canaanites; being expelled from their country with tremendous slaughter, first by the Assyrians and Chaldeans, and at length more completely by the Romans.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is very useful to record the principal events of our own lives, and of the Lord's dealings with his church: and frequent meditation on these subjects tends to awaken gratitude, to excite repentance and humiliation, and to encourage our faith and hope in God.—Few of the periods of our lives can be reflected on, without reminding us of the Lord's goodness, and of our own ingratitude and disobedience: these, like a two-fold thread, run entwined together through the whole of our experience, and our unworthiness renders the kindness of God more admirable, while his kindness shews our sins more inexcusable.—We could not reasonably wish to pass over again any stages of our pilgrimage, except we could hope, by the grace of God, to shun the sins which we committed, or to embrace those opportunities of glorifying God which before we slipped. But if we are upright in these desires, they shall be graciously accepted: and we may be thankful that we have travelled thus far towards a better country; we may set up our Ebenezer, and praise him who hath helped us hitherto; and we may trust in him to bring us safe to our journey's end.—But, whatever be our character and state,

every day, week, month, and year, whether prosperous or adverse, carries us forward to our “long home,” and conveys the unbeliever nearer to the gates of hell, the believer nearer to the joys of heaven; and not only those days which are marked for some important transaction or event, but those which glide away unnoticed and are speedily forgotten.—Soon will our wanderings end, and our eternal state be irrevocably fixed: how important then is the present moment!—Happy are they, whom the Lord now “guides with his counsel, and will” at length “receive to his glory!” To this felicity the gospel calls us: “Behold, now is the accepted time! behold, now is the day of salvation!”—Let sinners seize the precious opportunity, and flee for refuge to the hope set before them. Let us all behold with trembling, and keep at a distance from “the graves of the lusters;” let us fear the doom of the unbelievers, concerning whom the “LORD sware” in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest; let us shun the *Meribahs* and *Massahs*, at which so many have perished in their murmurings and rebellions. Let us rather prefer the bitter waters of *Marah*, sweetened with the consolations of the gospel.—Let us not loiter in our journey, nor think of returning to Egypt, nor fear interposing enemies, difficulties, or death itself. Let us but redeem our time to glorify God, and serve our generation, and he will carry us safe through all to his eternal kingdom.—But except we separate from sinners, avoid occasions of evil, and crucify our lusts, we must perish: and if we shew any quarter to our sinful propensities, they will gather strength by indulgence, mar the comfort of our lives, and perhaps “be pricks in our eyes and thorns in our sides” when we lie upon a death-bed.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIV. V. 3—5. It was absolutely necessary that the boundaries of the land, of which the Israelites were commissioned to dispossess and extirpate the inhabitants, should be exactly ascertained: because they were not

6 And *as for* the western border, ye shall even have <sup>1</sup>the great sea for a border: this shall be your west border.

<sup>1</sup> Josh. i. 4. ix. 1. xv. 12-17. xxiii. 4. Ez. xlvii. 10. 15. 20.

7 And this shall be your <sup>m</sup>north border: from the great sea ye shall point out for you mount Hor.

8 From mount Hor ye shall point out *your* border unto <sup>n</sup>the entrance of Hamath: and the goings forth of the border shall be to Zedad.

<sup>n</sup> xlii. 21. Josh. xlii. 5. 6. 2 Sam. viii. 9. 2 Kings xiv. 25. Jer. xxxix. 5. Ez. xlvii. 15-20.

9 And the border shall go on to Ziphron, and the goings out of it shall be at Hazar-enan: this shall be your north border.

10 And ye shall point out your east border from <sup>o</sup>Hazar-enan to Shepham.

11 And the coast shall go down from Shepham to <sup>p</sup>Riblah, on the east side of Ain: and the border shall descend, and shall reach unto the <sup>q</sup>side of <sup>a</sup>the sea of Chinnereth eastward.

<sup>p</sup> 2 Kings xxiii. 33. xiv. 6. Jer. xxxix. 5. 6. lii. 10. 26, 27.

<sup>q</sup> Deut. iii. 17. Josh. xi. 2. Chinnereth. xix. 35. Luke v. 1. Gennesaret. John vi. 1. Sea of Tiberias.

12 And the border shall go down to Jordan, and the goings out of it shall be at <sup>r</sup>the salt sea: this shall be your land, with the coasts thereof round about.

13 And Moses commanded the children of Israel, saying, <sup>s</sup>This is the land which ye shall inherit by lot,

<sup>s</sup> Josh. xiv. 1, 2

commissioned to push their conquests any further, at *that time*, or at any time in the same manner; though it was the divine purpose at length to put them in possession of much more extensive territories. (Notes, Gen. xv. 18-21. Ex. xxiii. 31.)—The boundary of the land towards the south was here fixed, as beginning from the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, extending to the west in a winding direction, past the desert of Zin and the borders of Idumea to Kadesh-barnea, and thence to the place where the river of Egypt ran into the Mediterranean sea.

V. 6. The Mediterranean sea was the western boundary.

V. 7-9. Mount Hor, here mentioned, was at the opposite extremity of the land, from that mount Hor on which Aaron died. It seems to have been a ridge of mount Libanus, which was the northern boundary, extending from the Mediterranean sea, southward of Zidon to the springs of Jordan.

V. 10-12. Jordan was only a small stream, till it united with other rivulets, and formed the sea, or lake, of Chinnereth, or Gennesaret, or Tiberias; but afterwards, emerging on the opposite end of the lake, it became a considerable river, then more generally known by the name Jordan. It seems, however, in its whole course, including the sea of Chinnereth and the Dead Sea, to have been the eastern boundary of Canaan, properly so called, which formed a country not more than one hundred and sixty miles long, and about sixty broad.—Moses was born in Egypt, and never had an opportunity of making a survey

which the LORD commanded to give unto the nine tribes, and to the half tribe.

14 For <sup>t</sup>the tribe of the children of Reuben, according to the house of their fathers, and the tribe of the children of Gad, according to the house of their fathers, have received *their inheritance*, and half the tribe of Manasseh have received their inheritance.

<sup>t</sup> xxxii. 83. Deut. iii. 12-17. Josh. xiii. 8-12. xiv. 2, 3.

15 The two tribes and the half tribe have received their inheritance <sup>u</sup>on this side Jordan *near* Jericho, eastward, toward the sun-rising.

<sup>u</sup> xxxii. 32.

16 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

17 These *are* the names of the men which shall divide the land unto you: <sup>x</sup>Elcazar the priest, and <sup>y</sup>Joshua the son of Nun.

<sup>x</sup> Josh. xiv. 1. xix. 51. <sup>y</sup> See on xiii. 8. 16.

18 And ye shall take one <sup>z</sup>prince of every tribe, to divide the land by inheritance.

<sup>z</sup> See on i. 4-6.

19 And the names of the men *are* these: Of the tribe of Judah, <sup>a</sup>Caleb the son of Jephunneh.

<sup>a</sup> xlii. 30. xiv. 6. 24. 30. 38. xxvi. 65.

20 And of the tribe of the children of Simeon, Shemuel the son of Ammihud.

of the countries beyond Jordan. (Deut. iii. 25.) Yet he has given an exact geographical description of them, which accords with the whole subsequent history, and with ancient history in general. Whatever opportunity he might have had, in those early times, of gaining information; it cannot reasonably be doubted, but that he was guided by the Holy Spirit, in thus specifying the grant which God made to Israel.—The Dead Sea, once a still more fertile country than Canaan, might be a useful lesson to Israel, to shun those sins which brought destruction upon Sodom and Gomorrah; and the wilderness might call to remembrance their wanderings, rebellions, and mercies there; and the border of Egypt might remind them, “that they had been bondmen, but that the LORD their God had redeemed them.”

V. 13-15. The countries already conquered, and conditionally assigned to the two tribes and a half, lay without these boundaries: but the Israelites might make alliances with other nations, not included in this grant; and they were not allowed to dispossess or extirpate them, as they did the devoted Canaanites.—During the reigns of David and Solomon they possessed a much larger country: yet, through their own sloth and wickedness, they seldom actually enjoyed the whole even of the land here granted to them.

V. 16-29. This appointment of the persons who should divide the land, gave assurance of conquest to Israel; and to the persons themselves of preservation from

21 Of the tribe of Benjamin, Elidad the son of Chislon.

22 And the prince of the tribe of the children of Dan, Bukki the son of Jogli.

23 The prince of the children of Joseph, for the tribe of the children of Manasseh, Hanniel the son of Ephod.

24 And the prince of the tribe of the children of Ephraim, Kemuel the son of Shiptan.

25 And the prince of the tribe of the children of Zebulun, Elizaphan the son of Parnach.

26 And the prince of the tribe of the children of Issachar, Paltiel the son of Azzan.

27 And the prince of the tribe of the children of Asher, Ahihud the son of Shelomi.

28 And the prince of the tribe of the children of Naphtali, Pedahel the son of Ammihud.

<sup>b</sup> Josh. xix 51.

29 <sup>b</sup> These *are they* whom the LORD commanded to divide the inheritance unto the children of Israel in the land of Canaan.

the sword, and from natural death, during the wars with the Canaanites.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The people of God, though generally poor, are said "to inherit the earth;" because "a little that the righteous hath, is better than the riches of many wicked."—For the bounds of their habitation, and the measure of their provision, are assigned them by the only wise God, their heavenly Father, in subserviency to their salvation, and the increase of grace and peace in their souls. Their numbers have likewise hitherto been few: and they have commonly been despised and neglected, by the multitude of the turbulent and wicked of the world. But "the eye of the LORD is upon them;" "his Name is their strong Tower;" he "knoweth what things they have need of," and hath reserved for them a more enduring inheritance in heaven; and "they are kept by his power through faith unto salvation." May we cast our lot among them, and not covet riches, nor seek, in any improper way, to increase our temporal provision; may we be careful not to live beneath our privileges, through sloth or indulgence; may we enjoy the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, as an assurance of victory and eternal life; and when our warfare is ended, may we be welcomed to the heavenly Canaan by Jesus, the Prince of all the tribes of the redeemed, to our everlasting and complete satisfaction.

#### CHAP. XXXV.

Forty-eight cities with their suburbs to be given to the Levites, 1—8. Six to be cities of refuge, 9—15. Laws respecting murder and manslaughter, 16—34.

AND the LORD spake unto Moses <sup>a</sup>in the plains of Moab, by Jordan *near* Jericho, saying,

2 Command <sup>b</sup>the children of Israel, that they give unto the Levites, of the inheritance of their possession, cities to dwell in: and ye shall give *also* unto the Levites suburbs for the cities round about them.

3 And the cities shall they have to dwell in, <sup>c</sup>and the suburbs of them shall be for their cattle, and for their goods, and for all their beasts.

4 And the suburbs of the cities which ye shall give unto the Levites, *shall reach* from the wall of the city and outward, a thousand cubits round about.

5 And ye shall measure from without the city on the east side two thousand cubits, and on the south side two thousand cubits, and on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north

<sup>a</sup> xxii. 1. xxvi. 33.  
xxxi. 12. xxxiii. 50. xxxvi. 13.  
Deut xxxiv. 1.  
8.

<sup>b</sup> Lev. xxv. 32.  
33. Josh. xiv. 3. 4. xxi. 2. Ez. xiv. 1—8. xlviii. 8. 22. 1 Cor. ix. 10—14.

<sup>c</sup> Josh. xxi. 11.  
2 Chr. xi. 14.  
Ez. xiv. 2.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XXXV. V. 2—8. These cities, reserved for the priests and Levites, were designed, not only for their accommodation, but likewise that they might reside as religious instructors in the several parts of the land, and conveniently go to the adjacent towns and villages, or receive those who thence resorted to them. They might also dwell elsewhere on some occasions, and those of other tribes might live in these cities as their tenants.—Though the *typical* temple-service was limited to one place; yet reading, expounding, and enforcing the law of God, with prayer and praise, were not thus confined, but might be attended to any where, with reference to the appointed sacrifices and priesthood, and to the ark of the covenant.—Thus the curse pronounced on Levi (*Gen. xlix. 7.*) was turned into a blessing, both to them, and to Israel in general.—Many of the *cities* spoken of seem to have been like our market-towns; and they were very numerous in that populous and fruitful country. The suburbs of a thousand cubits nearest the city would serve for gardens and out-houses; and the larger suburb of another thousand, at a greater distance, would yield pasture for the flocks. The whole seems to have extended nearly three quarters of a mile on every side of each city; and, though forty-eight such cities with the suburbs, in addition to the tithes and other perquisites, would be a very plentiful provision for this small tribe, it does not appear that the people complained of it as exorbitant.

side two thousand cubits, and the city shall be in the midst: this shall be to them the suburbs of the cities.

6 And among the cities which ye shall give unto the Levites, *there shall be* <sup>d</sup> six cities for refuge, which ye shall appoint for the manslayer, that he may flee thither: and <sup>e</sup> to them ye shall add forty and two cities.

7 So all the cities which ye shall give to the Levites shall be <sup>e</sup> forty and eight cities: them shall ye give with their suburbs.

8 And the cities which ye shall give shall be <sup>f</sup> of the possession of the children of Israel: <sup>g</sup> from them that have many ye shall give many; but from them that have few ye shall give few: every one shall give of his cities unto the Levites according to his inheritance which <sup>h</sup> he inheriteth.

9 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, <sup>i</sup> When ye be come over Jordan into the land of Canaan,

11 Then <sup>j</sup> ye shall appoint you cities to be cities of refuge for you; that the slayer may flee thither, which killeth any person <sup>k</sup> at unawares.

12 And they shall be unto you cities for refuge <sup>l</sup> from the avenger; that the

manslayer die not, <sup>m</sup> until he stand before the congregation in judgment.

13 And of these cities which ye shall give, six cities shall ye have for refuge.

14 Ye shall give <sup>n</sup> three cities on this side Jordan, and three cities shall ye give in the land of Canaan, which shall be cities of refuge.

15 These six cities shall be a refuge, <sup>o</sup> both for the children of Israel, and for the stranger, and for the sojourner among them; that every one that killeth any person unawares may flee thither.

16 And <sup>p</sup> if he smite him with an instrument of iron, so that he die, he is a murderer: <sup>q</sup> the murderer shall surely be put to death.

17 And if he smite him <sup>r</sup> with throwing a stone, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death.

18 Or <sup>s</sup> if he smite him with an hand-weapon of wood, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death.

19 The <sup>t</sup> revenger of blood himself shall slay the murderer: when he meeteth him he shall slay him.

20 But <sup>u</sup> if he thrust him of hatred, or hurl at him <sup>v</sup> by laying of wait that he die;

*Cities for refuge. (6) Marg. Ref. d. Note, 11—15.*

V. 11—15. In order to express the greater abhorrence of murder and to provide the more effectually for the punishment of the murderer, the prosecution and execution, by ancient custom, devolved upon the nearest relation, or next heir, or "the redeemer;" (so the word rendered *avenger* signifies;) the very person to whom the right of redemption belonged; who in *notorious cases* might pursue the criminal any whither, and execute vengeance without the formalities of a trial. This custom, under certain restrictions, was sanctioned by the divine law: for it must be supposed, that the avenger was not authorized to put any one to death on mere suspicion; as the magistrates and congregation might not inflict this punishment, except the fact was proved by the testimony of two witnesses. (Note, 24—30.) But, even if the person was certainly known, an equitable and merciful provision was also made, for the security of those who had *unintentionally* shed blood. Six cities were appointed in different parts of the land, to which they might flee for refuge and be safe, until they had a fair trial before the proper magistrates. One or other of these cities would lie within half a day's journey of every part of the land. It would rarely occur that the avenger of blood would be on the spot, and

none else had a right to assault or detain the manslayer, at least if no malicious intention was manifest. These unhappy men would therefore generally get the start of their adversaries, and very few of them be overtaken before they gained the place of refuge. But then they must leave their families, employments, and most important interests, and dearest comforts: and they must neither loiter, nor yield to weariness, nor regard difficulties, nor slacken their pace, till they had got safe within the walls of the city, which secured them, in virtue of the divine institution, and not by its own natural strength.—The Jewish writers inform us, that, to afford every facility to those who thus fled for their life, the road to these cities was always preserved in good repair; and way-posts, inscribed REFUGE, were placed wherever needful, that they might not so much as hesitate for a moment. All strangers and sojourners, whether proselytes or not, were allowed the benefit of this provision: for the tradition of the Jews, that none but proselytes were intended, most evidently contradicts the text. The region eastward of Jordan was nearly as long as that to the west of the river, and therefore three cities were appointed in each division.

V. 16—23. The several instances here adduced on each side, in order to illustrate the grand principle of the law,

21 Or in enmity smite him with his hand, that he die: he that smote *him* shall surely be put to death; *for* he is a murderer: the revenger of blood shall slay the murderer when he meeteth him.

22 But if he thrust him suddenly <sup>a</sup> without enmity, or have cast upon him any thing without laying of wait;

23 Or with any stone, wherewith a man may die, seeing *him* not, and cast it upon him that he die, and *was* not his enemy, neither sought his harm:

24 Then <sup>x</sup> the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the revenger of blood, according to these judgments;

25 And the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled: and he shall <sup>y</sup> abide in it unto the death of the high priest, which was <sup>z</sup> anointed with the holy oil.

26 But if the slayer shall at any time come without the borders of the city of his refuge, whither he was fled;

27 And the revenger of blood find him without the borders of the city of his refuge, and the revenger of blood kill the slayer; <sup>h</sup> he shall not be guilty of blood:

28 Because <sup>a</sup> he should have remained in the city of his refuge until the death of the high priest: but <sup>b</sup> after the death of the high priest, the slayer shall return into the land of his possession.

29 So these *things* shall be for <sup>a c</sup> a statute of judgment unto you, throughout your generations, in all your dwellings.

30 Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by <sup>d</sup> the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to *cause* him to die.

31 Moreover, <sup>e</sup> ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is <sup>f</sup> guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death.

32 And ye shall take <sup>f</sup> no satisfaction for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the priest.

33 So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye *are*; for blood, <sup>g</sup> it defileth the land: <sup>h</sup> the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it.

34 <sup>h</sup> Defile not therefore the land which ye shall inhabit, wherein <sup>i</sup> I dwell: for I the LORD <sup>k</sup> dwell among the children of Israel.

<sup>a</sup> 11 Ex. xxi. 13.  
Deut. xix. 9.  
Josh. xx. 2. 5.

<sup>x</sup> See on 12

<sup>y</sup> 23. Josh. xx. 6.  
Rom. iii. 24—26.  
Eph. ii. 16—18.  
Heb. iv. 14—16.  
vii. 25—28. ix.  
12—15. x. 19—  
22.

<sup>z</sup> Ex. xxix. 7. Lev.  
viii. 12. xxi. 10.

<sup>h</sup> Heb. no blood  
shall be to him.  
Ex. xxii. 2. Deut.  
xix. 6. 10.

<sup>a</sup> John xv. 4—6.  
Acts. xxi. 23. xxvii.  
31. Heb. iii. 14  
vi. 4—8. x. 28—  
30 39  
<sup>b</sup> Heb. ix. 11, 12.  
15—17.

<sup>d</sup> Deut. xvii. 6, 7.  
xix. 15. Matt.  
xxviii. 16. John  
viii. 17, 18. 2 Cor.  
xiii. 1. 1 Tim. v.  
19. Heb. x. 28.  
Rev. xi. 3.

<sup>e</sup> Gen. ix. 5, 6.  
Ex. xxi. 14.  
Deut. xix. 11—  
18. 2 Sam. xii.  
13. 1 Kings ii.  
29—34. Ps. li.  
14. 16.

<sup>f</sup> Heb. *faulty* to  
die.

<sup>f</sup> Acts iv. 12. Gal.  
ii. 21. iii. 10—  
13. 22. Rev. v. 9.

<sup>g</sup> Lev. xviii. 25.  
Deut. xxi. 1—8.  
23. 2 Kings xxi.  
26. xxiv. 4. Ps.  
cvi. 38. Is. xxvi.  
21. Ez. xxii. 24

<sup>h</sup> 27. Hos. iv. 2.  
3. Mic. iv. 11.  
Matt. xxiii. 35.  
Luke xi. 50, 51.

<sup>i</sup> Heb. there can  
be no expiation  
for the land.

<sup>h</sup> v. 3. Lev. xx.  
24—26

<sup>i</sup> Ps. cxxxv. 21.  
Is. lviii. 15. Hos.  
ix. 8. 2 Cor. vi.  
16, 17. Rev. xxi.  
3. 27.

<sup>k</sup> v. 3. Ex. xxv. 8.  
xxix. 45, 46.  
1 Kings vi. 13.  
Ps. cxxxii. 14  
Is. viii. 18.

and the difference between the unfortunate manslayer and the murderer, are not intended to mark the distinction between sudden anger and malice *prepenſe*; (which latter is indeed an aggravation, but not essential to murder:) but between *intentionally* striking a man with any weapon likely to cause death, or in wrath from hatred, or with a design of doing him injury; and an *unintentional* blow, at unawares, and without seeking his harm, which alone is here considered as *manslaughter*. (Note, Deut. xix. 2—10.)

V. 24—30. After the manslayer had been received into the city of refuge, the avenger of blood could only act as prosecutor; and the magistrates, in the presence of the people, were appointed to decide the cause according to the rules here laid down. Probably the accused person was tried at or near the place, where the deceased had been slain, and where evidence could most easily be brought: and in case he was acquitted by the decision of the judges, and with the approbation of the people, he was conveyed back to the city of refuge, where he was protected, as a kind of prisoner at large, till the death of the high priest; when the public loss, and the grief occasioned by it, might be supposed to swallow up all personal regrets and resentments: and then he was permitted to return to his

house and estate. But if, in the mean while, he ventured to leave the city, and the avenger met him and slew him, he was supposed to merit his doom by thus neglecting the appointment of God for his preservation, and the avenger must not be punished. This shews that in other cases, if the avenger slew an innocent man on surmise, he was liable to the punishment of a murderer.—But if, by the testimony of two credible witnesses, the man who had fled to the city of refuge (or any other person tried for murder,) was adjudged guilty, he must, without fail, be put to death: yet if only one witness supported the charge, though he appeared guilty, he must not be thus punished.

V. 31—34. In case murder was proved against a man, no *atonement* or ransom might be accepted for his life; but, however otherwise distinguished, he must be put to death: nay, further, no atonement or compensation might purchase the manslayer the liberty of leaving the city of refuge, before the death of the high priest! Because murder was to be considered, not so much as the private injury of an individual, as the crime of the nation, which could only be expiated by the death of the offender; and as defiling the land, till thus expiated. (Note, Deut. xxi. 1—9.) Does not this fully prove, that the connivance of

## CHAP. XXXVI.

A difficulty shewn by the Manassites respecting

our government, in the burning of widows, and in human sacrifices, and in other species of murder, committed in our East Indian dominions, under the pretext of an idolatrous religion, is wholly unjustifiable, and burdens our land and all connected with those distant regions, with the guilt of blood, not expiated by that of those who shed it?—The vengeance of God might be expected on the nation of Israel, if the magistrates and people neglected their duty in this respect; and especially, as to the land, in which the Lord himself condescended to dwell by his temple and ordinances.

This remarkable law, expressive of the deepest detestation of murder, yet providing most effectually against the innocent being punished with the guilty, is likewise an instructive typical representation of the salvation of the gospel. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after death is the judgment," with its eternal consequences. In the mean while, a REFUGE is provided and revealed in Christ Jesus. His ministers warn sinners to "flee from the wrath to come," and instruct and exhort them to "flee for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before them." All things are prepared for the reception of those who obey this call. By faith they discern both their danger and Refuge. Then fear urges, and hope animates. Should death, like the avenger of blood, find them *without*, destruction is inevitable. All is at stake: this is their "one thing needful." Now no longer will they be amused, or bribed, or persuaded to loiter. Even their choicest earthly comforts, and most important temporal interests, appear comparatively worthless. They "count all but loss... that they may win Christ, and be found in him." They apply earnestly to him, and follow his instructions. They are welcomed into the Refuge which he hath provided. "There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus:" but a trial must take place before the assembled world, by which those who have a right, as true believers, to this Refuge, will be distinguished from all who have only a dead faith. At present true believers abide in him, and cleave to him in the obedience of faith and love; and at length in virtue of the death of their great and gracious High Priest, they will be restored to their forfeited inheritance.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

## V. 1—8.

The provision, which God hath appointed for his ministers, was not intended to pamper them in pride, sloth, or self-indulgence; and thus to disqualify them for their work, and teach them to dislike and despise it: but to free them from distracting care, and to leave them at leisure wholly to employ themselves in their important duties; and to seize every opportunity of conciliating the people, and gaining attention to their instructions. So that the grant, and the effect of it when properly used, were intended *ultimately* and *mainly* for the advantage of those who gave, not of those who received it. But the sinfulness of man's heart perverts the wisest constitutions, human and divine: and the abuse made, alas! by too many, affords others a plausible pretext for neglecting their duty. Thus both are

daughters inheriting, 1—5. Such must marry in their own tribe, 6—9. Zelophehad's daughters are married to the sons of their father's brother, 10—13.

criminal; but they who furnish the excuse have the deeper guilt.—It is very profitable for the ministers of the gospel frequently to confer together. This tends to increase mutual love, and gives younger ministers especially the opportunity of profiting by the knowledge, experience, and observations of their seniors: but *above all* they should pray much together, for each other *personally*, for a blessing on each other's labours, for a blessing on the word, and for the success of the gospel and the enlargement of the church, in every place. And when, with this advantage, access to a number of willing hearers can be obtained, a minister of Christ has abundant reason for content and thankfulness.—In the maintenance of the ministry, in the support of divine worship, in the provision for the poor, or in any other good work, equality and proportion should be considered, both by those who contribute, and those who receive; for that donation is *liberality* from the poorer, which is shamefully scanty in those of superior affluence.

## V. 9—34.

It is very important in the administration of justice, that the guilty should not escape, and that the innocent should not suffer: and though the prosecution and execution of criminals be a painful, and in many cases an odious employment; yet it is necessary, and therefore it is a duty which should be performed by those concerned, from regard to publick justice and the welfare of society. This is especially the case with murder in all its forms, and under all disguises, which so pollutes the land, that nothing but the blood of the murderer, whatever be his rank or quality, can cleanse it. Alas! that unscriptural and absurd distinctions, and concessions to the maxims of proud ungodly men, should cause so many atrocious murders to pass unpunished, the guilt of which, with accumulating weight will, it is seriously to be apprehended, help to sink this nation into destruction!—this nation which hath so long been favoured in a peculiar manner in God's providence, and where he hath so long dwelt by his word and ordinances; but which, infidelity, profaneness, and licentiousness, threatening to deluge all before them, mark to be ripening apace for ruin; except, in answer to the prayers of the remnant of his people, "the Spirit of the Lord lift up a standard against them!" Let us all then with one consent present our supplications in behalf of our beloved country, that reformation and a general revival of pure religion may avert the judgments of God.—The restrictions, dangers, and inconveniences, which *unintentional* bloodshed occasioned, should impress us with horror at the thought of even heedlessly occasioning death; and should increase our caution and circumspection, as well as watchfulness over our passions, and also our earnestness in praying to be preserved from such a calamity.—But above all, let sinners take warning without delay to flee for refuge to Jesus Christ, whatever they renounce, venture, and suffer: let them not stop short, turn back, or loiter: let them not fear a repulse; for the Refuge is appointed for the purpose of receiving all such, as are sensible of their danger, and flee to lay hold on the hope set before them, how vile soever they have been. Let them

**AND** the chief fathers of the families of the children of <sup>a</sup> Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of the sons of Joseph, came near, and spake before Moses, and before the princes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel;

<sup>b</sup> 2 And they said, <sup>b</sup> The LORD commanded my lord to give the land for an inheritance by lot to the children of Israel: and my lord was commanded by the LORD <sup>c</sup> to give the inheritance of Zelophehad our brother unto his daughters,

<sup>d</sup> 3 And if they be married to any of the sons of the *other* tribes of the children of Israel; then shall their inheritance be taken from the inheritance of our fathers, and shall be put to the inheritance of the tribe <sup>e</sup> whereunto they are received: so shall it be taken from the lot of our inheritance.

<sup>f</sup> 4 And when <sup>f</sup> the jubilee of the children of Israel shall be, then shall their inheritance be put unto the inheritance of the tribe whereunto they are received: so shall their inheritance be taken away from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers.

<sup>g</sup> 5 And Moses commanded the children of Israel, according to the word of the LORD, saying, The tribe of the sons of Joseph <sup>g</sup> hath said well.

<sup>h</sup> 6 This is the thing which the LORD

doth command concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, Let them <sup>i</sup> marry to whom they think best; <sup>i</sup> only to the family of the tribe of their father shall they marry;

<sup>j</sup> 7 So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe; for every one of the children of Israel shall <sup>j</sup> keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers.

<sup>k</sup> 8 And <sup>k</sup> every daughter, that possesseth an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel, shall be wife unto one of the family of the tribe of her father, that the children of Israel may enjoy every man the inheritance of his fathers.

<sup>l</sup> 9 Neither shall the inheritance remove from *one* tribe to another tribe; but every one of the tribes of the children of Israel shall keep himself to his own inheritance.

<sup>m</sup> 10 ¶ Even <sup>m</sup> as the LORD commanded Moses, so did the daughters of Zelophehad:

<sup>n</sup> 11 For <sup>n</sup> Mahlah, Tirzah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were married unto their father's brother's sons.

<sup>o</sup> 12 And they were married <sup>o</sup> into the families of the sons of Manasseh, the son of Joseph; and their inheritance remained in the tribe of the family of their father.

<sup>i</sup> Heb. be wives  
12. Gen. xxxv.  
87, 88.

<sup>j</sup> Heb. cleave to.  
9. 1 Kings xxi.  
3.

<sup>k</sup> 1 Chr. xlii 22

<sup>h</sup> Ex. xxxix. 42.  
43. Lev. xxiv  
23. 2 Chr. xxx.  
12. Matt. xxviii.  
20.

<sup>i</sup> xxvii. 1.

<sup>o</sup> Heb. to some  
that were of the  
families

abide in Christ, and shew their faith by a thankful obedience to him, who died for sinners and rose again: let them be careful not to pervert this refuge by encouraging themselves in unrepented sin: and let them wait the appointed time, and they shall certainly at length be restored to liberty, and reinstated in their forfeited inheritance. The Lord grant that neither the writer, nor any of the readers, may be "of those who draw back unto perdition:" but that we all may be "of those who believe to the saving of the soul!"

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XXXVI. V. 1—12. It does not appear that Manasseh left any son but Machir, or Machir any son but Gilead; from whose posterity, in different families, this whole numerous tribe had sprung. To one division of it a portion had been assigned eastward of Jordan: but Zelophehad was of that division, to which an inheritance was afterwards allotted west of Jordan; yet, expecting the promised land, the elders of the Manassites proposed a difficulty, upon the adjudged case of Zelophehad's daughters.

(Notes, xxvii. 1—11.)—If the females should inherit, in defect of male issue, and should intermarry with other tribes, they would diminish the interest and weaken the influence of their own tribes, and give occasion to future confusion, and perhaps contention. The Manassites therefore referred the case to Moses; and he, by the authority of God, annexed a clause, which would effectually keep the tribes and inheritances distinct, as long as it was observed. Heiresses were not allowed to marry out of their own tribe, though within those bounds they might consult their own inclinations. Probably there had been some prospect of Zelophehad's daughters marrying into another tribe; as both their character and expected inheritance would induce overtures from different quarters: but when the will of God was declared, all parties acquiesced, and they were married to their *own cousins*; not out of necessity, for there were many thousands within the assigned limits; but by choice, and perhaps because these were the next heirs of the family: and we may hence learn that there is nothing improper in such marriages, as it has often been groundlessly supposed.

<sup>k</sup> Lev. vii. 37, 38.  
<sup>xi</sup> 46. xiii. 59  
<sup>xiv</sup>. 54—57. xv.  
 32, 33. xxvii. 34.

13 These *are* <sup>k</sup> the commandments and the judgments, which the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses

unto the children of Israel, <sup>l</sup> in the plains of Moab by Jordan *near* Jericho. <sup>xxvi. 3. xxxiii. 50. xxxv. 1.</sup>

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No laws, however excellent, express, or multiplied, can reach every particular case which may arise; and still room will be left for the exercise of sound judgment and common sense. But when these are regulated according to the true meaning of the word of God, and in dependence on divine teaching, they will guide us through all perplexities, as far as our immediate duty is concerned. Yet the Lord frequently leaves us to feel our difficulties, that we may be habituated to reflect, to search the Scriptures, and to trust him more simply.—All our inclinations ought to be subjected to the will of God: and in contracting marriage, future consequences to posterity, as well as to ourselves and our connexions, should be taken into consideration.—The Scriptures indeed suppose that esteem, affection, and preference, are requisite in this important

relation: but they know nothing of that irrational, ungovernable, and idolatrous passion, which, regardless of all consequences, and in defiance of all authority, rushes headlong upon gratification; which is neither moderated by discretion, nor subordinated to the will of God; which is not rational esteem, nor tender friendship, nor congenial affection, but something vastly more rapturous, unintelligible, and undefinable; and which, with all its refinements, is inconsistent with common sense, the interests of society, the happiness of domestick life, and the Christian religion.—Finally, though it is prudent to foresee and prevent disputes about temporal property, it would be better if we were equally quicksighted and attentive in respect of our spiritual and eternal interests. But “the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.”

# THE FIFTH BOOK OF MOSES,

CALLED

## DEUTERONOMY.

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THIS book is named by the Jews, as in some former instances, from one of the first words (דְּבָרִים). Some however call it, *The Book of Reprehensions*, from the reproofs contained in it : others style it *Torah* (תּוֹרָה), or *the Law* ; and *Misna* (מִשְׁנָה, xvii. 18. Heb.), which is nearly the same as *Deuteronomy*, the name taken from the Septuagint in our version ; which signifies a *second law*, or a *repetition of the law*. Indeed several of the laws before given are *repeated* : sometimes with further explanations, and enforced by the most animated and pathetick exhortations and expostulations ; and therefore Moses generally speaks in the first person, and directly addresses the people. In the former books he spake as a lawgiver, merely declaring the statutes, which God had delivered to him. But here he is more generally a preacher, enforcing on a new generation, the laws before given, with illustrations, warnings, exhortations and persuasions, frequently in the highest style of simple pathetick eloquence. The most remarkable events of the preceding history are likewise recapitulated, and applied to practical purposes. These repetitions were peculiarly proper, in his circumstances ; and the way in which Moses applied them, was exceedingly adapted to leave a deep and durable impression on the hearts and consciences of the people.—But several new laws are likewise added, and various other things not before mentioned.—The last two months of Moses's life, which he knew to be his concluding scene, were employed in delivering and committing to writing the several parts of this book ; so that it contains his dying exhortations to Israel : and his active zeal for the glory of God, and fervent love to his people, with the various methods which he employed for their benefit in his concluding days, are very remarkable.—Having reminded them of the Lord's dealings with their fathers and with them, and of their past rebellions, he enforced obedience to all his commandments with unequalled pathos and energy, and almost from every imaginable motive. He set before them, in prophetic blessings and curses, the consequences of their conduct ; and gave directions for writing the law on pillars of stone, and ratifying its principal parts in a most extraordinary manner, from mount Ebal and mount Gerizim. (xxvii.)—He then formed the substance of his instructions, exhortations, and warnings, into a prophetic song (xxxi, xxxii) : and finally pronounced blessings, evidently prophetic, on their several tribes. (xxxiii.)—Thus far the book was no doubt written by him, and has every mark of being genuine ; but at the close some other person informs us, that Moses having ascended mount Nebo, viewed the promised land, and died ; and was buried by the Lord himself, and lamented by Israel thirty days. (xxxiv.)—It is an honourable circumstance to this portion of Scripture, that our Lord took all the texts from it, with which he baffled Satan's temptations : and it is in both testaments quoted as the work of Moses, and the word of God. (1 Kings ii. 3. 2 Chr. xxv. 4. Dan. ix. 13. Matt. iv. 4. 7. 10. John i. 45. Acts iii. 22. vii. 37. Rom. x. 6. 8. 1 Cor. ix. 9. Gal. iii. 10—13.)—The prophecies also contained in it are most explicit and numerous, and unanswerably demonstrate its divine original. They have been evidently fulfilling during a course of above three thousand years ; and yet some of them remain unaccomplished. Of this the reader will judge for himself on carefully considering the Notes on the chapters here referred to. (iv. xviii. xxviii, xxix. xxxi, xxxii, xxxiii.)

## CHAP. I.

Moses, toward the end of the fortieth year of Israel's continuance in the wilderness, addresses the people, 1—5. He relates how the Lord directed them to leave Horeb, 6—8; and appointed him assistants in the government, 9—18; how they passed the desert to Kadesh-barnea, and sent spies to search the land; and through their report, brought on themselves the sentence of exclusion from the promised land, by their unbelief, 19—46.

**THESE** be the words which Moses spake unto all Israel, <sup>a</sup>on this side Jordan, in the wilderness, in the plain over against <sup>b</sup>the Red sea, between <sup>b</sup>Paran, and Tophel, and Laban, and <sup>c</sup>Hazereth, and Dizahab.

2 (*There are eleven days' journey* from Horeb, <sup>d</sup>by the way of mount Seir, <sup>e</sup>unto Kadesh-barnea.)

3 And it came to pass <sup>f</sup>in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, *that* Moses spake unto the children of Israel, according unto all that the LORD had given him in commandment unto them;

4 After <sup>g</sup>he had slain Sihon the king of the Amorites, which dwelt in Hesh-

bon, and Og the king of Bashan, which dwelt at Astaroth in Edrei:

5 On this side Jordan, in the land of Moab, began Moses <sup>h</sup>to declare this law, saying,

6 The LORD our God spake unto us <sup>i</sup>in Horeb, saying, <sup>k</sup>Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount:

7 Turn you, and take your journey, and go to <sup>l</sup>the mount of the Amorites, and unto <sup>l</sup>all the places nigh thereunto, <sup>m</sup>in the plain, in the hills, and in the vale, and in the south, and by the sea-side, to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, unto <sup>n</sup>the great river, the river Euphrates.

8 Behold, I have <sup>o</sup>set the land before you: go in and possess the land <sup>o</sup>which the LORD sware unto your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them, and to their seed after them.

9 ¶ And I spake unto you at that time, saying, <sup>p</sup>I am not able to bear you myself alone:

10 The LORD <sup>q</sup>your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, ye *are* this day as the stars of heaven for multitude.

## NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. "The words," as here mentioned, seem to mean the subsequent exhortations which Moses delivered to the principal persons in Israel, that they might make them known in their several tribes and families. Perhaps he spake some of the principal passages many times over to the people in general, assembled in large companies for that purpose: but there is no ground to suppose that his voice was *miraculously* rendered audible to the whole nation at once, as some have asserted.—The names of places, here mentioned, seem intended to mark out the spot, where Israel was encamped, as contiguous to all of them: but it is not easy to make this out. The marginal reading, *Zuph*, instead of "the Red Sea," seems preferable, as there is nothing in the original for *sea*. Probably *Zuph* was a place in the country of Moab. (Note, Num. xxi. 11—15.) There might also be other places called Paran and Hazereth, besides those before read of, which were remote from the present encampment of Israel.—The word rendered "on this side," may mean *at the passage of Jordan*. No doubt the eastern side was intended.

Red sea.] בְּסוּפָה, Num. xxi. 14.—*Zuph* (*marg.*) would more properly be *Suph*; as it is spelt with Samech, not Zain. This confirms the opinion above stated, that the clause, rendered "the red sea," means the same place in Moab which is mentioned in Num. xxi. 14.

V. 2. This seems to have been introduced to remind

the Israelites, that their own misconduct alone had occasioned their tedious wanderings: otherwise they might long before have been settled in peaceable possession of Canaan; as in eleven days they might have marched from Horeb to the borders of the land.—It does not appear, that the march of Israel from Horeb to Kadesh-barnea, at the first, took up much time. (6—8. 19, 20. Num. x. 12, 13. xiii. 3. 26. xiv. 25. xxxii. 8.)

V. 5. *This law.*] The word *law* is at some times used with considerable latitude, and at others with more exact precision, which is generally perceivable from the context. This book does not contain *another law*, distinct from that of the foregoing books; and it is evident it comprises much more than a repetition of the law before given. "This *law*" must therefore mean the commands of God, enforced by arguments deduced from their reasonableness and authority, from the consequences of obedience, and from the experience of former years.

V. 6—8. Moses, being about to recapitulate some remarkable particulars of the preceding narrative, as introductory to his exhortations, began with Israel's departure from Horeb. They had continued there almost a year: and as the law had then been given, and the worship at the tabernacle fully instituted; they needed to stay there no longer, but go directly, (as on a journey rather than a warfare,) and possess the promised land; both that which was more properly called Canaan, and also the other countries even to the Euphrates. (Notes, Num. x. 11—13. xxxiv.)

11 (The LORD God of your fathers  
make you a thousand times so many  
more as ye *are*, and bless you, as he  
hath promised you!)

12 How can I myself alone bear  
your cumbrance, and your burden, and  
your strife?

13 Take ye wise men, and under-  
standing, and known among your  
tribes, and I will make them rulers  
over you.

14 And ye answered me, and said,  
The thing which thou hast spoken is  
good for us to do.

15 So I took the chief of your tribes,  
wise men, and known, and made them  
heads over you, captains over thou-  
sands, and captains over hundreds, and  
captains over fifties, and captains over  
tens, and officers among your tribes.

16 And I charged your judges at  
that time, saying, Hear the causes be-  
tween your brethren, and judge right-  
eously between every man and his  
brother, and the stranger that is with  
him.

17 Ye shall not respect persons in  
judgment; but ye shall hear the small  
as well as the great; ye shall not be  
afraid of the face of man, for the  
judgment is God's: and the cause that  
is too hard for you, bring it unto me,  
and I will hear it.

18 And I commanded you at that  
time all the things which ye should do.

19 ¶ And when we departed from  
Horeb, we went through all that great  
and terrible wilderness, which ye saw  
by the way of the mountain of the  
Amorites, as the LORD our God com-

manded us; and we came to Kadesh-  
barnea.

20 And I said unto you, Ye are  
come unto the mountain of the Amo-  
rites, which the LORD our God doth  
give unto us.

21 Behold, the LORD thy God hath  
set the land before thee: go up and  
possess it, as the LORD God of thy fa-  
thers hath said unto thee: fear not,  
neither be discouraged.

22 And ye came near unto me every  
one of you, and said, We will send  
men before us, and they shall search  
us out the land, and bring us word  
again by what way we must go up, and  
into what cities we shall come.

23 And the saying pleased me well:  
and I took twelve men of you, one of  
a tribe.

24 And they turned and went up  
into the mountain, and came unto the  
valley of Eshsol, and searched it out.

25 And they took of the fruit of the  
land in their hands, and brought it  
down unto us, and brought us word  
again, and said, It is a good land which  
the LORD our God doth give us.

26 Notwithstanding ye would not  
go up, but rebelled against the com-  
mandment of the LORD your God.

27 And ye murmured in your tents,  
and said, Because the LORD hated us,  
he hath brought us forth out of the  
land of Egypt, to deliver us into the  
hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.

28 Whither shall we go up? our  
brethren have discouraged our heart,  
saying, The people is greater and  
taller than we; the cities are great and

k See on 2.—Num.  
xiii. 26.

l See on 7, 8.

m xxx. 1. Num.  
xiii. 30. xiv. 8.  
9. Josh. i. 9. Ps.  
xxvii. 1—3. xlvii.  
1. 7. 11. Is. xli.  
10. xliii. 1. 2.  
Luke xii. 6.  
n See on Num.  
xiii. 1—20.

o See on Num.  
xiii. 21—27.—  
Josh. ii. 1, 2.

p Num. xiv. 1—4.  
Ps. cvi. 24, 25.  
Is. lxiii. 10. Acts  
vii. 51.

q Is. 28. Ex. xvi.  
8. 8. Num. xiv.  
3. xxi. 5. Matt.  
xxv. 24. Luke  
xix. 21.

r Heb. melted. xx  
8. marg. Ex. xv.  
15. Josh. ii. 9.  
11. 24. marg.  
xiv. 8. Is. xlii. 7.  
Ex. xxi. 7.  
r Is. i. Num. xiii.  
28—35.

V. 11. In rather more than two hundred years, the people had multiplied to much more than ten thousand times the number of which they had consisted! The promises of God did not limit their future increase, nor did the faith and prayer of Moses; for a large definite is taken for an indefinite number.—Under Pharaoh the increase of Israel excited jealousy and cruelty: (Note, Ex. i. 9, 10:) but Moses delighted in it, and prayed that it might be still far greater. This was a tacit reproof of their murmurings, and wishes to return into Egypt: and he evidently meant to remind them, that he sought not his own grandeur or advantage, but their good; and that in the most laborious, patient, and disinterested manner. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 12—18. The counsel, here referred to, seems to have been suggested by Jethro before the giving of the law.

(Notes, Ex. xviii. 13—26.) Moses in consequence proposed it to the Lord, who approved it; and then, with the concurrence of the people, it at length took place about the time when they departed from Horeb, and at no great distance from that of the appointment of the seventy elders. (Notes, Num. xi. 16—30.) The captains, however, must have been distinct from the elders, and much more numerous: being according to the number of the thousands and hundreds, over whom they probably presided in a civil and military capacity, yet with subordination; and therefore the superiors of them might be called judges. Or these judges might be the seventy elders appointed soon afterwards.

V. 22—28. (Notes, and P. O. Num. xiii. xiv.) The people proposed this measure from unbelief; Moses, mistaking

walled up to heaven; and, moreover, 'we have seen the sons of the Anakims there.

29 Then I said unto you, 'Dread not, neither be afraid of them.

30 The LORD your God which goeth before you, 'he shall fight for you, 'according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes:

31 And 'in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the LORD thy God 'bare thee as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place.

32 Yet in this thing 'ye did not believe the LORD your God,

33 Who went 'in the way before you, to search you out a place to pitch your tents in, 'in fire by night, to shew you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day.

34 And the LORD heard the voice of your words and was wroth, 'and sware, saying,

35 Surely there shall not one of these men of this evil generation see that good land, which I swear to give unto your fathers;

36 Save 'Caleb the son of Jephunneh, he shall see it; and to him will I give the land that he hath trodden upon, and to his children, because he hath 'wholly followed the LORD.

37 Also 'the LORD was angry with me for your sakes, saying, Thou also shalt not go in thither.

38 But 'Joshua the son of Nun, 'which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: 'encourage him; for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.

39 Moreover, 'your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, and your children, 'which in that day had no knowledge between good and evil, they shall go in thither, and unto them will I give it, and they shall possess it.

40 But as for you, 'turn ye, and take your journey into the wilderness, by the way of the Red Sea.

41 Then ye answered and said unto me, 'We have sinned against the LORD; we will go up and fight, according to all that the LORD our God commanded us. And when ye had girded on every man his weapons of war, ye were ready to go up into the hill.

42 And the LORD said unto me, Say unto them, 'Go not up, neither fight: 'for I am not among you; lest ye be smitten before your enemies.

43 So I spake unto you, and ye would not hear, 'but rebelled against the commandment of the LORD, and 'went presumptuously up into the hill.

44 And the Amorites which dwelt in that mountain, came out against you, and 'chased you as bees do, and destroyed you in Seir, even 'unto Hormah.

45 And 'ye returned, and wept before the LORD; but the LORD would not hearken to your voice, nor give ear unto you.

<sup>a</sup> ix. 2. Josh. xi. 22. xv. 14. Judg. i. 10. 20. 2 Sam. xxi. 16—22.

<sup>t</sup> See on 21.

<sup>a</sup> xx. 1—4. Ex. xiv.

14. 25. Josh. x.

42. 1 Sam. xvii.

45. 46. 2 Chr.

xiv. 11, 12. xxxii.

8. Neh. iv. 20.

Ps. xvi. 11. Is.

viii. 9, 10. Rom.

viii. 31.

<sup>x</sup> Ex. vii—xv. Ps.

lxxviii. 11—13.

43—51. cv. 27—

26.

<sup>y</sup> Ex. xvi. xvii.

Neh. ix. 12—22.

Ps. lxxviii. 14

—28. cv. 39—41.

<sup>z</sup> xxxii. 11, 12. Ex.

xix. 4. Num. xii.

11, 12. 14. Is.

xvi. 8, 4. lxxii.

9. Hos. xi. 3, 4.

Acts xiii. 18.

<sup>z</sup> marg.

<sup>a</sup> 2 Chr. xx. 20

Ps. lxxviii. 22.

cvi. 24. Is. vii. 9.

Heb. iii. 12. 18.

19. Jude 5.

<sup>b</sup> Ex. xiii. 21.

Num. x. 33. Ps.

lxxvii. 20. Ez.

xx. 6.

<sup>c</sup> Ex. xiii. 21, 22.

xiv. 19, 20. 24.

xl. 34—38. Num.

ix. 15—22. x.

11, 12. xiv. 14.

Neh. ix. 12. Ps.

lxxviii. 14. cv.

39. Is. iv. 5, 6.

Zech. ii. 5.

<sup>d</sup> ii. 14, 15. Num.

xiv. 22—30.

xxxii. 8—13. Ps.

xcv. 11. Ez. xx.

15. Heb. iii. 8—

11.

<sup>e</sup> Num. xiii. 6, 80

xxvi. 65. xxxii.

12. xxxiv. 19.

Josh. xiv. 6—14.

Judg. i. 12—15.

<sup>f</sup> Heb. fulfilled to

go after Num.

xiv. 24.

<sup>g</sup> iii. 26. iv. 21.

xxxiv. 4. Num.

xx. 12. xxvii. 14.

Ps. cv. 32, 33.

<sup>g</sup> See on Num.

xiii. 8. 16.—xiv.

30. 38. xxvi. 65.

<sup>h</sup> Ex. xvii. 9—14.

xxiv. 13. xxxii.

11. 1 Sam. xvi.

22. Prov. xxii.

29.

<sup>i</sup> iii. 28. xxxi. 7, 8.

14. 23. Num.

xxvii. 18—23.

Josh. i. 1. 6—9.

<sup>k</sup> Num. xiv. 3. 31.

Is. vii. 15, 16.

Jon. iv. 11. Rom.

ix. 11. Eph. ii

3.

<sup>m</sup> See on Num.

xiv. 25.

<sup>n</sup> See on Num.

xiv. 39, 40. xxii.

84. Prov. xix. 3.

<sup>o</sup> Num. xiv. 41,

42.

<sup>p</sup> Lev. xxvi. 17.

Josh. vii. 8—13.

1 Sam. iv. 2. 10

Is. xxx. 17. lxx

1, 2. Hos. ix. 12.

<sup>q</sup> Is. lxxiii. 10. Acts

viii. 1. Rom. viii

7, 8.

<sup>t</sup> Heb. ye were

presumptuous

and went up.

Num. xiv. 44.

<sup>r</sup> xxxviii. 25. xxxii.

30. Ps. cxviii. 12.

Is. vii. 18.

<sup>s</sup> Num. xiv. 45.

xxi. 3.

<sup>t</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 34.

Heb. xii. 17.

their intention, approved of it; and the Lord, being justly displeased, permitted them to follow their own counsel, which proved injurious to them only through their sin and folly. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 29—31. Moses, in bitterness of spirit, when greatly tried, had hastily spoken, as if he had been required to bear Israel as a man does his son; (*Note, Num. xi. 11—15*;) but he here tacitly retracted it, and allowed that the Lord himself had thus borne or carried them.—The arguments, which he at that time used with them, taken from their past experience of God's powerful protection and tender care, are here adduced, though not related in the account of these transactions.

V. 32—36. Moses here addressed another generation, and not that which had been sentenced, for unbelief and disobedience, to fall in the wilderness: but many of them might be concerned, though not at that time of age; the rest in general shewed a disposition to imitate the sin of their fathers; and they formed the same nation,

the same body corporate, though not the same individuals. (*Notes, Ex. xiii. 21, 22. xl. 36—38. Num. xiv. 22—24.*)

V. 37. It was natural for Moses here to introduce this subject, though the event took place many years after that, of which he was discoursing: for it would occur to his mind that he also was excluded, and thus involved in the general sentence, in consequence of a temptation which the unbelief of the people had laid in his way. This he mentioned, not to excuse himself, but to humble them; and remind them, that they heard the words of a dying man, and of one to whose death they had been accessory. (*Note, Num. xx. 10—13.*)

V. 39—44. (*Notes, Num. xiv. 31—45.*) Bees with their fierce stings attack such as offend them, and are not easily induced to desist; so that they assault, and have been known to kill, both men and cattle that approached their hives.

V. 45. *Note, Heb. xii. 15—17.*

<sup>c</sup> Num. xiv. 25, 34.  
xx. 1. 22. Judg.  
xi. 16, 17.

46 So ye abode <sup>a</sup>in Kadesh many days, according unto the days that ye abode *there*.

#### CHAP. II.

Moses reminds the people of the command given them not to meddle with Edom, Moab, or Ammon: he introduces some fragments of very ancient history: and touches on the continuance of Israel during forty years in the wilderness, till the rebellious generation was dead, 1—23. The grant and conquest of the kingdom of Sihon, 24—37.

V. 46. It is no where said how long Israel continued at Kadesh-barnea: but they had encamped there during many days, before they were sentenced to return by the way of the Red Sea; and they remained there many days afterwards.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—8.

The faithful servants of the Lord, with advancing years and experience, frequently acquire increasing reputation for wisdom, integrity, and disinterested philanthropy, as well as pious zeal for the glory of God. This adds to their influence, and gives weight to their instructions; and when favoured with health, they may, with vast advantage, redouble their diligence in enforcing the truths, which they before had taught, upon the consciences of the people, that they may have them in remembrance after their decease. (Note, 2 Pet. i. 12—15.) While they draw nearer to the heavenly world, they often seem to breathe a purer air, and all their words have a heavenly savour; their motion accelerates, as they approach their rest; their earnestness increases, when they can be influenced by no earthly motive; and their confidence and comfort acquire strength, in defiance of the approaching king of terrors. Under such circumstances their instructions are doubly impressive, and frequently have a durable effect upon the survivors. They should then seize every occasion of reminding the people of the wisdom, power, truth, and love of God, as manifested in his dealings with them: and there are times when they may also, consistently with deep humility, speak of their own conduct, their love to souls, their faithful labours, their self-denial, and patient sufferings in the arduous work about which they are engaged; in order to obviate prejudice, and to obtain a more favourable attention to further exhortations. But it is likewise necessary to shew the people their transgressions, that they may be duly humbled; to warn them against the fatal effects of unbelief and sin; to point out the advantages of confidence in God and obedience to him; and to unite confessions of their own imperfection and sinfulness (37), both to avoid giving needless offence, to suggest encouragement, and to excite personal humiliation.

##### V. 9—46.

It is exceedingly profitable for us frequently to meditate on the history of our past lives, and to set apart time for that purpose; to divide our years into distinct periods; to review them separately; to give thanks for the mercies of each successive period; and to confess and seek forgiveness of all our sins, as far as we remember them: and

THEN <sup>a</sup>we turned and took our journey into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea, as the Lord spake unto me: and <sup>b</sup>we compassed mount Seir many days.

2 And the Lord spake unto me, saying,

3 Ye have compassed this mountain <sup>c</sup>long enough: turn you northward.

<sup>a</sup> l. 40. Num. xiv. 25

<sup>b</sup> l. 2. Num. xxi. 4. Judg. xi. 18.

thus endeavouring to revive suitable affections, with earnest prayers and simple dependence on the Lord, to renew our acceptance of his salvation, and the surrender of ourselves to his service.—Without repeating the observations before made on the history here recapitulated, we may take notice in general that nothing but total unbelief, and the disobedience connected with it, can exclude any sinner from the promised rest; that unbelief, *partially* operating in disobedience, occasions manifold abatements and delays in our comforts; that our own expedients seldom avail to much good purpose; that courage, in the exercise of faith and the path of duty, enables the possessor to “follow the Lord wholly,” to disregard all obstructions, to triumph over all opposition, and to seize the promised blessings; that all the mercies which we receive render our distrust more inexcusable; that the sins of some are the temptations of others, and tend to involve them in guilt and punishment; that *worldly* sorrow is seldom better than impatience and rebellion and unbelief, and thus worketh death; and that they who do not exercise *godly* sorrow in due time, and obey the call of mercy, must weep with bitter unavailing sorrow, when the sentence of condemnation is irrevocably past.—Finally, we may observe, that every publick and honourable trust implies a very heavy and laborious duty, and that frequently the duty is particularly described in Scripture.—Happy is it for themselves, and for those around them, when men diligently search out such passages as describe *their* duties, and shew what manner of persons they ought to be, *in that station of life in which the providence of God has placed them*: while they seriously meditate on them, and pray over them; and then in the fear of God, as under his eye, and with reference to the day of judgment, endeavour to regulate their publick and private conduct according to them.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 3. Here again an almost total silence is observed, concerning more than thirty-seven years of the time, which the Israelites passed in the wilderness. (Note, Num. xx. 1.) We may however suppose, that Moses, Aaron, and the priests and Levites, were diligently employed in instructing the people; and that many, even “of them whose carcases fell in the wilderness,” were thus prepared for heaven; while the survivors were humbled and proved, in order to their entrance into the promised land. In the mean time the Canaanites, elated with their first success, and perceiving their dreaded invaders entangled in the wilderness, grew more insolent and daring in wickedness, and ripened apace for destruction.

4 And command thou the people, saying, 'Ye are to pass through the coast of your brethren the children of Esau, which dwell in Seir, and 'they shall be afraid of you: 'take ye good heed unto yourselves therefore.

5 Meddle not with them; for I will not give you of their land, 'no not so much as a foot-breadth; 'because I have given mount Seir unto Esau for a possession.

6 Ye shall <sup>b</sup>buy meat of them for money, that ye may eat; and ye shall also buy water of them for money, that ye may drink.

7 For the LORD thy God hath <sup>1</sup>blessed thee in all the works of thy hand; <sup>k</sup>he knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness: <sup>1</sup>these forty years the LORD thy God *hath been* with thee; thou hast lacked nothing.

8 And <sup>m</sup>when we passed by from our brethren the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, through the way of the plain from <sup>a</sup>Eloth, and from Ezion-gaber, we turned, and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab.

9 And the LORD said unto me, 'Distress not the Moabites, neither contend with them in battle; for I will not give thee of their land for a possession, because I have given <sup>a</sup>Ar unto <sup>b</sup>the children of Lot for a possession.

10 The <sup>a</sup>Emims dwelt therein in times past, a people great and many, and tall as the Anakims;

11 Which also were accounted

giants, 'as the Anakims; but the Moabites call them Emims.

12 The <sup>a</sup>Horims also dwelt in Seir before-time: but the children of Esau <sup>a</sup>succeeded them, when they had destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their <sup>1</sup>'stead, 'as Israel did unto the land of his possession which the LORD gave unto them.

13 Now rise up, *said I*, and get you over the <sup>a</sup>'brook <sup>a</sup>Zered: and we went over the brook Zered.

14 And the space in which we came from <sup>a</sup>Kadesh-barnea, until we were come over the brook Zered, *was* thirty and eight years; <sup>1</sup>until all the generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the host, as the LORD swore unto them.

15 For indeed <sup>a</sup>'the hand of the LORD was against them, to destroy them from among the host, until they were consumed.

16 ¶ So it came to pass when all the men of war were consumed and dead from among the people,

17 That the LORD spake unto me, saying,

18 Thou art to <sup>a</sup>'pass over through Ar, the coast of Moab, this day.

19 And *when* thou comest nigh over against the children of Ammon, <sup>b</sup>distress them not, nor meddle with them: for I will not give thee of the land of the children of Ammon *any* possession, because I have given it unto the children of Lot for a possession.

<sup>d</sup> xxiii. 7. Num. xv. 14—21. Ob. 10—13.

<sup>e</sup> Ex. xv. 15. Num. xxii. 3. 4. xxiv. 14—18.

<sup>f</sup> Matt. v. 16. Luke xii. 15. Eph. v. 15. Phil. ii. 15. Col. iv. 5.

<sup>g</sup> Heb. even to the treading of the sole of the foot. Acts vii. 5.

<sup>h</sup> xxvii. 8. Gen. xxxvi. 8. Josh. xxiv. 4. 2 Chr. xx. 10—12. Jer. xxvii. 5. Dan. iv. 25. 32. Acts xvii. 26.

<sup>i</sup> 28, 29. Num. xx. 19. Matt. vii. 12. Rom. xii. 17. 2 Thes. iii. 7 R.

<sup>j</sup> Gen. xii. 2. xxiv. 35. xxvi. 12. xxx. 27. xxxix. 5.

<sup>k</sup> Job xxxiii. 10. Ps. i. 6. xxxi. 7. John x. 27.

<sup>l</sup> viii. 2—4. xxxix. 5. Neh. ix. 21. Luke xxii. 35.

<sup>m</sup> Num. xx. 20, 21. Judg. xi. 18.

<sup>n</sup> 1 Kings ix. 26. Eloth, 2 Kings xiv. 22. xvi. 6.

<sup>o</sup> Or, Use no hostility against Moab. Num. xxii. 4. Judg. xi. 17. 2 Chr. xx. 10.

<sup>p</sup> Second.—Num. xxi. 15. 28.

<sup>q</sup> 19. Gen. xix. 36. 37. Ps. lxxxiii. 8.

<sup>r</sup> 11. Gen. xiv. 5.

<sup>r</sup> See on i. 28.—ix. 2. Num. xiii. 22. 28.

<sup>s</sup> 22. Gen. xiv. 6. xxxvi. 20—30. 1 Chr. i. 38—42.

<sup>t</sup> Heb. inherited them. Gen. xxxvi. 31—43. 1 Chr. i. 43—54.

<sup>u</sup> Heb. room. 1 Chr. i. 32—37. iii. 1—11. Num. xxi. 21 &c.

<sup>v</sup> Or, valley. Num. xiii. 23. marg. u Num. xxi. 12. Zared.

<sup>w</sup> i. 2. 19. 46. Num. xiii. 26.

<sup>x</sup> l. 34. 35. Num. xiv. 29—35. xxvi. 64, 66.

<sup>y</sup> xxxii. 11. Ps. lxxxviii. 33. xc. 3. 9. cvi. 26. Ez. xx. 16. 1 Cor. x. 5. Heb. iii. 8—19. Jude 5.

<sup>z</sup> Judg. vii. 15. 1 Sam. v. 6. 9. 11. vii. 18. Ps. xxxii. 4. xc. 7—9. Is. lxvi. 14.

<sup>aa</sup> See on Num. xxi. 15. 23. Is. xv. 1.

<sup>ab</sup> See on 5. 9.—Gen. xix. 38. Judg. xi. 13—27. 2 Chr. xx. 10.

V. 4—7. On comparing this passage with the texts referred to in the margin, it appears that the Edomites refused the Israelites a passage into the heart of their country, but allowed them to march through some parts of the confines; and that they generally sold them provisions, though perhaps in some instances they refused to do it. (Note, Num. xx. 14—21.)—The manna was still continued; yet the people would naturally desire change of diet when they came near cultivated regions. This they might purchase of the Edomites, but they were not permitted to plunder; because God himself had given mount Seir to the descendants of Esau for their inheritance. Nor had Israel any need to covet the possessions of Edom, seeing the Lord had noticed, guided, and guarded them, during all their wanderings in the wilderness; and for forty years had blessed them with an abundant supply of every needful good.—Moses called the Edomites *brethren*, though they would not acknowledge or act according to that re-

lation. Thus the Israelites were taught to forgive *their* enemies, before they were employed to execute vengeance on the enemies of the Lord; and to obey his command in leaving nations unmolested, before they fulfilled his word in dispossessing and destroying the Amorites and Canaanites. (Note, Num. xxi. 21—25.) It is also observable that the opposition of Edom is not here mentioned; for the Spirit, which spake by Moses, would not needlessly repeat grievances, but bury them in oblivion.

V. 10, 11. All the nations here mentioned appear to have been the posterity of Ham, who lay under the prophetic curse of Noah, which was thus executed upon this part of them by the Moabites and Edomites.

V. 12. Israel had, at the time when Moses spake this, conquered Sihon and Og, and taken possession of their countries, as Edom had done to the Horims. (22. Note, Gen. xxxvi. 20.)

V. 15. Num. xvi. 45. 49. xxi. 6. xxv. 9.

20 (That also was accounted a land of giants: giants dwelt therein in old time, and the Ammonites call them

c Gen. xiv. 5. <sup>o</sup> Zamzummims; <sup>o</sup> Zuzims.

d See on 10, 11. l. 28.—iii. 11

e 22. Judg. xi. 24. Jer. xxvii. 7, 8. Hab. i. 10, 11.

21 A people <sup>a</sup> great and many, and tall as the Anakims; <sup>a</sup> but the LORD destroyed them before them, and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead:

f Gen. xxxvi. 8. <sup>a</sup> 22 As he did to the children of <sup>a</sup> Esau which dwelt in Seir, when he

g 12. Gen. xiv. 6. xxxvi. 20—30. 1 Chr. i. 38, &c.

destroyed <sup>a</sup> the Horims from before them; and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead, even unto this day:

h Josh. xiii. 3. <sup>a</sup> Arites.

i 1 Kings iv. 24. Jer. xxv. 20. Zeph. ii. 4. Zech. ix. 5. Gaza.

k Gen. x. 14. Jer. xlviii. 4. Amos ix. 7. Acts xviii. 28.

23 And <sup>a</sup> the Avims, which dwelt in Hazerim, <sup>a</sup> even unto <sup>a</sup> Azzah, <sup>a</sup> the Caphtorims, which came forth out of Caphtor, destroyed them, and dwelt in their stead.)

l 36. Num. xxi. 13. —15. Judg. xi. 18—21.

m Josh. vi. 16. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 28. Ezra i. 2. Jer. xxvii. 6. Ez. xxix. 20. Dan. ii. 38. iv. 17.

n xi. 25. xxviii. 10. Ex. xxxiii. 27. Josh. ii. 9—12. ix. 24. 2 Kings vii. 6, 7. Ps. cv. 38. Jer. xxxiii. 9. Rev. iii. 9.

24 ¶ Rise ye up, take your journey, and pass over <sup>a</sup> the river Arnon: <sup>a</sup> behold, I have given into thy hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land; <sup>a</sup> begin to possess <sup>a</sup> it, and contend with him in battle.

25 This day will I begin <sup>a</sup> to put the dread of thee, and the fear of thee, upon the nations <sup>a</sup> that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of

thee, and shall tremble and be in anguish because of thee.

26 And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of <sup>a</sup> Kedemoth unto Sihon king of Heshbon, <sup>a</sup> with words of peace, saying,

o Josh. xiii. 18. xxi. 37.

p xx. 10, 11. Eath. ix. 30. Matt. x. 12—15. Luke x. 5, 6. 10—12.

q 6. Num. xxi. 22. 23. Judg. xi. 19.

27 Let <sup>a</sup> me pass through thy land: I will go along by the high-way, I will neither turn unto the right hand nor to the left.

28 Thou shalt sell me meat for money, that I may eat; and give me water for money, that I may drink: <sup>a</sup> only I will pass through on my feet,

r Num. xx. 19.

29 (As <sup>a</sup> the children of Esau which dwelt in Seir, and the Moabites which dwelt in Ar, did unto me;) until I shall pass over Jordan, <sup>a</sup> into the land which the LORD our God giveth us.

s xxiii. 3, 4. Num. xx. 18. Judg. xi. 17, 18.

t iv. 21. 40. v. 16. ix. 6. xxv. 15. Ex. xx. 12. Josh. i. 11—15.

30 But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him: for <sup>a</sup> the LORD thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart <sup>a</sup> obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand, as <sup>a</sup> appeareth this day.

u See on Ex. iv. 21.—Num. xxi. 23. Josh. xi. 19. 20. Judg. xi. 20. Rom. ix. 17—28. 1s. xlviii. 4.

31 And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have begun to <sup>a</sup> give Sihon and his land before thee: begin to possess, that thou mayest inherit his land.

y See on 24. i. 8.

z Num. xxi. 23—30. Judg. xi. 20—23. Neh. ix. 22. Ps. cxx. 7. CXXV. 11. CXXV. 19.

32 Then <sup>a</sup> Sihon came out against

V. 20—23. These fragments of ancient history were introduced to encourage the Israelites. If the Lord destroyed these giantlike people before the posterity of Lot, and of Esau; what cause had the posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, his chosen servants and friends, to fear the Anakims, or the Canaanites? especially as Israel acted by commission from God, and had his promise as their security of success, and the pledge of it in his presence, and the wonders which he had already wrought for them; and as they were the only nation of worshippers of the LORD, in the ordinances of his institution, which could be found on earth. 'This is so often repeated to possess the minds of the Israelites with a sense of God's providence, which rules every where; displacing one people, and setting another in their stead; and fixing their bounds also, which they shall not pass without his leave.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 24, 25. The Israelites had hitherto possessed neither lands nor cities, but had been supported by miracles as wanderers in the waste desert; (*Note, Num. xiv. 27—30*;) but now they were to begin to possess houses and estates, and to subsist as other people did.—The dread of Israel, which had been excited among the nations, when the Egyptians were destroyed in the Red Sea, had subsided; but now the Lord would begin to impress it far more deeply and extensively, and to render it effectually subservient to the success of his people. (*Notes, Ex. xv. 14—16. Josh. ii. 8—11. ix. 24.*)

V. 26. The Lord's *secret* purposes cannot possibly be either the rule or motive of man's conduct; and therefore they can in no degree affect the innocence or criminality of his actions.—Whatever the Lord's intentions or intimations to Israel were, Sihon, not knowing them, could not be induced by them, but by arrogance and presumption, to refuse the proposal of peace made to him. (*Notes, Matt. xxvi. 21—24. Acts ii. 22—24.*) Had he acceded to it, he would doubtless have been spared: but the Lord, for wise and righteous reasons, was pleased to leave him to himself, well knowing what the consequence would be. Thus this message served to discover his wickedness, and to illustrate the justice of God in his destruction.

V. 28, 29. It is probable, that the Edomites and Moabites sold provisions to the Israelites, though they would not grant them a passage through their borders. (*Note, 4—7.*)

V. 30. *Hardened.* *Notes, Ex. iv. 21. vii. 13. 22, 23. viii. 15. ix. 12—16. xiv. 3—9.*—God 'gave him over to his own inflexible humour, which was set upon violent courses; from which God did not divert him, because he intended to destroy him...As it is a *sin*, this cannot be ascribed unto God; but as it is a *punishment*, might justly be inflicted by him upon Sihon for his former sins.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 31—37. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, Num. xxi. 21—25. xxxi. 2.*

us, <sup>he</sup> and all his people, to fight at Jahaz.

<sup>a</sup> 33 And <sup>a</sup> the LORD our God delivered him before us, and <sup>b</sup> we smote him, and his sons, and all his people.

<sup>c</sup> 34 And we took all his cities at that time, and <sup>c</sup> utterly destroyed <sup>c</sup> the men, and the women, and the little ones of every city; we left none to remain:

<sup>d</sup> 35 Only <sup>d</sup> the cattle we took for a prey unto ourselves, and the spoil of the cities which we took.

<sup>e</sup> 36 From <sup>e</sup> Aroer, which *is* by the brink of the river of Arnon, and *from* the city that *is* by the river, even unto Gilead, there was <sup>f</sup> not one city too strong for us; the LORD our God delivered all unto us:

<sup>g</sup> 37 Only <sup>g</sup> unto the land of the chil-

dren of Ammon thou camest not, *nor* unto any place of the river <sup>h</sup> Jabbok, <sup>h</sup> nor unto the cities in the mountains, nor unto whatsoever the LORD our God forbad us.

## CHAP. III.

Israel's victory over Og king of Bashan, 1—11. His kingdom and that of Sihon are given to the two tribes and a half, 12—17. The command given to them and to Joshua, 18—22. Moses prays to enter the promised land, but is refused; yet is permitted to see it, 23—29.

**THEN** we turned, and went up the way to Bashan; and <sup>a</sup> Og the king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei.

2 And the LORD said unto me, <sup>b</sup> Fear him not: for I will deliver him,

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The servants of God, while they despise worldly riches in comparison of a treasure in heaven, and often live and die poor, bequeath to their posterity the most durable possessions, in the blessings which God had promised to bestow upon them, for the sake of their parents.—“The earth is the LORD’s, and the fulness thereof;” and with perfect justice, absolute sovereignty, and irresistible power, he assigns to every people the countries which they inhabit, and dispossesses them to make way for others, as he sees good: (Note, xxxii. 8:) but none can plead his grant to excuse the violences, which ambition, rapacity, or revenge induce them to commit; though undesignedly they fulfil his secret purposes.—When nations or individuals are ripe for destruction, the Lord in awful judgment gives them up to final and total obduracy; and their desperate wickedness both occasions their ruin, and manifests his righteousness. Then the wisest are infatuated, and the boldest are intimidated; they tremble, and are in anguish, and perish, as instructive examples to the survivors.—But, calling off our attention from the enemies of God, to reflect upon his dealings with Israel, we are led to meditate upon years spent in vanity through our transgressions and his indignation. A succession of uninteresting events and changes, of trifling employments and pursuits, of disappointed expectations and unsatisfying enjoyments, wear out the life of man, and bring one generation after another to the grave. Indeed ever since the sentence was past upon offending man, “Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,” “the hand of the LORD hath been against us to destroy us until we are consumed:” nor can wisdom, learning, authority, wealth, courage, vigour of constitution, or eminence of reputation, procure any exemption or respite, in this universal execution: nay, even faith and piety plead in vain for another passage to the heavenly felicity. (Note, 2 Cor. v. 1—4.)—What the mouth of the Lord hath spoken, his hand is engaged to perform. Wretched then are they who abide, and die, under the incumbent weight of that “wrath of God which is re-

vealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.” (Notes, Rom. i. 17—20.) But happy those, whom “Jesus hath delivered from the wrath to come,” and to whom he hath “given the earnest of his Spirit in their hearts.” “All things are theirs:” all the promises of God belong to them, and are ratified by covenant and by oath. His arm is engaged on their behalf to perform all his word: “He knows,” guides, guards, and approves their path, while “walking through this great wilderness:” for the twenty, thirty, fifty, sixty, or even eighty years of their past lives, they have lacked nothing, but have had all with a peculiar blessing. (Notes, Gen. xlviii. 15, 16. xlix. 18.) The Lord is their Portion, nor need they envy the prosperity, or covet the possession, of any worldlying. He who hath prepared for them an incorruptible inheritance, and taught them in the first place to seek it, will provide for them all that is needful and profitable by the way. They have only to submit to his disposal; to depend on him; to abstain from what he forbids, and deny themselves when he requires it, in his providence or by his precept; to receive what he gives with thankfulness, and to use it with moderation, and to glorify him and adorn their profession, by an upright, generous, disinterested, forgiving, and blameless deportment, not injurious to their enemies, nor needlessly burdensome to their friends; and “by doing to all men, as they would they should do unto them.” In this case, the vanity of the world cannot prevent their comfort, nor can its opposition interrupt the serenity of their minds: their inheritance cannot be affected by the revolutions of kingdoms, or the mutability of earthly possessions; death cannot hurt and need not alarm them; all will combine in preparing them for heaven, and giving them the anticipation, and introducing them to the enjoyment, of those pleasures which never satiate and will never end.

## NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—10. Marg. Ref.—Note, Num. xxi. 34.

and all his people, and his land, into thy hand; and thou shalt do unto him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon.

e ii. 24—27. Num. xxi. 23—25.

d See on ii. 23, 34. —Num. xxi. 35. Josh. xiii. 12, 30

3 So <sup>d</sup> the LORD our God delivered into our hands Og also the king of Bashan, and all his people: and we smote him until none was left to him remaining.

e Num. xxxiii. 33 —42. Josh. xii. 4. xiii. 30, 31.

f 1 Kings iv. 13.

4 And we took <sup>a</sup> all his cities at that time; there was not a city which we took not from them, threescore cities, <sup>a</sup> all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

g i. 25. Num. xlii. 28. Heb. xi. 30.

5 All these cities *were* <sup>e</sup> fenced with high walls, gates, and bars, besides unwalled towns a great many.

b See on ii. 34.—xx. 16—18. Lev. xxvii. 23, 29. Num. xxi. 28. Josh. xi. 14. i See on 2. ii. 34.

6 And <sup>b</sup> we utterly destroyed them, as we did unto Sihon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying the men, women, and children of every city.

j ii. 35. Josh. viii. 27. xi. 11—14.

7 But <sup>j</sup> all the cattle and the spoil of the cities, we took for a prey to ourselves.

k Num. xxxiii. 33 —42. Josh. xii. 2—6. xiii. 9—12.

8 And we took at that time out of the hand of the two kings of the Amorites, <sup>k</sup> the land that *was* on this side Jordan, from the river of Arnon unto mount Hermon;

l iv. 48. Ps. xxix. 6. lxxxix. 12. cxxxiii. 3. Cant. iv. 8.

9 (*Which* <sup>l</sup> Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion, and the Amorites call it <sup>m</sup> Shenir;)

m 1 Chr. v. 23. Ez. xxvii. 5. Senir. n iv. 49.

10 All <sup>a</sup> the cities of the plain, and all Gilead, and all Bashan, unto Salchah and <sup>a</sup> Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

o Num. xxi. 33. Josh. xii. 4. xiii. 12, 31.

11 For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of giants: behold, his bedstead *was* a bedstead of iron; *is* it not in <sup>p</sup> Rabbath of the children of Ammon? <sup>q</sup> nine cubits *was* the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it, after the cubit of a man.

p 7 Sam. xii. 26. Jer. xlix. 2. Ez. xxi. 20. Amos i. 14. Rabbah. q 1 Sam. xvii. 4. Am. ii. 9.

r ii. 26. iv. 49. Num. xxxiii. 33 —38. Josh. xii. 2—6. xiii. 9—12. 14—28. 2 Kings x. 33.

12 ¶ And this land *which* we possessed at that time, <sup>r</sup> from Aroer, which *is* by the river Arnon, and half mount

Gilead, and the cities thereof, gave I unto the Reubenites and to the Gadites.

13 And <sup>s</sup> the rest of Gilead, and all Bashan, *being* the kingdom of Og, gave I unto the half-tribe of Manasse: all the region of Argob, with all Bashan, which was called the land of giants.

Num. xxxiii. 33 —42. Josh. xii. 23—26. 1 Chr. v. 23—26.

14 <sup>s</sup> Jair the son of Manasseh took all the country of <sup>t</sup> Argob, unto the coasts of <sup>u</sup> Geshuri, and Maachathi, and called them after his own name, <sup>v</sup> Bashan-havoth-jair, unto this day.

1 Chr. ii. 21—22. u See on 4. x Josh. xiii. 18. 2 Sam. iii. 3. x. 6. xiii. 37. y Num. xxxiii. 41.

15 And I gave Gilead unto <sup>w</sup> Machir.

z Gen. i. 23. Num. xxvi. 29. xxxiii. 40. Josh. xvii. 1. 3. xxii. 7. a Num. xxxiii. 33 —38. 2 Sam. xiv. 5.

16 And unto <sup>x</sup> the Reubenites, and unto the Gadites, I gave from Gilead even unto the river Arnon, half the valley, and the border, even unto the <sup>y</sup> river Jabbok, *which is* the border of the children of Ammon;

b ii. 37. Gen. xxxiii. 22. Num. xxi. 24. Josh. xii. 2.

17 The plain also, and Jordan and the coast *thereof*, from <sup>z</sup> Chinnereth even unto <sup>a</sup> the sea of the plain *even* the salt sea, under <sup>b</sup> Ashdoth-pisgah eastward.

c See on Num. xxxiv. 11.—Josh. xii. 8. d iv. 49. Gen. xiii. 10. xiv. 3. xix. 28, 29. Num. xxxiv. 12. Josh. iii. 16. xii. 3. xv. 2. 5. xviii. 19.

18 And <sup>c</sup> I commanded you at that time, saying, The LORD your God hath given you this land to possess it: ye shall pass over armed before your brethren the children of Israel, all *that are* <sup>d</sup> meet for the war.

e Or, the springs of Pisgah, or, the hill. Num. xxxiii. 14. f Num. xxxii. 20 —24. Josh. i. 12 —15. iv. 12, 13. xxii. 1—9.

19 But your wives, and your little ones, and your cattle, (*for* I know that ye have much cattle,) shall abide in your cities which I have given you;

g Heb. sons of power.

20 Until the LORD have given rest unto your brethren, as well as unto you, and *until* they also possess the land which the LORD your God hath given them beyond Jordan: and *then* shall ye <sup>e</sup> return every man unto his possession which I have given you.

f Josh. xxii. 4, 8.

21 And <sup>f</sup> I commanded Joshua at that time, saying, Thine eyes have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto these two kings: <sup>g</sup> so shall

g Num. xxvii. 18 —23. Josh. x. 25. 1 Sam. xvii. 36, 37. Ps. ix. 14. 2 Cor. i. 10. xii. 10. Eph. iii. 20. 2 Tim. iv. 17. 18.

V. 11. It is probable that Og was descended from a race of giants, of larger stature than even the Anakims.—If his bedstead of iron was intended for use, and not for ostentation, his bulk must have been enormous; as it was at least five yards long, and above two broad. Either the Ammonites seized on it, or they bought it of the Israelites; and carrying it to Rabbath, it was there preserved as a monument of his stature, or of Israel's victory: for neither

his vast strength, nor his numerous fortified cities, could secure him against God, who fought for his people.—This race of giants was soon extinct; but others remained within the land of Canaan, of whom we read in the history of David. (Notes, 1 Sam. xvii. 4—7. 45—49. 2 Sam. xxi. 15—22.)

V. 12—22. “Bashan-havoth-jair” (14) signifies *Bashan, the villages of Jair*.—The words, “unto this day,” were





LEBANON IN THE DISTANCE.

DEUT. iii. 25. 1 KINGS v. 14. PSALM xxix. 6. JER. xviii. 14.





LEBANON.

DEUT. iii. 25. CANT. vii. 4. ISAIAH xxxvii. 24. JER. xviii. 14; xxii. 6, 7, 23.  
EZEK. xvil. 3. HAB. ii. 17. ZECH. x. 10; xi. 1.

the LORD do unto all the kingdoms whither thou passest.

22 Ye shall not fear them; <sup>1</sup> for the LORD your God he shall fight for you.

23 And <sup>1</sup> I besought the LORD at that time, saying,

24 O Lord God, thou hast begun to shew thy servant <sup>1</sup> thy greatness, and thy mighty hand: for <sup>a</sup> what god is *there* in heaven or in earth, that can do according to thy works, and according to thy might?

25 I pray thee let me go over and see <sup>a</sup> the good land that is beyond Jordan, that goodly mountain and Lebanon.

26 But <sup>o</sup> the LORD was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me: and the LORD said unto me, <sup>1</sup> Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto me of this matter.

27 Get thee <sup>a</sup> up into the top of <sup>1</sup> Pisgah, and <sup>1</sup> lift up thine eyes west-

ward, and northward, and southward, and eastward, and behold *it* with thine eyes: for thou shalt not go over this Jordan.

28 But <sup>1</sup> charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him; <sup>1</sup> for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see.

29 So we abode in the <sup>a</sup> valley over against Beth-peor.

#### CHAP. IV.

Earnest exhortations to obedience, and dissuasives from idolatry, 1—24. Prophetical warnings of the consequences of disobedience, and promises of mercy to the penitent, 25—31. The Lord's special care of Israel, and his wonderful works for them, 32—40. Three cities of refuge appointed eastward of Jordan, 41—43. An introduction to the following exhortations, 44—49.

NOW therefore hearken, O Israel, <sup>a</sup> unto the statutes, and unto the judg-

and not only victory, but abundant advantage from every foe that assaults them, "for the wealth of the sinner is <sup>a</sup> laid up for the just." Every experience of the Lord's faithfulness is a sure pledge of further mercies, and ere long all his people shall be made more than conquerors, and enter upon the full possession of their everlasting rest.—"This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD <sup>a</sup> and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD." (*Notes*, *Is.* liv. 15—17. *Rom.* viii. 35—39.) Are we then of that number? Do we seek reconciliation unto God through Jesus Christ, as "the one thing needful?" Do we trust his grace, plead his promises, listen to his voice, and keep his commandments? Then assuredly "all things will <sup>a</sup> work together for our good."—But unbelief excludes men from heaven: a dead inactive faith deceives and ruins thousands: and even the sins of believers are chastened with sharp trials, the withholding of wonted comforts, and the refusal of their prayers for such mercies, as are not immediately connected with salvation. If this should be the case with us, let us kiss the rod, and seek to profit by our chastening. And if we have the earnestness and prospects of heaven; let this suffice us, let us acquiesce in the Lord's will, and speak no more to him of those things which he sees good to refuse us.—When we are about to leave the world, the same principle which before induced us to contribute, as we were able, to promote the cause of God and the good of his church, will dispose us to rejoice in the prospect of the good work being carried on by other, and more honoured instruments; and will make us wish to close our eyes, encouraging our survivors to be valiant for the truth, assured that the Lord will fight for them and make them successful.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. The power of God and his love to

1 1. 30 xx. 4. Ex. xiv. 14. Num. xxi. 34. Josh. x. 42. 2 Chr. xiii. 12. xx. 17. 29. Ps. xlv. 3. k 2 Cor. xii. 8.

1 xi. 2. Neh. ix. 32. Ps. cvi. 2. cxlv. 3. 6. Jer. xxxii. 18—21. m Ex. xv. 11. 28. vii. 22. Ps. xxxv. 10. lxxv. 19. lxxxvi. 8. lxxxix. 6. 8. Is. xl. 16. 25. Jer. x. 6. Dan. iii. 29.

n iv. 21. 22. xi. 11. 12. Ex. iii. 8. Num. xxxii. 5. Ez. xx. 6.

o i. 37. xxxi. 2. xxxii. 51. 52. xxxiv. 4. Num. xx. 7—12. xxvii. 12—14. Ps. cvi. 32. 33. Is. lli. 5. 6. Matt. xxvi. 39. p 1 Chr. xvii. 4. 12. 13. xxii. 7—9. xxviii. 2—4. Matt. xx. 22. 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9.

q xxxiv. 1—4. Num. xxxvii. 12. \* Or, the hill, 17. r Gen. xiii. 14, 15.

s 1. 38. xxxi. 3. 7. 23. Num. xxxvii. 18—23. 1 Chr. xxii. 6. 11—16. xxviii. 9. 10. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 13, 14. 2 Tim. ii. 1—3. iv. 1—6. t Josh. i. 2. iii. 7. —17. John i. 17. —Acts vii. 45. Heb. iv. 8. Jerus. u iv. 3. 46. xxxiv. 6. Num. xxxv. 3. xxxiii. 48, 49.

perhaps added by Ezra, to shew how long these places retained their names. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, *Num.* xxxii. *Josh.* xiii. xxii.)

V. 23—28. This prayer of Moses arose from a high valuation of the promised land, and an earnest desire of witnessing the power and faithfulness of the Lord, in putting the Israelites in possession of it, by destroying their enemies. He had prevailed in behalf of Israel more than once, in apparently similar circumstances: and his request did not displease the Lord; though for an example to Israel, he did not see good to grant it.—Thus Moses prevailed for others, but for himself he could not prevail; which made him the more exact type of Christ, who "saved others, <sup>a</sup> himself he could not save," that is, consistently with the purpose of saving others.—(*Mark* xv. 31. *Notes*, *Num.* xx. 10—13. xxvii. 15—20.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Nothing more hastens the destruction of sinners, than overlooking the examples of divine justice set before them for their warning, and rushing forward in the same steps, which have brought others to a miserable end.—All those advantages, with which men are naturally pleased, eventually conduce to their more speedy ruin and deeper condemnation, whenever they increase their pride, security, and boldness in transgression: so far are riches, power, worldly wisdom, and courage, from profiting their ungodly possessors!—No arm can be strong when the contest is against the Almighty; and he that assaults the church wages war against God. • In this case especially. "the <sup>a</sup> battle is not to the strong, nor the race to the swift:" his most insolent and presumptuous enemies will soon lie down in despair; and his feeblest and most timid friends have no cause to fear. His promise secures success in every undertaking, in which they are required to engage;

ments; which I teach you, for to do *them*,<sup>b</sup> that ye may live; and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you.

2 Ye shall not<sup>a</sup> add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish *ought* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you.

3 Your eyes have seen<sup>a</sup> what the LORD did because of Baal-peor: for all the men that followed Baal-peor, the LORD thy God hath destroyed them from among you.

4 But ye that did<sup>a</sup> cleave unto the LORD your God *are* alive every one of you this day.

5 Behold<sup>a</sup> I have taught you statutes

and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it.

6 Keep therefore, and do *them*; for<sup>a</sup> this *is* your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say,<sup>b</sup> Surely this great nation *is* a wise and understanding people.

7 For<sup>a</sup> what nation *is there so great*, who *hath* God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God *is* in all things that we call upon him for?

8 And what nation *is there so great*, that hath<sup>a</sup> statutes and judgments so righteous, as all this law which I set before you this day?

<sup>b</sup> Lev. xviii. 5.  
Ex. xx. 11, 21.  
Rom. x. 5.

<sup>c</sup> xii. 32. Josh. i. 7. Prov. xxx. 6. Matt. v. 18, 43. xv. 2—9. Mark vii. 1—13. Gal. iii. 15. Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

<sup>d</sup> Num. xxv. 1—9. xxxi. 16. Josh. xxii. 17. Ps. cvi. 28, 29. Hos. ix. 10.

<sup>e</sup> x. 20. xlii. 4. Josh. xxii. 5. xxiii. 8. Ruth i. 14—17. Ps. lxi. 8. cxliii. 6—11. Is. xxvi. 20. Ez. ix. 4. John vi. 67—69. Acts xi. 23. Rom. xii. 9. Rev. xiv. 4. xx. 4.

<sup>f</sup> 1. Matt. xxviii. 20. Acts xx. 27. 1 Cor. xi. 23. xv. 3. 1 Thes. iv. 1. 2. Heb. iii. 5.

<sup>g</sup> Job xxviii. 28. Ps. xix. 7. cxi. 10. cxix. 98—100. Prov. i. 7. xiv. 8. Jer. viii. 9. 2 Tim. iii. 15. Jam. iii. 13.

<sup>h</sup> 1 Kings iv. 34. x. 6—9. Dan. i. 20. iv. 9. v. 17—16. Zech. viii. 20—23. Mal. iii. 12.

<sup>i</sup> Num. xxiii. 9. 21. 2 Sam. vii. 23. Is. xliii. 4. j v. 26. Ps. xlv. 1. lxxiii. 23. cxlv. 18. cxlviii. 14. Is. lv. 6. Eph. iii. 12—22. Jam. iv. 12.

<sup>k</sup> x. 12, 13. Ps. xix. 7—11. cxix. 86. 96. 127, 128. cxlvii. 19, 20. Rom. vii. 12—14. 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

Israel, as delineated in the foregoing recapitulation of their history, are in this chapter improved by a variety of practical admonitions and exhortations. The abstract of the argument may be thus stated: 'As the Lord hath manifested himself so able and willing to deliver, protect, and bless you, take heed that you do not forfeit his favour by disobedience; but from gratitude for past mercies, and in order to secure the continuance of his favour, make it your constant study to worship him alone, to depend on his promises, perfections, and providence, and to submit to his authority; as a nation governed by his judgments, and as individuals "walking in all his ordinances and commandments." This is your true wisdom; this will certainly advance you to greatness, prosperity, and reputation, and secure your felicity: whereas the contrary conduct will surely involve you in misery and ruin.' The subsequent practical instructions seem to be thus inferred from the preceding history; and they are enforced by every argument and every motive imaginable. The national covenant made with Israel is indeed constantly referred to: yet the whole may be accommodated to the case of true Christians; whilst it more directly suits the case of nations favoured with the light of revelation.—The Israelites had witnessed many instances, in which disobedience was punished with immediate death. Their fathers had been doomed to die in the wilderness: nor could they expect to possess Canaan if not obedient. Obedience cannot merit salvation: but it is the only evidence that we partake of "the gift of God, which is eternal life through Jesus Christ:" and disobedience both deserves eternal destruction, and when persisted in, renders it inevitable. (Note, Ez. xviii. 30—32.)

V. 2. To add any thing to the commands of God, as obligatory upon the conscience, or an essential part of religion, seems to charge him with an oversight; and is as affronting to his wisdom, as to diminish any thing from it is to his authority and goodness. And human traditions or appointments, when not explicitly distinguished from the law of God, as comparatively of no authority, and kept entirely subordinate, have always been the competitors of the sacred word, and tended to render it of none effect.

(Marg. Ref.—Note, Matt. xv. 3—6.)—Some explain the word *add* to be merely a caution against sins of *commission*; and *diminish*, against sins of *omission*: but this comes far short of the true meaning.—This prohibition is supposed to have been extremely useful, in preserving entire the text of these ancient books; by deterring even those who most openly broke the law, or explained away its meaning, or contended virulently with each other about religious opinions and practices, from adding to, or taking from, the words of the Scriptures themselves. (xii. 32. Notes, Prov. xxx. 5, 6. Rev. xxii. 18—21.)

V. 3, 4. (Notes, Num. xxv.) It appears from this appeal, that the pestilence, as well as the sword of the magistrates, singled out the guilty persons and spared the rest. (Ps. xci. 6—8.) 'The legislator, in order to deter the Jews from idolatry, alludes to this fact, but he notices no circumstance but one, which, though in the original narrative not stated, was infinitely the most important to advert to on this occasion; but which no persons, but spectators of the fact, and perfectly acquainted with every individual concerned in it, could possibly feel the truth of.' *Graves on the Pentateuch*, vol. 1. pp. 137, 138.

V. 5. The people had been often ready to conclude, that Moses taught them by his own authority; but at the close of his life he solemnly assured them, that he had instructed them exactly as the Lord had commanded him, neither more, nor less, nor otherwise.—This is a most express declaration, that he was divinely inspired; and utterly incompatible with integrity of character, if he was not.

V. 6—8. Israel was a "great nation," highly honoured by having the tabernacle, ark, and ordinances of God in the midst of them, and by his powerful interposition in their behalf, whenever they earnestly called upon him for help. Even the surrounding nations could not help observing this, while Israel adhered to the worship of God, which was their true wisdom: and indeed, taking in the whole time from Moses to this day, what nation has been so greatly distinguished as they have been?—Their laws also, whether moral or judicial, in proportion as they are examined, and compared with the laws of other nations,

9 Only take heed to thyself, and <sup>1</sup>keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and <sup>m</sup>lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but <sup>n</sup>teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons;

10 Specially <sup>o</sup>the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to <sup>p</sup>fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and *that* they may teach their children.

11 And ye came near, and <sup>q</sup>stood under the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire unto the <sup>r</sup>midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness.

12 And <sup>s</sup>the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw <sup>t</sup>'no similitude; <sup>u</sup>only <sup>v</sup>'ye heard a voice.

13 And <sup>w</sup>he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, *even* <sup>x</sup>ten commandments; and <sup>y</sup>he wrote them upon two tables of stone.

14 And the LORD commanded me <sup>z</sup>'at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in

the land whither ye go over to possess it.

15 <sup>a</sup>Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves, (for ye saw no manner <sup>b</sup>of similitude on the day *that* the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire,)

16 Lest ye <sup>c</sup>corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, <sup>d</sup>'the likeness of male or female;

17 The likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air;

18 The likeness of any thing that creepeth on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth:

19 And lest thou lift up thine eyes <sup>f</sup>unto heaven, and <sup>g</sup>'when thou seest the sun, and the moon, and the stars, *even* all <sup>h</sup>'the host of heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them, and serve them, <sup>i</sup>'which the LORD thy God hath <sup>j</sup>'divided unto all nations under the whole heaven.

20 But the LORD hath taken you, and brought you forth out of <sup>k</sup>'the iron furnace, *even* out of Egypt, to be unto him <sup>l</sup>'a people of inheritance, as *ye are* this day.

21 ¶ Furthermore, <sup>m</sup>'the LORD was

will appear to every impartial judge most equitable and excellent.

V. 9. *Keep thy soul*—] Note, Prov. iv. 23.

V. 11. *The midst of heaven*.] The fire and smoke filled the atmosphere to a great height; as the fowls are, in the original, said "to fly in the open firmament of heaven." (17.—Notes, Gen. i. 6—8. Ex. xix. 16—20.)

V. 13. (Notes, Ex. xx. xxiv.) The ten commandments were the foundation of the national covenant made with Israel, as well as of the covenant of works, though not exactly in the same manner: and, when written in the heart, they form the evidence, that the covenant of grace by faith in Jesus Christ is ratified with us. (Notes, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Heb. viii. 7—13.)

V. 15—18. Let any one carefully examine the multiplied and varied expressions of these verses; and then let him form his judgment, and bring in his verdict, respecting the use of images, in religious worship, in the church of Rome, and elsewhere. (Note, Ex. xx. 4.)

V. 19. The propensity of mankind to idolatry, and the artifice of Satan, would concur to drive the people into this species of it. It is indeed extremely irrational to make the creatures of God his rivals; and to allow the instruments of his bounty to rob him of his glory: but the

worship of the splendid and useful luminaries of heaven is far more plausible than any other idolatry, and therefore more carefully to be guarded against. The declaration that the God of Israel had formed the sun, moon, and stars, and given all nations the benefit of them, was well suited to this purpose, and to mark to every reader the infinite distance between the glorious Creator and the noblest of his creatures. (Marg. Ref. g. Note, Job xxxi. 24—28.)

V. 20. *The iron furnace*.] This strong expression forcibly marks the misery which the Israelites endured, and the danger to which they were exposed, in the Egyptian bondage.—Thence they were brought forth to be "unto the LORD a people of inheritance." All the revenue of worship, obedience, and praise, which the Lord receives from this lower world, is paid him by his redeemed people, by whom alone he is loved, in whom he delights, and for whose sake the frame of nature is preserved. As the apostle says: "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." (Note, 1 Cor. iii 18—23.)

V. 21—24. The consideration, that Moses was excluded from Canaan for one offence, was both suited to

angry with me for your sakes, and swear that I should not go over Jordan, and that I should not go in unto that good land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

22 But <sup>1</sup>I must die in this land, I must not go over Jordan: but ye shall go over, and possess that good land.

23 Take <sup>m</sup> heed unto yourselves, <sup>a</sup> lest ye forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which he made with you, and <sup>e</sup> make you a graven image, or the likeness of any *thing* which the LORD thy God hath forbidden thee.

24 For the LORD thy <sup>b</sup> God is a consuming fire, *even* <sup>a</sup> a jealous God.

25 When thou shalt <sup>b</sup> beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall <sup>a</sup> corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image, or the likeness of any *thing*, and shall <sup>a</sup> do evil in the sight of the LORD thy God, to provoke him to anger;

26 I <sup>u</sup> call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that <sup>a</sup> ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it, ye shall not prolong *your* days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.

27 And the LORD shall <sup>v</sup> scatter you

among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you.

28 And there <sup>a</sup> ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which <sup>a</sup> neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.

29 But <sup>b</sup> if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find *him*, if thou seek him <sup>e</sup> with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.

30 When thou art in tribulation, and <sup>a</sup> all these things <sup>a</sup> are come upon thee, *even* <sup>a</sup> in the latter days, <sup>a</sup> if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be <sup>e</sup> obedient unto his voice;

31 (For <sup>b</sup> the LORD thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor <sup>1</sup> forget the covenant of thy fathers, which he swore unto them.

32 ¶ For <sup>k</sup> ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and *ask* <sup>1</sup> from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been *any such thing* as this great thing *is*, or hath been heard like it?

33 Did *ever* people <sup>m</sup> hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?

- 1 1 Kings xiii. 21.  
22. Amos iii. 2.  
Heb. xii. 6-10.  
2 Pet. i. 13-15.  
In Sec on 9. —xxvii.  
9. Josh. xxiii. 11.  
Matt. xxiv. 4.  
Luke xii. 15.  
xxi. 8. Heb. iii.  
12.  
n vi. 12. xxix. 25.  
xxxi. 20. Josh.  
xxiii. 16. 1 Chr.  
xvii. 15. Is. xxiv.  
5. Jer. xxxi. 32.  
Ez. xvi. 59.  
o See on 16. —Ex.  
xx. 4, 6.  
p Is. 3. xxxiii. 22.  
Ex. xxiv. 17. Pa.  
xxi. 9. Is. xxx.  
xxiii. 14.  
Jer. xxi. 12-14.  
Nah. i. 6. Zeph.  
i. 18. Heb. xii.  
19.  
q vi. 15. xxix. 20.  
xxxi. 16, 21. Ex.  
xx. 5. xxiv. 14.  
Pa. lxxxiii. 58.  
Is. xlii. 8. Nah.  
2. 1 Cor. x.  
22.  
r xxxi. 16-18.  
Judg. ii. 8-15.  
s See on 16. —  
xxx. 29. Ex.  
xxxiii. 7. Hos. ix.  
8.  
t 2 Kings xvii. 17.  
—19. xxi. 2. 14.  
—16. 2 Chr.  
xxxvi. 12-16.  
u xxx. 18, 19.  
xxxi. 28. xxxii.  
1. Is. i. 2. Jer. ii.  
12. vi. 19. xxii.  
29. Ez. xxxvi. 4.  
Mic. i. 2. vi. 2.  
x xxxix. 28. Lev.  
xxviii. 28. xxvi.  
8. —35. Josh.  
xxiii. 16. Is. vi.  
11. xxi. 1-3.  
Jer. xlii. 22. Ez.  
xxiii. 28. Luke  
xxi. 24.  
v xxviii. 62-64.  
Neh. i. 8. Ez.  
xii. 15. xxxii. 26.

- z xxviii. 26. 64.  
1 Sam. xxvi. 19.  
Jer. xvi. 18. Ez.  
xx. 32. 39. Acts  
vii. 42.  
a Pa. cxv. 4-7.  
cxxxv. 15. Is.  
xlv. 9. xiv. 20.  
xlvii. 7. Jer. x. 8.  
9.  
b xxx. 10. Lev.  
xxvi. 39-42.  
2 Chr. xv. 4. 15.  
Neh. i. 9. Is. lv.  
6, 7. Jer. xxxix.  
12-14.  
c xxx. 2. 1 Kings  
viii. 47. 48.  
2 Kings x. 31.  
xxiii. 3. 2 Chr.  
xv. 12. xxxi. 21.  
Pa. cxix. 2. 10.  
58. 145. Jer. iii.  
10.  
d 1 Kings viii. 46-  
53. 2 Chr. vi. 36.  
—39. Dan. ix.  
11-19.  
e Heb. have found  
thee. xxxi. 17.  
Ex. xviii. 8.  
Marg.  
f xxxi. 29. Gen.  
xlix. 1. Num.  
xxiv. 20. Jer.  
xxiii. 20. Dan.  
x. 14. Hos. iii.  
5. Heb. i. 2.  
g xxx. 10. Lam.  
iii. 40. Hos. xiv.  
2. 3. Joel ii. 12.  
13. Acts iii. 19.  
xxvi. 20.  
h Is. i. 19. Jer. vi.  
23. Zech. vi. 15.  
Heb. v. 9.  
i Lev. xxxiv. 6, 7.  
Num. xiv. 18.  
2 Chr. xxx. 9.  
Neh. i. 5. ix. 31.  
Pa. lxxxvi. 5. 15.  
cxvi. 5. cxiv. 8.  
9. Jon. iv. 2. Mic.  
vi. 18.  
j Lev. xxvi. 42.  
45. Pa. cv. 8.  
cxi. 5. 9. Jer.  
xiv. 21. Luke i.  
72.  
k Job viii. 8. Pa.  
xlii. 1. Joel i. 2.  
l xxx. 4. Matt.  
xxiv. 31. Mark  
xiii. 27.  
m v. 24-26. ix. 10.  
Ex. xx. 18, 19.  
xxiv. 11. xxxiii.  
20. Judg. vi. 22.

impress the people with the sense of the Lord's mercy in sparing them, notwithstanding their many and heinous transgressions; and to warn them of the consequence of renewing their rebellions, and of running into idolatry: for their merciful God was also "a jealous God, and a consuming fire."—It seems that, when Moses pleaded earnestly for a reversal of the sentence, the Lord, to silence him, confirmed it with an oath. (Note, iii. 23-28.)

V. 25-28. Many expressions in this prophecy evidently refer to times much later, than even the Babylonish captivity. The Jews could not then, with any propriety, be said to have "utterly perished" out of the promised land, as they returned to it at the end of seventy years: but their present state, in which they have been "scattered among the nations" for almost eighteen hundred years, without any access to their own land; and their condition, as dispersed individuals, not as a nation under a regular government; answer the language of the prediction with great exactness. They do not indeed at present worship images; except as in popish countries they sometimes conceal their religion, and conform to the idolatrous worship there performed, in order to escape persecution; but they are grossly ignorant of the true God: "for he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father that sent

him." (Notes, John v. 20-23. viii. 54-59.) Numbers of Israelites also have doubtless been incorporated with idolaters.

V. 29-31. "A jealous God" hath fulfilled the threatenings before denounced on the rebellious Israelites: but he is also a merciful God, and waits to receive them, either as a nation or individually, whenever they repent, and turn to him with all their hearts, in the obedience of faith.—After all that hath come on the nation, especially in their present long continued dispersion, they are still preserved a distinct people, by a most astonishing interposition of Providence; evidently in remembrance of the covenant confirmed with their fathers; and in order to the fulfilment, as prophecies, of these conditional promises, when the "Spirit of grace and supplications" shall be poured out on them, and they shall look in penitent faith to their crucified Messiah. (Notes, Lev. xxvi. 40-42. Num. xxiii. 9. 1 Kings viii. 46-53. Jer. xxx. 10, 11. Hos. iii. 4, 5. Zech. xii. 9-14.)

V. 32, 33. During above two thousand five hundred years, from the creation, no record, nor even report, existed of such events as the Israelites had witnessed, nor of any at all similar to them.

Fire. (33) Impostors have sometimes deceived men by voices, supposed to be uttered by some deity, but never

34 Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?

35 Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him.

36 Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee; and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire, and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire.

37 And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt;

38 To drive out nations from before thee, greater and mightier than thou art, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as it is this day.

39 Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath; there is none else.

40 Thou shalt keep therefore his

statutes and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, for ever.

41 ¶ Then Moses severed three cities on this side Jordan toward the sun-rising;

42 That the slayer might flee thither, which should kill his neighbour unawares, and hated him not in times past; and that, fleeing unto one of these cities, he might live:

43 Namely, Bezer in the wilderness, in the plain country of the Reubenites; and Ramoth in Gilead of the Gadites; and Golan in Bashan of the Manassites.

44 ¶ And this is the law which Moses set before the children of Israel:

45 These are the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which Moses spake unto the children of Israel, after they came forth out of Egypt;

46 On this side Jordan, in the valley over against Beth-peor, in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heshbon, whom Moses and the children of Israel smote, after they were come forth out of Egypt:

as spoken out of the midst of a most tremendous fire, in the sight and hearing of numbers, to whose senses the appeal was made.

V. 34. *Temptations.*] The commands, judgments, and respites, by which Pharaoh was required to let Israel go, made trial of his temper, and discovered his unwillingness to obey, and his inability to resist. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 35—40. Nothing had occurred in the history of the world at that time, and nothing has taken place during much more than three thousand years since, that at all resembled the interposition of God, to deliver one nation out of the midst of another more powerful nation, which had long enslaved it, by two unarmed men, entirely through miracles, and contrary to all human probability; or that was any thing like his dealings with them at Sinai and in the wilderness. The very singularity of the transactions, though attested beyond all reasonable doubt, gives a plausible pretence for scepticism. But miracles must be extraordinary events, or they would cease to deserve the name; and an adequate reason is assigned for this extraordinary interposition of JEHOVAH, at a time when all nations were ready to sink into idolatry: for he intended thus effectually to shew men in general, and his chosen people in parti-

cular, that he alone was the true God in heaven and earth; and that all the deities of the nations were mere names, or lying vanities, who could not at all protect or help their worshippers, or resist his power. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Ex. ix. 13—16.*)

V. 41—43. The first exhortation, or sermon, (so to speak) of this book ends with the preceding verse: and the appointment of the cities of refuge has no visible connexion with what goes before, or with what follows: but probably Moses performed that service, before he delivered his next discourse, that he might shew how this important concern was to be regulated. (*Note, Josh. xx. 7—9.*) Thus he lost no part of his short remaining time, but filled up the whole with speaking or acting for the good of the people.

V. 44. (*Note, i. 5.*) This is evidently an introduction to the discourse of the subsequent chapters. Moses having practically improved some particulars in the history of Israel, proceeded to repeat and enforce the laws which he had before delivered, with additions and explanations, beginning with the ten commandments.

V. 46. *Beth-peor.*] Or, "The house of Peor." Probably a temple of Baal-peor was full in the view of the

47 And they possessed his land, and  
\* See on iii. 1—14. \* the land of Og king of Bashan, two  
 Num. xxi. 33—35.  
 ii. 36. iii. 12.  
 Josh. xiii. 24.  
 &c. kings of the Amorites, which were on  
 this side Jordan, toward the sun-rising:  
 48 From <sup>a</sup>Aroer, which is by the

bank of the river Arnon, even unto  
 mount <sup>a</sup>Sion, which is Hermon.

u iii. 9 Ps cxxiii.  
 3.

49 And all the plain on this side Jordan eastward, even unto the sea of the plain, <sup>a</sup>under the springs of Pishgah.

x iii. 17. xxxiv. 1.  
 Josh. xiii. 20

people, while Moses was pressing upon them the worship of JEHOVAH alone; and perhaps that very temple, where so many had sinned to their own destruction.

V. 48. *Mount Sion, &c.*] (*Marg. Ref.*) Not mount Zion but Sion, which was on the east of Jordan, and northwards towards Lebanon.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—20.

Every instance of the Lord's kindness to us is a conclusive argument to enforce our obedience to his commandments; and will either influence us to obey him, or testify against us, and enhance our condemnation. Indeed, all his commandments are so reasonable, equitable, and salutary, that if we were not blinded and infatuated by Satan, a wise regard to our own interest would induce us to observe them: for they are only righteous and kind rules, which the all-wise Creator has affectionately prescribed to his rational creatures; by attending to which they may secure their own felicity, and conduce to that of each other, while they render him the glory due unto his name. None of them can be broken without injuring ourselves and others, as well as dishonouring God: and a peaceful conscience, well regulated passions and appetites, a sweet sense of his favour, an unspeakable pleasure in his ways, and complete harmony and love with each other, together with health of body and vigour of mind, must be the consequences of perfect obedience to them. Even now, in proportion as we are enabled to obey them, these blessed effects follow: and the case is the same with nations as with individuals. They therefore will one day appear to be the only "wise and understanding people," (however now derided as fools,) who make the law of God the rule of their whole conduct, without "adding to it or "diminishing from it:" and that very light which discovers their wisdom, will detect the folly and madness of those pretenders to superior understanding, who reject the divine testimony, and disregard the divine authority: so that at length it will be undeniably evident, that true religion is but another name for wisdom, honour, and felicity. Even in this world experience decides, that they who forsake the Lord plunge themselves into many miseries, and often into sudden destruction: and, notwithstanding self-denial and persecutions, the temporal advantages of piety are vastly more satisfactory, than the most splendid acquisitions of prosperous wickedness; even apart from the comforts of the Holy Spirit and the hope of glory on the one hand, or the remorse and terrors, which are more sensibly felt than honestly acknowledged, on the other: for "godliness hath both the promise of this life and of "that which is to come." (*Notes*, 1 Tim. iv. 6—10. vi. 6—10.)—But if we would secure these advantages, with hearts like ours, in such a world as this, in the midst of temptations and enemies, we must apply our minds seriously both "to know and to consider" the works and the word of God: we must "take great heed unto our-

"selves, and keep our souls diligently," lest the good impressions which are excited depart out of our hearts, without producing any abiding effects: for while our duty and happiness, as well as God himself and his service, are always the same; our sense of them is alas! exceedingly variable, and even apt to wear out of our minds. (*Note*, Heb. ii. 1—4.) We should therefore "watch and pray "always," that we may not be entangled by those snares which are laid in every place: we should keep a strict and constant guard upon our imaginations, affections, senses, and appetites: our minds must be armed with every imaginable motive which can encourage hope, excite fear, and influence our love or hatred; that in patience, courage, and self-denial, we may be prepared for labour, trials, and for the cross in whatever form it is laid in our way. All this, and much more must be attended to, if we would walk safely and comfortably with God, through this world to glory.—But trusting in Christ by faith in his blood; and drawing from his fulness wisdom, strength, and grace, it will become practicable and pleasant.—Nothing is more essential in this important concern, than just apprehensions of the perfections of God; since universal history reminds us of man's astonishing propensity to idolatry.—We must not therefore trust to our vain reasonings, or indulge our gross imaginations; but, by faith, derive our knowledge of God from revelation alone; particularly attending to the displays which he hath made of his power, justice, goodness, mercy, and truth, in the various dispensations there recorded.

##### V. 21—49.

We ought carefully to study our obligations to God, and his character, with the relations in which we stand to him; his law and worship; our own situation as sinners under a dispensation of mercy; and the nature of that gracious covenant to which we are invited to accede: since far more interesting discoveries are made to us, than ever Israel saw from mount Sinai; and far greater mercies are conferred on us, than they experienced in Egypt, in the wilderness, or in Canaan. One speaks to us of infinitely superior dignity to Moses, who, on our account, was not, like him, deprived merely of a greatly desired and much regretted temporal satisfaction, but who even bore upon the cross the wrath and curse of God for our sins, and felt the unspeakable agony in all its bitterness. And now, instead of the language and displays of fiery indignation, he pleads with us by his dying love, and in mild accents of mercy, not to neglect so great salvation.—Nay, our God, while awfully jealous for the glory of his name, and "a "consuming Fire" to all impenitent sinners, is yet most merciful, ready to forgive, and willing to be gracious to all who turn to him in true repentance. If then, after all our rebellions, we at last seek him with all our heart and with all our soul, and become obedient to his voice, (fleeing for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us,) he will yet pardon us, and ratify to us all the blessings of

## CHAP. V.

Moses shews that God made a covenant with Israel at Horeb, 1—5. He sets the ten commandments before them, 6—21. He relates how, at the people's request, he had received the law from God for them, 22—31. He exhorts them to obedience, 32, 33.

**AND** Moses called <sup>a</sup>all Israel, and said unto them, <sup>b</sup>Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and <sup>c</sup>keep, and do them.

<sup>d</sup>2 The LORD <sup>e</sup>our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.

<sup>f</sup>3 The LORD <sup>g</sup>made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, *even us*, who *are* all of us here alive this day.

<sup>h</sup>4 The <sup>i</sup>LORD talked with you face to face in the mount, out of the midst of the fire,

<sup>j</sup>5 (I <sup>k</sup>stood between the LORD and you at that time, to shew you the word of the LORD: for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount,) saying,

<sup>l</sup>6 *I am* the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of <sup>m</sup>bondage.

the everlasting covenant.—But apostles, prophets, and ministers, yea, heaven and earth also, will testify against us, if we “refuse him that speaketh.” (Note, Heb. xii. 22—25.) Even our natural affection to our children may suggest additional motives to obedience; for when the Lord loves the parents, he often chooses and blesses the children after them, especially when they diligently instruct them in the same good way. (Note, Gen. xviii. 18, 19.) Thus may we seek an entail of heavenly blessings upon our latest posterity: and both parents and ministers may learn profitably from Moses, to instruct their children and people, with fervour and faithfulness, even to the close of their lives, in all that the Lord had taught them, with a mixture of firmness, affection, and gravity, suited to such important occasions. (Notes, 2 Tim. iv. 1—5. 2 Pet. i. 12—15.)—Finally, as the present dispersion of the Jews shews this chapter to have been a prophecy, as well as a sermon; let us not forget to pray for them, that in their tribulation, even now in *these latter days*, they may seek the Lord, and be reinstated in the privileges of the covenant made with their fathers.

## NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 3. The Sinai-covenant was different from that made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for that was personal, and related mainly to spiritual blessings; this was national, and especially stated the terms, on which the possession of the promised land, and other privileges, would be continued to Israel. (Notes, Gen. xvii. 1—8. Ex.

7 Thou <sup>n</sup>shalt have none other gods <sup>o</sup>before me. <sup>p</sup>See on Ex. xx. 3.—Matt. iv. 10. John v. 23. 1 John v. 21.

8 Thou shalt not make thee *any* <sup>q</sup>graven image, or any likeness of *any* <sup>r</sup>thing that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the waters beneath the earth. <sup>s</sup>See on iv. 16.

9 Thou <sup>t</sup>shalt not bow down thyself <sup>u</sup>unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* <sup>v</sup>a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth <sup>w</sup>generation of them that hate me, <sup>x</sup>See on Ex. xx. 4—6. <sup>y</sup>See on Ex. xxxiv. 7, 14.

10 And <sup>z</sup>shewing mercy unto thousands of them that <sup>aa</sup>love me, and keep my commandments. <sup>ab</sup>Is i. 16—19. Jer. xxxii. 16. Dan. ix. 4. Matt. vii. 21—27. Gal. v. 6. 1 John i. 7. n vi. 8, 6. x. 12, 13. John xiv. 15. 21—23. xv. 14. Rom. viii. 28. Jam. i. 25. 1 John v. 2, 3.

11 Thou <sup>ac</sup>shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold *him* guiltless that taketh his name in vain. <sup>ad</sup>See on Ex. xx. 7.—Lev. xix. 12. Jer. iv. 2. Matt. v. 33, 34. Jam. v. 12. <sup>ae</sup>See on Ex. xx. 8—11.—Is. lvi. 6, lviii. 13.

12 <sup>af</sup>Keep the sabbath-day to sanctify it, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee. <sup>ag</sup>Ex. xxxii. 12. xxxv. 2, 8. Ez. xx. 12. Luke xiii. 14—16. xxiii. 56. <sup>ah</sup>Gen. ii. 2. Ex. xvi. 29, 30. Heb. iv. 4.

13 <sup>ai</sup>Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work: <sup>aj</sup>Ex. xxxii. 12. xxxv. 2, 8. Ez. xx. 12. Luke xiii. 14—16. xxiii. 56.

14 But the seventh day *is* <sup>ak</sup>the sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy

xix. 5. Gal. iii. 15—18.) But this language may also mean, that the covenant made at Horeb, was as obligatory on the generation whom Moses then addressed, as on those who were immediately present, when the law was delivered, and the covenant ratified. For they were a collective body, incorporated by charter, the obligations and advantages of which descended to the successors of those to whom it was first conceded. Some indeed whom Moses addressed had been present at the giving of the law, though under age; but most of them were then unborn, or children: yet the covenant made with their fathers included them likewise.—Thus all, favoured with revelation, are bound to submit to it, equally with those to whom it was first given; though they do not behold the miracles by which it was authenticated: for there are other evidences of its divine authority, which gather force by revolving ages; and they who submit to it have equal benefits, with those to whom it was first communicated.

V. 4—11. Marg. Ref.—Notes, 28, 29. Ex. xix. 16—20. xx. 1—7. 18—25.

V. 12—15. (Notes, Ex. xx. 8—11.)—The words “As the Lord thy God hath commanded,” here introduced in recording the giving of the law from mount Sinai, seem to imply an appointment of the sabbath, previous to that transaction.—The original reason for hallowing the sabbath, taken from the creation, is not here mentioned. This indeed must ever remain valid, and it was well known to the people. But they were also required to remember their oppressed state in Egypt, and their wonderful deli-

son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor <sup>a</sup>thy stranger that *is* within thy gates: that <sup>b</sup>thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou.

15 And <sup>c</sup>remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and *that* <sup>d</sup>the LORD thy God brought thee out thence, <sup>e</sup>through a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath-day.

16 <sup>f</sup>Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee: that <sup>g</sup>thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

17 Thou <sup>h</sup>shalt not kill.

18 Neither <sup>i</sup>shalt thou commit adultery.

19 Neither <sup>j</sup>shalt thou steal.

20 Neither <sup>k</sup>shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour.

21 Neither <sup>l</sup>shalt thou desire thy neighbour's wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour's house, his field, or his man-servant, or his maid-servant, or his ox, or his ass, or any *thing* that *is* thy neighbour's.

22 ¶ These <sup>m</sup>words the LORD spake unto all your assembly, in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; and he added no more: and <sup>n</sup>he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.

23 And it came to pass, <sup>o</sup>when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, (for the mountain did burn with fire,) that ye came near unto me, *even* all the heads of your tribes, and your elders;

24 And ye said, Behold, the LORD our God hath shewed us his glory, and his greatness, and <sup>p</sup>we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and <sup>q</sup>he liveth.

25 Now therefore why should we die? for <sup>r</sup>this great fire will consume us. If we <sup>s</sup>hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, then we shall die.

26 For <sup>t</sup>who *is there of* <sup>u</sup>all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the <sup>v</sup>living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we *have*, and lived?

27 Go thou near, and <sup>w</sup>hear all that the LORD our God shall say; and speak thou unto us all that the LORD our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear *it* and do *it*.

28 And the LORD heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me, and the LORD said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: <sup>x</sup>they have well said all that they have spoken.

29 <sup>y</sup>Oh, that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and <sup>z</sup>keep all my commandments always, <sup>aa</sup>that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!

<sup>a</sup> Neh. xiii. 15—21.

<sup>b</sup> Lev. xxv. 44—46. Neh. v. 5.

<sup>c</sup> xv. 15. xvi. 12. xxiv. 18—22. Ia. ii. 1, 2. Eph. ii. 1, 12.

<sup>d</sup> See on 6.—Ps. cxvii. 16. Ia. lxi. 9. Luke i. 74, 75. Tit. ii. 14. <sup>e</sup> See on iv. 34—37.

<sup>f</sup> See on Ex. xx. 12.—Lev. xix. 3. Matt. xv. 4—6. Col. iii. 20. <sup>g</sup> v. 40. xxviii. 16. Eph. vi. 2, 3.

<sup>h</sup> See on Ex. xx. 13. Matt. v. 21, 22.

<sup>i</sup> See on Ex. xx. 14.—Luke xviii. 20. Jam. ii. 10, 11.

<sup>j</sup> See on Ex. xx. 15.—Rom. xiii. 9. Eph. iv. 28.

<sup>k</sup> xix. 16—21.—See on Ex. xx. 6.—xxiii. 1. 1 Kings xxi. 13. Prov. vi. 19. xix. 5, 9.

<sup>l</sup> See on Ex. xx. 17.—1 Kings xxi. 1—4. Mic. ii. 2. Hab. ii. 9. Luke xii. 15. Rom. vii. 7, 8. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. Heb. xiii. 5.

<sup>m</sup> See on 4. lv. 12.—Is. 36. Ex. xix. 18, 19.

<sup>n</sup> See on iv. 13.—Ex. xxiv. 12. xxxi. 18.

<sup>h</sup> Ex. xx. 16, 19. Heb. xii. 18—21.

<sup>i</sup> See on 4, 5.

<sup>j</sup> iv. 33. Gen. xxxii. 30. Ex. xxxiii. 20. Judg. xiii. 22. <sup>k</sup> xviii. 16. xxxiii. 2. 2 Cor. iii. 7—9. Gal. iii. 10, 21, 22. Heb. xii. 29. <sup>l</sup> Heb. add to hear.

<sup>m</sup> See on iv. 33. Gen. vi. 12. Jer. xl. 6. Rom. iii. 20. <sup>n</sup> Josh. iii. 10. Ps. xlii. 2. xxxiv. 2. Jer. x. 10. Dan. vi. 28. Matt. xxvi. 63. Ac's xiv. 15. 2 Cor. vi. 16. 1 Thea. i. 9. <sup>o</sup> See on Ex. xx. 19.—Heb. xii. 19.

<sup>p</sup> xviii. 17. Num. xxxvii. 7. xxxviii. 5. <sup>q</sup> xxxiii. 29, 30. Ps. lxxxii. 13—15. Ia. xlviii. 18. Jer. xlv. 4. Matt. xxiii. 37. Luke xix. 42. 2 Cor. v. 20. vi. 1. Heb. xii. 25. <sup>r</sup> xi. 1. Ps. cxi. 3. cxix. 1—3. Luke xi. 28. John xv. 14. Rev. xxii. 14. <sup>s</sup> 16. iv. 40. vi. 3. 18. xli. 25. 28. xix. 13. xxii. 7. Ruth iii. 1. Ps. xix. 11. Ia. iii. 10. Jer. xxii. 14. 15. Eph. vi. 3. Jam. i. 25.

verance: and while they worshipped and gave thanks to their great and gracious Deliverer, humanely to allow respite from labour to their servants, and even heathen slaves, and piously to afford them an opportunity of becoming acquainted with JEHOVAH, and worshipping him; from which advantages, they themselves had been cruelly and impiously restricted by their Egyptian oppressors. Thus, while the *judicial* law supposed the *existence of slavery* among the Jews; this, and similar regulations, when duly complied with, were calculated to convert the slavery of the *heathen* in Israel into a blessing to their souls, by bringing them under the means of grace, and putting them in the way of obtaining the privileges of God's peculiar people. (Note, Ex. xxi. 2.) And, amidst the enormities of modern slavery, if it could truly be said, that all the slaves rested from all labour on the Lord's day, being allowed and required to keep it holy; and were so instructed

on it in the nature of *genuine Christianity*, as to afford them an adequate opportunity of being made partakers of its blessings; it would plead more powerfully for its being suffered to exist, than all other reasons which have been urged in its favour.

V. 16—21. There are several unimportant variations from the law as delivered from Sinai; but the substance is entirely the same. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xx. 12—17.)

V. 22—27. Several particulars are here added which were not mentioned in the narrative; and all well calculated to illustrate the greatness of the consternation excited among the people, by the giving of the law from mount Sinai.—(Marg. Ref.—Note, Ex. xx. 18—20.)

V. 28, 29. When the people were impressed with the terror of immediate destruction from the voice of God speaking from mount Sinai, and were conscious that they could not *thus* approach him, but desired a mediator by

30 Go say to them, Get you into your tents again.

31 But as for thee, stand thou here by me, and 'I will speak unto thee all the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which thou shalt teach them, that they may do *them* in the land which I give them to possess it.

32 Ye shall <sup>a</sup> observe to do therefore as the LORD your God hath commanded you: <sup>a</sup>ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left.

whom he might speak to them; and when they promised to hear and obey that mediator; they spake well: and had they properly understood their own request, and been permanently disposed according to it, all would have proceeded and terminated happily. But the Lord, in very affecting and emphatical language, suggests that it was not so: for he saw that, though they were alarmed, they were neither duly humbled, nor prepared to receive in faith the promised Mediator whom Moses typified, nor disposed to walk in the ways of holy obedience. This language shews us what God *approves, delights in, and accepts*, as honourable to his name, right in itself, and profitable to his rational creatures: and is highly encouraging to those who are humbly desirous of salvation, and consciously willing to obey the commands of God; and who earnestly pray for grace to enable them so to do. For it evinces the Lord's readiness to assist and accept them; and shews that he does not delight in punishment for its own sake, but only when the righteous purposes of his government render it necessary; as the merciful prince does not delight in, yea indeed weeps over, the death-warrant, which a variety of important considerations render it indispensably necessary he should sign. But we should not attempt to infer any thing from such passages, respecting the conduct of God towards *impenitent* sinners, or the method of his dispensing his unmerited favours; for it is the evident intention of them to give us a practical, useful view of the subject, unencumbered with the niceties of speculation; and we should be very careful to admit nothing which tends to counteract that important design. (Notes, xxxii. 29. Ps. lxxxi. 13—15. Is. xlviii. 17—19. Ez. xviii. 23. Luke xix. 41—44.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

The word of God is spoken to us, that we may learn, retain, and practise it; for in this all religion is ultimately centred, and without it the whole is but a dead carcase, not only worthless but abominable. Of this practice the divine law is the universal, immutable, and everlasting rule: but we transgressors have no disposition, ability, or encouragement to obey that law, but what is derived from the new covenant of mercy and grace, made with us through the mediation of Christ. He continually stands between the holy God and the sinner who comes by faith in his name, both to ensure his acceptance, and assist his obedience. The words he once spake on earth are

33 Ye shall <sup>a</sup> walk in all the ways <sup>a</sup> which the LORD your God hath commanded you: that ye may live, and *that it may be* <sup>a</sup> well with you, and *that* <sup>a</sup> ye may prolong *your* days in the land which ye shall possess.

#### CHAP. VI.

Earnest exhortations to obedience, united with various instructions and cautions, 1—19. In what manner the children were to be instructed, 20—25.

NOW these *are* <sup>a</sup> the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which

written in the Scriptures; and from age to age sinners are invited to accede to his covenant, and share the promised blessings: which invitation cannot be finally refused, without ensuring eternal destruction; and nothing except such refusal can ruin us. But we must remember that good words may be spoken, good resolutions formed, and transient convictions experienced, nay, excellent words used in prayer, even by those who persist in unbelief through prevailing pride and love of sin. Of such we may say, "Oh, that there were such a heart in them!" But we should also add a prayer for ourselves, and for each other; and beg of the Lord that he would give us such a heart, "that we may fear him, and keep all his commandments always:" and we may present such a petition in faith, for the Lord delights in bestowing his blessings on those who have been taught to value them, and to seek them in the name of Jesus Christ.—Let sinners then tremble at this fiery law, and flee for refuge to the Saviour; let professed Christians examine carefully, whether their faith be accompanied with a desire of having that law written in their hearts, and reduced to practice in their whole conduct: and let believers make it more and more their study and delight, that they may do as the Lord God hath commanded them, without "turning aside to the right hand or to the left." Thus, by universal godliness, righteousness, temperance, patience, purity, and love, and an exact regard to every relative duty, they will best evince their faith, adorn the gospel, glorify the Lord, be useful to their fellow-creatures, entail a blessing on their children, and ripen for glory. In attending to these important concerns, we need repeated instructions and admonitions: let us then not deem it tedious frequently to hear, read, and meditate on the same truths and precepts. Let us learn to hallow the Lord's sabbaths, and set an example of attending on his ordinances: and, remembering that our servants are of the same nature with ourselves, and equally in need and capable of the same inestimable salvation, let us allow them also suitable relaxation from labour, and opportunity for hallowing the sabbath, and learning the way of peace and holiness.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1. Here and in similar passages, "the commandments" seem to denote *the moral law*; "the statutes," *the ceremonial law*; and "the judgments," *the judicial law*.

the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do *them* in the land whither ye <sup>a</sup>go to possess it: 2 That thou mightest <sup>b</sup>fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee; thou, <sup>c</sup>and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life, and that <sup>d</sup>thy days may be prolonged. 3 Hear, therefore, O Israel, <sup>e</sup>and observe to do *it*; that it may be well with thee, and <sup>f</sup>that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fa-

thers hath promised thee, <sup>g</sup>'in the land that floweth with milk and honey.

4 Hear, O Israel; <sup>h</sup>The LORD our God is one LORD.

5 And <sup>i</sup>thou shalt love the LORD thy God <sup>k</sup>with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

6 And these words, which I command thee this day, <sup>l</sup>shall be in thine heart.

7 And thou <sup>m</sup>shalt <sup>n</sup>teach them di-

Ex. iii. 8. h iv. 35, 36. v. 6. i Kings xviii. 21. l Chr. xxix. 10. ls. xlii. 8. xlv. 6. 8. xlv. 5, 6. Jer. x. 10, 11. Mark xii. 29, 32. John xvii. 3. 1 Cor. xiii. 4-6. 1 Tim. ii. 5. i x. 12, xli. 13. xxx. 6. Matt. xxii. 37. Mark xii. 30, 33. Luke x. 27. 1 John v. 3. k iv. 29. 2 Kings xxiii. 25. Matt. x. 37. John xiv 20, 21. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. l xi. 18. xxxii. 46. Ps. xxxviii. 31. Luke ii. 51. viii. 19. Gen. xviii. 19. Ex. xli. 26, 27. xlii. 14, 15. Ps. lxxviii. 4-6. Eph. vi. 4. sharp. m 2.—See on iv. 9, 10.—xi. 19. Gen. xviii. 19. Ex. xli. 26, 27. xlii. 14, 15. Ps. lxxviii. 4-6. Eph. vi. 4. sharp.

V. 4. The threefold mention of the divine names, and the plural number of the original word translated God, are supposed by many commentators, ancient and modern, to be a plain intimation of a Trinity of Persons, even in this express declaration of the unity of the Godhead, to the exclusion of the many lords and gods of the heathens, and in opposition to them. (Note, Gen. i. 1.) 'Some of the Jews themselves have thought there was something extraordinary in it, that the name of God should be thrice mentioned: . . . which signifies three *Midoth*, or properties, they confess, which they sometimes call *three Faces*, or *Emanations*, or *Sanctifications*, or *Numerations*; though they will not call them three *Persons*.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 5. The foregoing verse contains the first article of our creed; and this is "the first and great commandment," which briefly comprehends the whole of the first table of the law. The love of God perfectly consists with the fear of him before-mentioned (2): yea, the more we love him, the more we shall regard his authority, reverence his majesty, fear to offend or dishonour him, and be careful to render unto him that worship which he requires.—Human laws can only take cognizance of the outward conduct; but the law of the heart-searching God requires LOVE, the seat of which is in the inmost soul. That love comprises a supreme valuation of his infinite excellence and amiableness; an entire desire of the knowledge and enjoyment of him as our felicity; cordial delight in contemplating his manifested glories, and in worshipping and obeying him; lively gratitude for all his innumerable and invaluable mercies; zeal for his glory; and an ardent desire that all our fellow-creatures, in conjunction with us, may thus know, love, worship, obey, and serve him. These dispositions and affections are required to be as large as the powers of the soul itself, and to engross and fill the whole, to the entire exclusion of all *contrary* affections, and the regulation and moderation of all *other* affections, in entire subordination and subserviency to this governing principle: so that nothing should, in any sense, or in any degree, be loved by us, but for the Lord's sake, and according to his commandment. Thus are we *reasonably* required to "love the LORD our God," both for what he is in himself, what he hath done for us, and what he is and will be to us; and that uniformly, constantly, perfectly, and progressively.—Whatever our natural capacities may be, or to whatever improvements we may, in this or in a future world, attain, the Lord commands us to give him

the whole: and were our love thus perfect, our worship, obedience, and submission also would be perfect; nor could it ever possibly vary, or fall short of our whole strength and power, without a variation or diminution of this inward principle. Yet even this would admit of degrees and increase, from the first dawning of reason in the infant, (such as was the holy child Jesus,) in progressive enlargement to the highest possible exaltation of the angelick nature. For no creature, to all eternity, can ever love God in measure equal to his excellence, which is infinite as his incomprehensible being; but each might and ought to love the Lord, to the utmost extent of all the powers which the Creator has bestowed on him. This would at once secure to God the glory due to his name; and to his creatures, that felicity of which he hath formed them capable. Thus it is with angels in heaven; thus it was with man before his apostasy. But alas! the "carnal mind" of fallen man, "is enmity against God:" and as we all are by nature destitute of this love of God; we all love ourselves, the world, and our favourite sinful indulgences and pursuits, with all our heart, our mind, our soul, and strength, and therefore sacrifice every thing to these idols. But in regeneration—an internal revolution takes place; the usurpers are dethroned, the Lord himself takes possession of the heart, and becomes the *supreme* object of our love: yet so long as sin dwelleth in us, we never love God according to the full perfection of this precept; but our love in all the exercises and effects of it, is often interrupted, and at best comparatively languid. All, however, that comes short of this perfect love, is *sin*, and needs forgiveness; and therefore our best obedience can do nothing towards our justification. Yet this law is our standard: by progressive sanctification we are renewed in conformity to it; and "the spirits of just men made perfect" are, in this respect, already made equal to the angels in heaven. (Notes, Ex. xx. 3. Matt. xxii. 37. Mark xii. 28—34.)

V. 6. *In thine heart.*] That is, 'Let these words be treasured up in thy memory, rooted in thy judgment, and reigning in thy affections; that they may become habitually the subjects of converse and meditation, to the exclusion of all such as are of a contrary or inferior nature.'

V. 7—9. The Israelites were commanded to take every method of making the knowledge of the divine law familiar to them and to their families; that every object which

<sup>n</sup> Ruth ii. 4. 12. <sup>ly</sup> gently unto thy children, and <sup>n</sup> shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

<sup>o</sup> xi. 18. Ex. xiii. 9. 16. Num. xv. 38, 39. Prov. vi. 21. vii. 3. Matt. xxiii. 5. Heb. ii. 1.

8 And <sup>o</sup> thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

<sup>p</sup> xi. 20. Ex. xii. 7. Job xix. 23—25. 1a. xxx. 8. Ivi. 8. Hab. ii. 2.

9 And thou shalt <sup>p</sup> write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

<sup>q</sup> Gen. xiii. 15—17. xv. 18. xxvi. 8. xxviii. 13.

10 And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into <sup>a</sup> the land which he sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee <sup>r</sup> great and goodly cities which thou buildedst not,

<sup>r</sup> Josh. xxiv. 13. Neh. ix. 25. Ps. lxxviii. 66. cv. 44.

11 And houses full of all good things which thou filledst not, and wells digged which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive-trees which thou plant-edst not; <sup>s</sup> when thou shalt have eaten and be full;

<sup>s</sup> vii. 12—18. xxxii. 15. Judg. iii. 7. Prov. xxx. 8, 9. Jer. ii. 31, 32. Ez. xvi. 10—20. Matt. xix. 23, 24.

12 Then beware lest thou forget the LORD which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of <sup>t</sup> bondage.

<sup>t</sup> See on 2.—v. 29. x. 12. 20. xii. 4. Matt. iv. 10. Luke iv. 8.

13 Thou shalt <sup>u</sup> fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and <sup>v</sup> shalt swear by his name.

<sup>u</sup> Lev. xix. 12. Josh. ii. 12. Ps. xv. 4. Is. xlv. 23. lxx. 16. Jer. ii. 2. v. 7. xii. 16.

14 Ye shall <sup>x</sup> not go after other gods, <sup>y</sup> of the gods of the people which are round about you;

<sup>x</sup> vii. 19. xi. 28. Ex. xxxiv. 14—16. Jer. xxx. 6. 1 John v. 21.

15 (For the LORD thy God <sup>z</sup> is a jealous God among you;) <sup>a</sup> lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and <sup>b</sup> destroy thee from off the face of the earth.

<sup>y</sup> xii. 7. <sup>z</sup> See on iv. 24.—Ex. xx. 5. 1 Cor. x. 22.

16 Ye shall not <sup>d</sup> tempt the LORD your God, as ye <sup>d</sup> tempted him in Massah.

they beheld might serve as a memorial of it. Some think, that the subsequent directions should be considered only as figurative language, strongly enforcing the grand principle: but several of them at least seem to have been intended *literally*, according to the circumstances of those times; though the Jews in latter ages have run into a most frivolous superstition, by resting in the outward observance. Such external methods, however, may be less necessary at present, where copies of the Bible are cheap and numerous: but the duty of diligently teaching children from the word of God, and frequently and openly conversing together concerning it, remains the same. (xi. 18—21. Note, Matt. xxiii. 5—7.)

V. 12. Then beware, &c.] Notes, Ps. lxii. 8—10. Prov. xxx. 7—9. Jer. ix. 23, 24. Dan. iv. 28—33. Matt. xix.

17 Ye shall <sup>e</sup> diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee.

<sup>e</sup> 1, 2. xi. 13. 22. Ex. xv. 26. Ps. cxix. 4. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Tit. iii. 8. Heb. vi. 11. 2 Pet. i. 10—13. 14.

18 And thou <sup>f</sup> shalt do *that which is* right and good in the sight of the LORD; <sup>g</sup> that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest go in and possess the good land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers;

<sup>f</sup> viii. 11. xii. 25. 28. xiii. 18. Ps. xxx. 11. Is. iii. 10. Ez. xxviii. 5. 19, 21. 27. xxxiii. 14. 16. 19. Hos. xiv. 9. John vii. 29. Rom. xii. 2. See on iv. 40. v. 29, 33.

19 To <sup>h</sup> cast out all thine enemies from before thee, as the LORD hath spoken.

<sup>h</sup> Ex. xxiii. 28—30. Num. xxxiii. 52, 53. Judg. ii. 1—3. iii. 1—4.

20 ¶ And <sup>i</sup> when thy son asketh thee <sup>i</sup> in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD our God hath commanded you?

<sup>i</sup> See on 7.—Ex. xii. 26. xiii. 14. Josh. iv. 6, 7. 21—24. Prov. xxii. 6. + Heb. to-morrow

21 Then thou shalt say unto thy son, <sup>k</sup> We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt, and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.

<sup>k</sup> v. 6. 15. xv. 15. xxvi. 5—9.—See on Ex. xx. 2.—Neh. ix. 9, 10. Ps. cxxxvi. 10—12. Is. li. 1. Jer. xxxii. 20, 21. Rom. vi. 17, 18. Eph. ii. 11, 12.

22 And the LORD <sup>l</sup> shewed signs and wonders, great and <sup>l</sup> sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, <sup>m</sup> before our eyes;

<sup>l</sup> See on iv. 34.—Ex. vii. viii. ix. x. xii. xiv. Ps. cxxxv. 9.

23 And he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, <sup>n</sup> to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers.

<sup>m</sup> Heb. anal.

24 And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, <sup>o</sup> for our good always, that <sup>p</sup> he might preserve us alive, as *it is* at this day.

<sup>n</sup> 10. 18. i. 8. 35. See on Ex. xiii. 5.

25 And <sup>q</sup> it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.

23—26. 1 Tim. vi. 17—19. Jam. i. 9—11.—‘In all time... of our wealth;... Good Lord deliver us.’ Litany.

V. 13. As an act of religious worship, on important occasions, the Israelites were *commanded* to appeal to JEHOVAH by a solemn oath; and not to any of the imaginary deities of the nations around them. This command fully proves the *lawfulness* of oaths: for the unchangeable God could not expressly enjoin any thing, in itself contrary to his own moral law. (Note, Matt. v. 33—37.)

V. 14, 15. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xx. 4, 5. xxxiv. 11—17.

V. 16—19. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xvii. 1—7.

V. 20—24. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xiii. 8—10. Josh. iv. 20—24. Ps. lxxviii. 3—8.

V. 25. If the Israelites attended on the typical ceremo-

## CHAP. VII.

The nations of Canaan must be utterly destroyed, and no leagues or marriages made with them; in order to avoid idolatry, and because Israel was the chosen people of God, 1—8. Obedience enforced by the Lord's justice and mercy, and by promises of victory and prosperity, 9—24. Images to be entirely destroyed, 25, 26.

<sup>a</sup> See on iv. 38. vi. 1. 19. 23. ix. 4. xi. 29. xxxi. 20. Ex. vi. 8. xv. 17. Num. xiv. 31. Ps. xlv. 2. 3. lxxviii. 55. b Gen. xv. 18—21. Ex. xxxiii. 23. 24. xxxiii. 2.

**WHEN** <sup>a</sup>the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, <sup>b</sup>the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the

nies and sacrifices in a penitent and believing manner, and shewed that they were "without guile" in this respect, by a conscientious regard to all the other parts of the divine law; they would be accepted through the promised Redeemer, as if their obedience had been complete, though in itself it would be imperfect. On the other hand, by habitually neglecting any part of the law, their obedience in other respects would be rendered useless, and their partiality would evince their hypocrisy. (*Notes, Matt. vii. 21—27.*)

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The knowledge of the spirituality and excellence of the holy law is suited to shew sinful man his need of a Saviour, and to prepare his heart to welcome a gratuitous salvation: and the gospel is calculated to magnify and honour the law, not only in the perfect obedience of the Son of God to its holy precept, and in his willing subjection to its awful curse; but in bringing back apostate rebels and enemies, by repentance, faith, forgiveness, and renewing grace, to love God *supremely* in this world, and *perfectly*, even as angels love him, in the world above. In proportion as we possess that "faith which thus worketh by love," (*Note, Gal. v. 1—6.*) we shall delight in his commandments, ordinances, and people; we shall savour heavenly converse and heavenly exercises; and "our meditation of him will be "sweet."—But alas! that very conduct, which this chapter prescribes to Israel, could scarcely be reduced to practice among men called Christians, without exciting *almost* universal contempt and disgust! To be continually speaking of the truths and commands of God, upon our journeys, in our families, and in company; to make religion our first subject in the morning, and our last at night; and to quote Scripture on every suitable occasion, without reserve or apology, as those who glory and delight in it, would certainly bring upon us the charge of affectation, of enthusiasm, or of hypocrisy. This lamentably discovers to how low an ebb religion has fallen among professed Christians! but unless the truths and precepts of the sacred volume are indeed written in our hearts, and practised in our lives, all our profession or conversation will be but *lip-labour*, and justly condemned as hypocritical.—Though every condition in life exposes us to peculiar snares; yet none is so dangerous, and so commonly ruinous, as prosperity and

Jebusites, seven nations <sup>c</sup>greater and mightier than thou;

2 And when the LORD thy God shall <sup>d</sup>deliver them before thee, thou shalt smite them, <sup>e</sup>and <sup>f</sup>utterly destroy them: thou shalt <sup>g</sup>make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:

3 Neither shalt thou <sup>h</sup>make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

4 For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: <sup>i</sup>so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.

<sup>c</sup> See on iv. 38.—  
<sup>d</sup> iv. 1—3. xx. 1. 23. 24. iii. 8. xxxiii. 14. Gen. xiv. 20. Josh. x. 24. 25. 30. 32. 42. xxi. 44. Judg. i. 4.  
<sup>e</sup> xx. 16, 17. Lev. xxiii. 28. 29. Num. xxxiii. 52. Josh. vi. 17—23. viii. 24. ix. 24. x. 28. 40. xi. 11, 12. f xx. 10, 11. Ex. xxxiii. 32, 33. xxxiv. 12—16. Josh. ii. 14. ix. 18—21. Judg. i. 24. ii. 2. 2 Sam. xxi. 2.  
<sup>g</sup> Gen. vi. 2, 3. Ex. xxxiv. 15, 16. Josh. xxxiii. 12, 13. Judg. iii. 6, 7. 1 Kings xi. 2. Ezra ix. 1, 2. Neh. xiii. 28—27. 2 Cor. vi. 14—17.  
<sup>h</sup> vi. 5. xxxiii. 16, 17. Ex. xx. 5. Judg. ii. 11, 20. iii. 7. 8. x. 6, 7.

affluence; for pride, love of the world, forgetfulness of God, and disregard to eternal things, like poisonous weeds, naturally grow from our wicked hearts, when fattened (so to speak) with the manure of wealth. So that the greater favours we receive from a bountiful Providence, the more ungratefully we generally behave! Let none of us then be desirous or in haste to be rich. (*Note, 1 Tim. vi. 6—10.*)—Let those who are rich, or growing rich, tremble, "and beware lest they forget the LORD." Their danger is great, but "with God all things are possible:" let them seek to him for grace sufficient. If poor, let us learn to be content, and thankful for our safer lot: and instead of being anxious to get wealth for our children, (which is like building a wall to keep them out of heaven,) let us be careful to explain the scriptural truths, precepts, ordinances, and history to them and to all committed to our care; to make edifying observations to them on the occurrences of Providence; and to encourage their enquiries, by giving them plain, familiar, and full answers: endeavouring by every means to shew them the nature, reasonableness, and advantage of true religion; confirming the whole with the example of serious godliness, in every part and in every occurrence of life; united with an affectionate exercise of our authority, and fervent prayers for and with them. Thus will it be well with us and them; and we may hope for an incorruptible inheritance for them, and for ourselves, when all the wealth of this world shall be no more.

## NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1—4. The number and names of these nations, here vary from those which had been before mentioned. (*Note, Gen. xv. 18—21.*) In a long course of years many revolutions would take place; some tribes would be extinct, or incorporated with others, and some would have changed their names. But they were the posterity of the same people, inhabiting the same land; and they had now filled up the measure of their iniquities. Israel was therefore commissioned to execute divine vengeance: and they were not only *justified* in all they did; but they actually offended, and were themselves punished for not more entirely extirpating them. Yet they would by no means have been justified, if they had, from love of

1 xii. 2, 3. Ex. xxviii. 24. xxxiv. 13. 2 Kings xxiii. 6—14.  
 \* Heb. statues, or pillars xvi. 22. Lev. xxvi. 1.  
 † Judg. vi. 25, 26. 125 ix. 21. Ex. xxxiii. 20.

6 For thou *art* <sup>m</sup> an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee <sup>a</sup> to be a special people unto himself, above all people that *are* upon the face of the earth.

7 The LORD <sup>o</sup> did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; (for <sup>p</sup> ye *were* the fewest of all people;)

8 But <sup>a</sup> because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep <sup>r</sup> the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath <sup>s</sup> the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

9 Know, therefore, that the LORD thy God he *is* God, the <sup>t</sup> faithful God, <sup>u</sup> which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments, to <sup>v</sup> a thousand generations;

10 And <sup>w</sup> repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be <sup>x</sup> slack to him that <sup>y</sup> hateth him, he will repay him to his face.

11 Thou shalt therefore <sup>b</sup> keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day to do them.

b See on iv. 1. v. 82.—John xiv. 15.

conquest and thirst of dominion, carried on such bloody wars against any nation, not expressly included in their commission: their conduct therefore can form no precedent to others, nor in the least excuse the murder and rapine, which mad ambition has in all ages been committing. (*Notes, Num. xxi. 21—25. xxxi. 2.*)—The Lord was pleased in this solemn transaction, not only to shew his abhorrence of sin; but, by thus executing vengeance upon guilty nations, to teach all, who regard the Scriptures, the real cause of the heavy calamities with which, in the ordinary course of his providence, he punishes one kingdom after another.

V. 6—8. (*Notes, Ex. xix. 5, 6.*) The Lord chose Israel in the single person of Abraham: from him they were multiplied to seventy persons, when they went down into Egypt; and though they were very numerous in proportion when he brought them from thence, yet they were far less so than many other ancient nations; and probably than either the Egyptians from whom they were delivered, or the Canaanites whose land they inherited. (*Marg. Ref.*)

12 Wherefore it shall come to pass, <sup>t</sup> if <sup>e</sup> ye hearken to these judgments, and keep and do them, that <sup>d</sup> the LORD thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he sware unto thy fathers.

13 And <sup>e</sup> he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: <sup>f</sup> he will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

14 Thou shalt be <sup>f</sup> blessed above all people: there shall not be <sup>h</sup> male or female barren among you, or among your cattle.

15 And the LORD will take away from thee all sickness, and <sup>i</sup> will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee: but will lay them upon all *them* that hate thee.

16 And thou shalt <sup>k</sup> consume all the people which the LORD thy God shall deliver thee: <sup>l</sup> thine eye shall have no pity upon them; neither shalt thou serve their gods; <sup>m</sup> for that *will be* a snare unto thee.

17 If <sup>n</sup> thou shalt say in thine heart, <sup>o</sup> These nations *are* more than I, how can I dispossess them?

18 Thou <sup>p</sup> shalt not be afraid of them; *but* shalt well <sup>q</sup> remember what

† Heb. because. c xxviii. 1. Lev. xxvi. 3. d See on 9.—14. cv. 8—10. Mic. vii. 20. Luke i. 72, 73.

See on 7.—xxviii. 4. Ex. xxiii. 25. Ps. i. 3. xi. 7. cxliv. 12—15. John xiv. 21. xv. 10. xvi. 27. xxviii. 3—5. 11. 15—18. Job xlii. 12. Prov. x. 22. Mal. iii. 10, 11. Matt. vi. 33.

g xxxiii. 29. Ps. cxv. 15. cxlvii. 19, 20. h xxviii. 4, 11. Lev. xxv. 9. Ps. cxxviii. 8. i xxviii. 27, 60. Ex. ix. 14. xv. 26. Ps. cv. 36, 37. k See on 2.

l xiii. 8. xix. 13. 21. xxv. 12. Jer. xxi. 7. m xii. 30, 31. Ex. xxiii. 33. xxxiv. 12—16. Num. xxxiii. 55. Josh. xxiii. 13—16. Judg. ii. 3. 12. iii. 6. viii. 27. Ps. cvi. 36. 1 Cor. xv. 83.

n viii. 17. xv. 9. xviii. 21. Is. xiv. 18. xlviii. 8. xlix. 21. Jer. xlii. 22. Luke ix. 47. o Num. xxii. 32. Josh. xvi. 10—18.

p See on 1. 29—iii. 6. xxxi. 6. Ps. xxviii. 1, 2. xli. 1, 2. Is. xli. 10—14. q Ex. vii.—xiv. Judg. vi. 13. Ps. lxxvii. 11. lxxviii. 11. 42—51. cv. 5. 26—36. cxxxv. 8—10. cxxxvi. 10—15. Is. ii. 9, 10. lxiii. 11—15.

V. 9—14. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes, xxviii. 1—14. Ex. xxxiv. 5—7. Lev. xxvi. 3—12.*—*A thousand generations.* (9) 1 Chr. xvi. 15. *Note, Ex. xx. 6.*

V. 15. The Israelites, if obedient, would have been subject to no maladies but those common to fallen men, and generally very healthy and long lived; being graciously exempted from pestilential diseases, which often most tremendously scourge guilty nations; and from such maladies in particular, as they had witnessed in Egypt, by which God afflicted their cruel oppressors, but of which we know nothing with certainty. (*Ex. xv. 26.*) This must be referred to the *national* covenant: for though godliness commonly secures the most solid temporal advantages; yet temporal blessings were not, even among them, uniformly dispensed to *individuals* according to their obedience: but they were to the *nation*, with an exactness, which is not observed towards any other people. (*Note, Lev. xxvi. 3, 4.*)

V. 16—21. *Marg. Ref.*—*Hornet.* (20) *Notes, Ex. viii. 24, xxiii. 28.*

the LORD thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt;

19 The great temptations which thine eyes saw, and the signs and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the stretched-out arm, whereby the LORD thy God brought thee out; so shall the LORD thy God do unto all the people of whom thou art afraid.

20 Moreover, the LORD thy God will send the hornet among them, until they that are left, and hide themselves from thee, be destroyed.

21 Thou shalt not be affrighted at them: for the LORD thy God is among you, a mighty God and terrible.

22 And the LORD thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the field increase upon thee.

23 But the LORD thy God shall deliver them unto thee, and shall destroy them with a mighty destruction, until they be destroyed.

24 And he shall deliver their kings into thine hand, and thou shalt destroy their name from under heaven; there shall no man be able to stand before thee, until thou have destroyed them.

25 The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or gold that is on them, nor take it unto thee, lest thou be snared therein; for it is an abomination to the LORD thy God.

26 Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thy house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing.

r See on ix. 34.—  
xi. 2—4. Neh. ix.  
10, 11. Jer. xxxii.  
20, 21. Ez. xx. 6  
—9.

Ex. xxxiii. 28—  
30. Josh. xxiv.  
12.

Num. xi. 20. xiv.  
9, 14—22. xvi. 8.  
xxiii. 21. Josh.  
iii. 10. 2 Chr.  
xxxiii. 8. Ps. xiv.  
5, 7, 11. Is. viii.  
9, 10. Zech. ii.  
10, 11. 1 Cor.  
xiv. 25.

x. 37. xxvi. 8.  
1 Sam. iv. 8.  
Neh. i. 5. iv. 14.  
ix. 32. Zech. xii.  
2—6.

\* Heb. pluck off.  
x Ex. xxiii. 29, 30.  
Josh. xv. 63.

V. 22. (Note, Ex. xxiii. 29, 30.) The Israelites had been repeatedly commanded to attempt the immediate and entire extirpation of the devoted nations: as far as sloth, cowardice, or unbelief induced them to spare them, they sinned; and to punish this and their other sins, as well as to prove them, the Lord was pleased to permit a considerable remnant of these nations to remain among them. (Notes, Judg. ii. 1—5. iii. 1—4.) His conduct was the result of a settled plan; but this plan, being secret from them, was neither their rule, nor duty, nor motive.—Thus he commands the entire mortification of every sin, which is our rule of duty; and yet many intimations are given in scripture, that sin is never totally destroyed in this world, even in the best of saints: but it actually prevails much more, perhaps in all Christians, than it would, if they were more watchful and diligent.

V. 24. Their kings, &c.] Notes, Josh. viii. 29. x. 24. 28. xii. 7—24.

V. 25, 26. In detestation of idolatry, as utterly polluting the most precious things which had been abused in it, and in order to stop its hateful progress, the Lord gave his worshippers this self-denying command, totally to destroy even the valuable metals of the graven images, and all the rich ornaments devoted to them; yea, to detest and abhor them, on penalty of being themselves abhorred and accursed by the Lord. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Josh. vi. 17—19. vii. 1. 10—26. P. O. 10—26.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

All the commandments of God are equally the result of infinite wisdom, justice, and goodness; but not all alike level to our comprehension, and suited to our ideas. Assured, therefore, that the righteous Lord will not do unrighteously, but exercise his Sovereignty with perfect equity, whether we can perceive it or not; when he commands, it is our duty unreservedly to obey; and this is the never failing effect of true and strong faith. (Notes and P. O. Gen.

xxii.)—As the rebellion, ingratitude, and wickedness of man are so atrocious; it is more admirable that so many are spared, than that others are punished: and a proper understanding of the evil of sin, and of the mystery of a crucified Saviour, will enable us to perceive, in some measure, the justice of God in all the punishments, temporal and eternal, which he inflicts. We should, however, be thankful to be employed, not as executioners of his vengeance, but as the messengers of his love and compassion. We are called to exercise our severity against our own lusts: and with these enemies we must wage unrelenting war, and give them no quarter. Indeed this chapter strongly inculcates two most important lessons: namely, that being obedient we have no occasion to fear any enemies or events whatever; for our Redeemer from the dominion of sin and Satan will, “as a mighty and terrible One,” fight for us till all our foes be destroyed, and our victory and felicity be completed: but, on the other hand, we are most emphatically warned of the danger resulting from disobedience. This we must ever keep in mind amidst our greatest success, and even progress in grace; for we still continue frail and depraved, and liable to be baffled by temptation, and have therefore always need for vigilance and circumspection. Indeed, we shall not be able, after all, to extirpate our sins, except by little and little; nor must we expect that the conflict will cease, till we drop our bodies in the grave. But the more we live by faith, and watch and pray diligently, the less will they prevail and interrupt our enjoyments.—Not our merit or loveliness, but the Lord’s free love, (of which he has assigned no reason, but because he would love us and choose us for Christ’s sake,) forms the source of our salvation, and of all our consequent blessings; and therefore “he will never leave us, nor forsake us.” (Notes, Rom. v. 6—10. viii. 28—31. Eph. ii. 4—10. Tit. iii. 5—7. 1 John iv. 9—12.) But if we belong to this chosen remnant, (which hitherto hath been “the fewest of all people,”) we shall by this very

See on 2  
† Heb. before thy  
face. ix. 8.  
z ii. 15. vii. 20. 1s.  
xiii. 6. Jer. xvii.  
18. Joel i. 15.  
2 Thes. i. 9  
a Josh. x. 24, 25  
42. xii. 1, &c.  
b ix. 14. xxv. 19.  
xxix. 20. Ex.  
xxv. 14. Ps. ix.  
5. Prov. x. 7  
Jer. x. 11. Zeph.  
i. 4.  
c xi. 25. Josh. i. 5  
x. 8. xxiii. 9.  
Rom. viii. 37  
1 Cor. xv. 57.  
d See on 5.—xii  
8. Ex. xxxiii. 20  
1 Chr. xiv. 12  
Is. xxx. 22.  
e Josh. vii. 1. 21  
f Judg. vii. 24—  
27. Zeph. i. 3  
1 Tim. vi. 9, 10  
g xvii. 1. xxiii. 18  
Rev. xvii. 5.  
h xiii. 17. Lev.  
xxvii. 23, 29  
Josh. vi. 17—24  
vii. 1, &c. 11—  
28. Heb. ii. 9—  
11. Ze h. v. 4  
i Is. ii. 20. xxx.  
22. Ez. xi. 18  
Hos. xiv. 8.  
Rom. ii. 22.

## CHAP. VIII.

Exhortations and cautions, enforced by arguments drawn from the Lord's former dealings with Israel, and the good land intended for them; from the dangers to which they would be exposed; and from the effects of disobedience, 1—20.

**ALL** the commandments which I command thee this day shall <sup>a</sup>ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in, and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers.

2 And thou shalt <sup>b</sup>remember all the

<sup>a</sup> See on iv. 1. v. 32, 33. vi. 1—3. —Ps cxix. 4—6. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2.

<sup>b</sup> See on vil. 18. Ps. lxxvii. 11. cvi. 7. Eph. ii. 11, 12. 2 Pet. i. 12, 13. iii. 1, 2.

consideration be induced to render him the more unreserved, disinterested, and self-denying obedience, to the contempt of gold, and every earthly good, when they come in competition with his precept, or his glory. And should we ever be tempted, through covetousness, (that common idolatry which God abhors,) to do otherwise, we shall find that we have “brought an accursed thing and an abominable nation into our house,” which must be cast out with detestation, if we would not be an accursed thing like unto it. (Note, *Zech. v. 1—4*.) For we are continually reminded that the Lord is no more “slack in repaying them that hate him,” than willing to “shew mercy to those who love him and keep his commandments:” nor will he be more severe with any, than with avaricious, fraudulent, hypocritical professors of our holy faith.—We cannot be too compassionate to sinners, but we may easily be too *complaisant* to them: nor can we stand too much aloof from intimacies, alliances, or intermarriages with them; for that has ever been, and ever must be, a snare to the people of God. (Notes, 2 *Kings* viii. 26. xi. 1, 2. 2 *Chr.* xviii. 1. xix. 2.) Indeed all occasions of sin must be shunned; for our hearts are so inflammable, that we should fear every spark which may light upon them: nor can we be losers by renouncing such sources of gain, as expose us to those temptations, which experience shews to be too strong for us. For we shall enjoy the present felicity of the Lord's holy people, above all other people of the earth, in proportion to the number and value of those things, which we renounce for his sake; as Christ has promised his suffering disciples “a hundred fold more” in this present world, and in the world to come everlasting life.” (Note, *Matt.* xix. 29, 30.)

## NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1. *All the commandments.*] Note, *Matt.* xix. 16—22.

V. 2. The Israelites were *afflicted* and *proved*, in order that they might be *humbled*. They were not previously aware of the wickedness of their own hearts, and never suspected that they were capable of such crimes as they actually committed: but the Lord well knew all their latent evil propensities; and for their good, and that of multitudes in every age to the end of the world, he was pleased to put them to the proof; that upon full and fair trial their real character might be ascertained. (Notes,

way which the LORD thy God <sup>e</sup>led thee these forty years in the wilderness, <sup>d</sup>to humble thee, and to <sup>e</sup>prove thee, <sup>f</sup>to know what *was* in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

3 And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and <sup>g</sup>fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know, that he might make thee know, that man <sup>h</sup>doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.

c i. 33. ii. 7. xxxix. 6. Ps. cxxxvi. 16. Amos ii. 10. d 2 *Chr.* xxxii. 28. 26. xxxiii. 12. 19. 23. Job xlii. 5, 6. Is. ii. 17. Luke xviii. 14. Jam. iv. 6. 10. 1 *Pet.* v. 5, 6. e 16. xlii. 3. Gen. xxii. 1. Ex. xv. 25. xvi. 4. 2 *Chr.* xxxii. 31. Ps. lxxxix. 7. Prov. xvii. 3. Mal. iii. 2. 8. Jam. i. 3. 1 *Pet.* i. 7. f *Jer.* xvii. 9, 10. John ii. 26. Rev. ii. 23. g Ex. xvi. 2, 3. 12—35. Ps. lxxxviii. 23—25. cv. 40. 1 *Cor.* x. 3. h Ps. xxxviii. 3. civ. 28. *Matt.* iv. 4. Luke iv. 4. xii. 29, 30. Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

*Prov.* xvii. 3. *Jer.* xvii. 9, 10.) They were therefore led through a variety of difficult circumstances; and were favoured by manifold miraculous evidences of the Lord's special presence with them, and regard to them. They were sometimes thwarted, at other times indulged: they were brought into dangers and straits, and miraculously delivered: they were disappointed in many expectations, and favoured in many things beyond expectation: they were sometimes severely punished for their sins, that they might take warning; and at other times mercifully pardoned, that they might take courage. But the result of the trial undeniably was, that they were always prone to distrust, to murmur, and to be ungrateful: they were invariably disposed to depreciate their mercies, and to magnify their trials and difficulties as intolerable and insuperable; to limit the power and suspect the loving-kindness of the Lord, after all their experience of both; to lust, envy, and rebel; to mutiny, apostatize, and fall into idolatry. In short, it appeared that they were so stiff-necked and hard-hearted, that no patience, but the infinite patience of God, could have borne with them: nor could they be restrained from the most desperate rebellions, but by the terrible examples of thousands struck dead by the avenging hand of divine justice. All this had a direct tendency, when reflected on, to convert their self-admiration into self-abhorrence; to render them sensible of their guilt, folly, and weakness; and to bring them to a suitable conviction of their entire dependence upon the mercy of God for every thing, and their manifold obligations to him for his goodness to them in times past; and finally to produce and preserve that *poverty of spirit*, which is radically necessary to the life of faith and the walk with God. (Note, *Matt.* v. 3.)—They should likewise be considered as a fair specimen of human nature: any other people, any individual, proved as they were, would appear as rebellious as they do, were the result as impartially recorded. And every one's own experience will have the same effect upon him; except he view himself through a false medium, or be lulled asleep by carelessness, or intoxicated by pride: for none of us live one week, without renewed evidences of our own weakness, folly, and depravity.

V. 3. When all ordinary means of sustenance failed, and the people must have perished with hunger; at the word of the Lord the manna descended, and afforded them a suitable, sufficient, and constant supply. Their frequent

i xxix. 5. Neh. ix.  
21. Matt. vi. 25  
—30.

4 Thy <sup>1</sup>raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.

j See on iv. 9. 28.  
Is i. 3. Ez. xlii.  
3. xviii. 28.  
k 2 Sam. vii. 14.  
Job v. 17, 18 Ps.  
lxxxix. 32. xciv.  
12. Prov. iii. 12.  
1 Cor. xi. 32.  
Heb. xii. 5—11.  
Rev. iii. 19.

5 Thou shalt also <sup>1</sup>consider in thine heart, that <sup>k</sup>as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee.

6 Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to <sup>1</sup>walk in his ways, and to fear him.

v. 33. Ez. xviii.  
20. 2 Chr. vi. 31.  
Ps. cxxviii. 1.  
Luke i. 6.

7 For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land; <sup>m</sup>a land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths, that spring out of valleys and hills;

m vi. 10, 11. xi. 10  
—12. Ez. iii. 8.  
Neh. ix. 24, 25  
Ps. lxxv. 9—13.  
Ez. xx. 6.

8 A land of <sup>n</sup>wheat, and <sup>o</sup>barley, and <sup>p</sup>vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of <sup>q</sup>oil-olive and honey;

i xxxii. 14. 2 Sam.  
iv. 6. 1 Kings v.  
11. Ps. lxxxvi. 16.  
cxlii. 14. Ez.  
xxvii. 17.  
o 2 Chr. ii. 10—  
13. John vi. 9.  
13.

9 A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any *thing* in it; a land <sup>r</sup>whose stones *are* iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.

p Is. vii. 23. Jer.  
v. 17. Hos. ii. 8.  
22. Mic. iv. 4.  
Hab. iii. 17.  
• Heb. olive tree  
of oil.

10 When <sup>s</sup>thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God, for the good land which he hath given thee.

q xxxiii. 25. Josh.  
xxii. 8. 1 Chr.  
xxii. 14. Job  
xxviii. 2.

11 <sup>t</sup>Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day:

r vi. 11, 12. Ps.  
ciii. 2. Matt. xiv.  
19. John vi. 23.  
Rom. xiv. 6.  
1 Tim. v. 18.  
1 Tim. iv. 4, 5.

12 Lest, <sup>u</sup>when thou hast eaten and art full, <sup>v</sup>and hast built goodly houses and dwelt *therein*;

s Ps. cxi. 21. Prov.  
i. 32. xxx. 9.  
Ez. xvi. 10—15.  
Hos. ii. 8, 9.

13 And *when* <sup>w</sup>thy herds and thy

t xxxviii. 47. xxxi.  
20. xxxii. 15.  
Hos. xiii. 5, 6.  
u Ec. ii. 4. Jer.  
xxii. 14, 15. Ez.  
xi. 3. Am. v. 11.  
Hag. i. 4. Luke  
xvii. 28.

v Gen. xiii. 1—5.  
Job i. 3. Ps.  
xxxix. 6. Luke  
xii. 13—21.

murmurs and ingratitude, and their inability to help themselves, were calculated to humble them; and the unexpected method in which they were provided for, served to teach them, that the Lord was not confined to ordinary means, and that they needed not to use sinful methods of obtaining the necessities of life: for when he speaks the word, a supply will be sent in one way or another; and that word alone can entirely be depended on. (*Note, Matt. iv. 3, 4.*)

V. 4. The Israelites, doubtless, brought out of Egypt more raiment than what they had upon them; they might manufacture the fleeces of their flocks in the wilderness; and they might be favoured in Providence with other supplies: yet when we consider their immense numbers, their situation and long continuance in the wilderness, and the strong expressions here made use of; there seems no reason to question the constant and most extraordinary miraculous interposition of God in this respect, as well as in others. We may, however, safely reject the Jewish

flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied;

14 Then <sup>y</sup>thine heart be lifted up, <sup>z</sup>and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;

y xvii. 20. 2 Chr.  
xxvi. 16. xxxii.  
25. Jer. ii. 31.  
1 Cor. iv. 7, 8.  
z See on 11.

15 Who <sup>a</sup>led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, *wherein were* <sup>b</sup>fiery serpents and scorpions, and drought, where *there was* no water; <sup>c</sup>who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;

a See on i. 19—  
Ps. cxxxvi. 16.  
Is. lxiii. 13. Jer.  
ii. 6.  
b Num. xxi. 6.  
Hos. xiii. 5.

16 Who <sup>d</sup>fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that <sup>e</sup>he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, <sup>f</sup>to do thee good at thy latter end;

c Ex. xvii. 6. Num.  
xx. 11. Ps. lxxxviii.  
15. cx. 41. cxiv.  
8. Is. xlv. 7.  
1 Cor. x. 4.  
d See on 3.—Ex.  
xvi. 15.

17 And <sup>g</sup>thou say in thine heart, <sup>h</sup>My power, and the might of mine hand, hath gotten me this wealth.

e See on 2.  
f Jer. xxiv. 5, 6.  
Rom. viii. 29.  
2 Cor. iv. 17.  
Heb. xii. 10, 11.  
Jam. i. 12. 1 Pet.  
i. 7.

18 But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for *it is* <sup>i</sup>he that giveth thee power to get wealth, <sup>j</sup>that he may establish his covenant, which he sware unto thy fathers, as *it is* this day.

g See on vii. 17.  
h ix. 4. Is. x. 8—  
14. Dan. iv. 34.  
Hos. xii. 8. Hab.  
i. 16. 2 Cor. iv.  
7.

19 And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, <sup>k</sup>I testify against you this day, that ye shall surely perish.

i Ps. cxxxvii. 1, 2  
cxliv. 1. Prov. x.  
22. Hos. ii. 8  
k vii. 8, 12.

20 As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God.

iv. 26. xxxviii. 58  
—68. xxxix. 25—  
28. xli. 18, 19.  
Josh. xxii. 13.  
1 Sam. xii. 2a.  
Dan. ix. 2. Am.  
iii. 2. Zeph. i.  
18. iii. 6. Luke  
xii. 47, 48. xiii.  
8, 9.

tradition, that the garments grew along with the bodies of the young people; not because it is too difficult to be credited, but because it wants the warrant of scriptural testimony, and does not appear to have been in the least necessary: for the grown persons might wear the clothes of those who died, and the young might take theirs.

V. 5. The punishments inflicted upon the Israelites, though destructive to individuals, were national blessings, salutary to the survivors, and suited to warn them, and conducive to their preservation, and prosperity: even as a father chastises his son, not for his hurt, but that he may escape ruin, and be wise and happy. (*Notes, Ps. xciv. 12—14. Prov. iii. 11, 12. Heb. xiii. 4—13.*)

V. 6—20. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes, Ex. xvi. xvii. Num. xxi. 6—9.—Stones, &c.* (9) There were no mines in Egypt: this would therefore be a new thing to the Israelites. (*Job xxviii. 2.*)—*Beware, &c.* (11) *Note, vi. 12.—My power, &c.* (17) *Notes, 1 Chr. xxix. 10—19. Dan. iv. 28—33.*

## CHAP. IX.

Israel assured of victory, not for their righteousness, but through the wickedness of their enemies, 1—6: reminded of their rebellions, and of the Lord's mercies, 7—29.

**HEAR**, O Israel: Thou *art* to <sup>a</sup> pass over Jordan this day, to go in to possess <sup>b</sup> nations greater and mightier than thyself, <sup>c</sup> cities great, and fenced up to heaven,  
2 A people <sup>d</sup> great and tall, the chil-

dren of the Anakims, whom thou knowest, and of *whom* thou hast heard say, 'Who can stand before the children of Anak?'

3 'Understand therefore this day, that the LORD thy God is he which <sup>e</sup> goeth over before thee; as <sup>f</sup> a consuming fire, <sup>g</sup> he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face: so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the LORD hath said unto thee.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our obedience cannot be *sincere*, unless we "observe to do *all* the commandments of the LORD;" so that whilst any one is broken, with allowance and habitually, that is a conclusive proof of hypocrisy.—In order to sinful man's rendering to God acceptable obedience, he must be *humbled*, and *proved*, and made sensible of his weakness, sinfulness, and misery. And when the severest chastenings and the most painful experiences, effect this conviction, they are evidences of the Lord's special love, and of his merciful intention "of doing us good at the latter end," which should make us thankful for them. Indeed, it is impossible that we can be truly penitent, or believe in Christ and love him, or become meek, patient, and forgiving, or attain to any part of the Christian temper and character, without humiliation. Nothing indeed can render even the most suitable outward dispensations, and inward conflicts, effectual for these ends, without the sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God: but it is our duty to be often employed in "remembering all the way in which the LORD hath led us;" in recollecting the many evidences we have given of our own ingratitude and perverseness, and of the deceitfulness and wickedness of our hearts; and in considering the proofs which we have had of his power and love, in supplying our wants, extricating us out of difficulties, preventing the bad effects of our misconduct, and over-ruling for our good, events which appeared fraught with ruin and destruction. Hence we may learn to cease from self-confidence, and to trust in the Lord for every thing; hence we may draw arguments against sin, and motives to obedience; and learn to watch against pride, unbelief, and forgetfulness of God.—The food out of the earth, the water from the clouds, and the raiment new from year to year, which our God provides, calls for no less gratitude from us, than the miraculous provision did from Israel: and perhaps he does not suffer us previously to hunger, nor confine us to the same provision; but indulges us in a vast variety, which he was pleased to deny them.—The word of the Lord first gave to the earth its fertility, and still continues it; his blessing renders our food nutrimental: and did he command the air to sustain us, it would be equally obedient. He appoints the measure of our support, however sent; and his promise, that they who "fear him shall not want any good," is our only security for a future sufficient supply, till we arrive at our journey's end.—But in this respect, the believing poor have the advantage: as they more easily perceive their

provision coming from the Lord, in answer to prayer, and find less difficulty in simply trusting him for daily bread: so that they taste a sweetness in it, generally unknown to the affluent, while they are exempt from many of their temptations. For when men possess large estates, or are engaged in extensive and productive commerce; when their herds and flocks, and gold and silver, are multiplied; they find it very difficult to expect and receive their daily bread in simple dependence, prayer, and thankfulness; and to remember that the "Lord alone gives them the power to get wealth," so as to give him all the praise, and to use it all to his glory. When "they have eaten and are full, and have built goodly houses, and dwelt therein," they find the temptation to pride, to forgetfulness of God, and to love of the world, very strong: they are apt to fail in reducing to practice the humbling lessons which they had before learned; and are prone to grow careless, to spend their riches on themselves, and to neglect the one thing needful. (Notes, Jer. ii. 31, 32. Hos. xiii. 5—8.) This is a "slippery place," whence many are "cast down into destruction:" (Ps. lxxiii. 18:) let those who are placed on it "rejoice with trembling;" and let them "watch and pray always," that they may escape the fate of those multitudes, who have "utterly perished through their prosperity." Let us all be sober and vigilant, and persevere in prayer; for we tread a dangerous path: let us beg of God that we may rather be chastened with his children, than be left to grow secure in sin with his enemies: and may we be taught to hunger after, and feast upon the hidden Manna, and drink of the waters of life from the wells of salvation; encouraged to active, self-denying obedience by the prospect of "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for" all, "who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation." (Note, 1 Pet. i. 3—5.)

## NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1. It is generally supposed that Moses here began a new discourse; which he introduced, as he had done the first, with referring to some parts of the history of Israel: and afterwards, in the following chapters, he practically applied it to their consciences. But in the former discourse he mainly expatiated on the wonderful works of God; in this he dwells chiefly upon the wicked works of Israel.—By *this day* is meant, that the long expected time was just at hand.

V. 2. *Anakims.*] ii. 28. Notes, Num. xiii. 35. Josh. xi. 21—23. xv. 14.

<sup>x</sup> 8. vii. 7, 8. viii. 17. Ez. xxxvi. 22, 32. Rom. xi. 6. 20. 1 Cor. iv. 7. Eph. ii. 4, 5. 2 Tim. i. 9. Tit. iii. 5—5.

4 <sup>1</sup> Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the LORD thy God, hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the LORD hath brought me in to possess this land; but <sup>1</sup> for the wickedness of these nations the LORD doth drive them out from before thee.

<sup>i</sup> xli. 31. xviii. 12. Gen. xv. 16. Lev. xviii. 24, 25

<sup>m</sup> Gen. xii. 7. xiii. 15. xv. 7. xvii. 8. xxi. 4. xxviii. 13. Ez. xxxii. 13. Ez. xx. 14. Mic. vi. 20. Luke i. 54, 55. Acts iii. 25. xiii. 32, 33. Rom. xi. 28. xv. 8.

5 Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart dost thou go to possess their land; but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and <sup>m</sup> that he may perform the word which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

<sup>n</sup> See on 3, 4—Ez. xx. 44.

6 <sup>1</sup> Understand therefore, that the LORD thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it, for thy righteousness; for thou art <sup>1</sup> a stiff-necked people.

<sup>o</sup> 13. x. 16. xxxi. 27. Ez. xxxii. 9. xxxiii. 3. xxxiv. 9. 2 Chr. xxx. 8. xxxvi. 13. Ps. lxxviii. 8. Is. xlviii. 3, 4. Ez. ii. 4. Zech. vii. 11, 12. Acts vii. 51. Rom. v. 20, 21.

<sup>p</sup> viii. 2. Ez. xvi. 61—63. xx. 43. xxxvi. 31, 32. 1 Cor. xv. 9. Eph. ii. 1. 1 Tim. i. 13—15.

<sup>q</sup> xxxii. 5, 6. Ez. xiv. 11. xvi. 2. xvii. 2. Num. xl. 4. xiv. 1. &c. xvi. 1, &c. xv. 2—5. xxi. 6. xxv. 2. Neh. ix. 16—18. Ps. lxxviii. 8. &c. xcv. 8—11. B. C. 1491.

<sup>r</sup> Ez. xxxii. 1—6. Ps. cvi. 19—22.

<sup>s</sup> Ez. xxiv. 12, 18.

<sup>t</sup> 15. Ez. xxxi. 18. xxxiv. 28. Jer. xxxi. 31, 32. Gal. iv. 24.

<sup>u</sup> Ez. xxiv. 18. xxxiv. 28.

<sup>v</sup> 1 Kings xix. 8. Matt. iv. 2.

<sup>x</sup> 18. 1 Kings xiii. 8, 9. 2 Kings vi. 22.

<sup>y</sup> x. 4. Matt. xii. 28. Luke xi. 20. 2 Cor. iii. 3. Heb. viii. 10.

<sup>z</sup> iv. 10—15. v. 6—21. xviii. 16. Ez. xix. 18. xx. 1—18.

<sup>1</sup> 18.

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I prayed for Aaron also the same time.

21 And <sup>r</sup>I took your sin, the calf which ye had made, and burnt it with fire, and stamped it, *and ground it* very small, *even* until it was as small as dust: and I cast the dust thereof into the brook that descended out of the mount.

22 And at <sup>r</sup>Taberah, and at <sup>r</sup>Mas-sah, and at <sup>r</sup>Kibroth-hattaavah, ye provoked the LORD to wrath.

23 Likewise, <sup>r</sup>when the LORD sent you from Kadesh-barnea, saying, Go up and possess the land which I have given you; then <sup>r</sup>ye rebelled against the commandment of the LORD your God, and <sup>r</sup>ye believed him not, nor hearkened to his voice.

24 Ye have been <sup>r</sup>rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you.

25 Thus <sup>b</sup>I fell down before the LORD forty days and forty nights, as I

fell down *at the first*: because the LORD had said he would destroy you.

26 I <sup>c</sup>prayed therefore unto the LORD, and said, O Lord God, destroy not thy people, and thine inheritance, <sup>a</sup>which thou hast redeemed through thy greatness, <sup>a</sup>which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand.

27 <sup>r</sup>Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: <sup>r</sup>look not unto the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin;

28 Lest the land whence thou broughtest us out say, <sup>b</sup>Because the LORD was not able to bring them into the land which he promised them, and because he hated them, he hath brought them out to slay them in the wilderness.

29 Yet <sup>r</sup>they *are* thy people, and thine inheritance, <sup>k</sup>which thou broughtest out by thy mighty power, and by thy stretched-out arm.

<sup>r</sup> See on Ex. xxxii. 20. Is. ii. 18—21. xxx. 22. xxi. 7. Hos. viii. 11.

<sup>s</sup> Num. xi. 1—5. <sup>t</sup> Ex. xvii. 7. <sup>u</sup> Num. xi. 4. 34.

<sup>π</sup> i. 19, &c. Num. xiii. 1—3.

<sup>j</sup> See on Num. xiv. 1—4. 10—41. Is. lxiii. 10.

<sup>z</sup> i. 32, 33. Ps. lxxviii. 22. cvi. 24, 25. Heb. iii. 18. 19. iv. 2. <sup>a</sup> 6, 7. xxi. 27. Acts vii. 51.

<sup>b</sup> See on 16.

V. 21. *Marg. Ref.—Note, Ex. xxxii. 20.*

V. 22, 23. *Notes, Ex. xvii. 7. Num. xi. 1—3. 33, 34. xiii. xiv.*

V. 24. xxxi. 27. *Note, Num. xx. 10—13.*

V. 25. Some conclude that Moses fasted *three times*, forty days each; but there is no sufficient grounds in the narration to think that he did. This verse is evidently a resumption of the subject after a digression; such as are commonly found, where the heart is much engaged, and the speaker is more solicitous to impress the hearers for their good, than to gain their applause. St. Paul's epistles abound in such digressions, which sometimes obscure the sense even to the attentive reader.

V. 26—29. *Notes and P. O. Ex. xxiv. xxxii. xxxiii. xxxiv. Num. xi. xiii. xiv.*

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They who enlist under the Lord's standard, must neither despise their enemies, nor tremble at them. In themselves indeed they are formidable; but not to be dreaded by those who have an almighty arm on their side. Yet we should count our cost, and consider what our vocation will certainly expose us to, lest we should turn back in the day of battle. (*Notes, Luke xiv. 25—33.*) For unless we so value salvation as to be willing to venture, suffer, and sacrifice every thing for it, our profession will begin with hypocrisy, and probably end in apostasy. Such soldiers "the Captain of our salvation" wants not, and he therefore plainly tells us what we are to expect, even in as strong language as we can use in our most desponding moments. (1, 2. i. 27, 28.) But he engages to go before us as "a consuming Fire:" and in that case, hard things will become easy, and we may rejoice and triumph in our sharpest conflicts and severest trials.—So strong is our propensity to pride, that it will intrude under one pretence or another: and if it be evident that the

might of our arm has not gotten us our wealth, we shall be ready to conceive that our righteousness has merited and procured for us the special favour of the Lord; though in reality our wickedness be more evident than our weakness. To remove that ignorance or forgetfulness, which occasions the increase of this absurd self-adulation, ministers must labour and be willing to give offence, by declaring to the people their transgressions; and must not only lay the facts before their eyes, but argue from them, and apply the subject to their consciences for conviction.—When the secret history of each individual shall be produced at the day of judgment, "every mouth will be stopped, and all the world will be proved guilty before God." As we are spared in infinite mercy, we should anticipate that solemn season, and be glad of every assistance in reviewing our past conduct; that judging and condemning ourselves in this world, we may not be then judged and condemned of the Lord. For now One intercedeth for us before the mercy-seat, who not only *fasted* forty days, but *died upon the cross*, for our sins; through whom we may approach and supplicate for unmerited mercy, and eternal life as the gift of God in him. "For his sake," not "for our righteousness," but for "the praise of his glory," and according to the tenour of the covenant of grace, the Lord bestows these blessings upon us: and though we have the verdict of our own consciences as well as the testimony of God, against us, "that we have been rebellious" from the beginning of our lives, yea, stubborn and stiff-necked; yet when we humbly call on him, he will save us, write his law in our hearts, and not suffer our enemies to triumph in our destruction.—Alas! that even believers should have so many *Massahs*, and *Taberahs*, and *Kibroth-hattaavahs*, to remember: yet we should by no means forget them; but thence draw arguments for deeper humility, more lively gratitude, more simple dependence, and more earnest prayers for the grace

<sup>c</sup> Ex. xxxii. 11—13. xxxiv. 9. Num. xiv. 13—19. Ps. xcix. 6. cvi. 23. Jer. xiv. 21. <sup>d</sup> 29. xxxii. 9. Ps. lxxiv. 1, 2. Is. lxiii. 19. <sup>e</sup> vii. 8. xiii. 5. xv. 15. xxi. 8. xxv. 7, 8. Ex. xv. 13. 2 Sam. vii. 23. Neh. i. 10. <sup>f</sup> lxxvii. 15. cvii. 2. Is. xlii. 23. Mic. vi. 4. Tit. ii. 14. Heb. ix. 12. Rev. v. 9. <sup>g</sup> Ex. iii. 6. 16. vi. 8—23. xiii. 5. xxxii. 13. Jer. xiv. 21. <sup>h</sup> Ex. xxxii. 31, 32. 1 Sam. xxv. 25. Is. xliii. 24. 26. Jer. i. 20. Mic. vi. 19. <sup>i</sup> xxxii. 26, 27. Ex. xxxii. 12. Num. xiv. 15, 16. Josh. vii. 7—9. Ps. cxv. 1, 2. Is. xliii. 25. xlviii. 9—11. Jer. xiv. 7—9. Ex. xx. 8, 9. 14. Dan. ix. 18, 19. <sup>j</sup> 28. iv. 20. 1 Kings viii. 51. Neh. i. 10. Ps. xcvi. 7. c. 3. Is. lxiii. 19. <sup>k</sup> See on 26. iv. 34.

## CHAP. X.

Moses relates the mercy of God, in again giving the tables of the law, continuing the priesthood, separating Levi, and hearing his prayer for the people, 1—11. Hence he exhorts them to obedience, 12—22.

**AT** that time the LORD said unto me, <sup>a</sup> Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first, and come up unto me into the mount, and <sup>b</sup> make thee an ark of wood.

<sup>2</sup> And I will write on the tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest, and <sup>c</sup> thou shalt put them in the ark.

<sup>3</sup> And <sup>d</sup> I made an ark of shittim-wood, and <sup>e</sup> hewed two tables of stone like unto the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in mine hand.

<sup>4</sup> And <sup>f</sup> he wrote on the tables, according to the first writing: <sup>g</sup> the ten <sup>h</sup> commandments, <sup>i</sup> which the LORD spake unto you in the mount, <sup>j</sup> out of the midst of the fire <sup>k</sup> in the day of the assembly: and the LORD gave them unto me.

<sup>5</sup> And <sup>l</sup> I turned myself and came down from the mount, and <sup>m</sup> put the tables in the ark which I had made, and <sup>n</sup> there they be, as the LORD commanded me.

<sup>6</sup> ¶ And the children of Israel <sup>o</sup> took

their journey from Beeroth of the children of Jaakan to <sup>p</sup> Mosera: <sup>q</sup> there Aaron died, and there he was buried: and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in his stead.

<sup>7</sup> From thence they journeyed unto Gudgodah: and from Gudgodah to Jotbath, a land of rivers of waters.

<sup>8</sup> ¶ At that time <sup>r</sup> the LORD separated the tribe of Levi, to <sup>s</sup> bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD <sup>t</sup> to stand before the LORD to minister unto him, and <sup>u</sup> to bless in his name, unto this day.

<sup>9</sup> Wherefore <sup>v</sup> Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren: the LORD is his inheritance, according as the LORD thy God promised him.

<sup>10</sup> ¶ And <sup>w</sup> I stayed in the mount according to the <sup>x</sup> first time, forty days and forty nights: and <sup>y</sup> the LORD hearkened unto me at that time also, and the LORD would not destroy thee.

<sup>11</sup> And the LORD said unto me, <sup>z</sup> Arise, <sup>aa</sup> take thy journey before the people, that they may go in and possess the land which I swore unto their fathers to give unto them.

<sup>12</sup> ¶ And now, Israel, <sup>ab</sup> what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but <sup>ac</sup> to fear the LORD thy God, <sup>ad</sup> to walk in all his ways, and <sup>ae</sup> to love him, and

<sup>a</sup> 4. Ex. xxxiv. 1, 2 4.

<sup>b</sup> 3. Ex. xxv. 10—15.

<sup>c</sup> 5. Ex. xxx. 16—22. xl. 20. 1 Kings viii. 9. Heb. 9. 4.

<sup>d</sup> Ex. xxxvii. 1—9.

<sup>e</sup> 1. Ex. xxxiv. 4.

<sup>f</sup> See on ix. 10. Ex. xxxiv. 28. g ix. 13.

<sup>h</sup> Heb. words.

<sup>i</sup> v. 4—21. Ex. xx. 1—17.

<sup>j</sup> iv. 11—15. v. 22—26. Ex. xix. 18. Heb. xii. 18, 19.

<sup>k</sup> ix. 10. xviii. 16. Ex. xix. 17.

<sup>l</sup> ix. 15. Ex. xxxii. 15.

<sup>m</sup> See on 2—Ex. xxv. 16. xl. 20.

<sup>n</sup> Josh. iv. 9. 1 Kings viii. 8, 9.

<sup>o</sup> Num. x. 6, 12, 13. xxxiii. 1, 2.

<sup>p</sup> Num. xxxiii. 30—33. Moseroth. Hor-ha-gudgad. Jotbathah.

<sup>q</sup> Num. xx. 23—25. xxxiii. 39.

<sup>r</sup> Ex. xxx. 1, &c.

<sup>s</sup> Lev. viii. 12.

<sup>t</sup> Num. i. 47—53.

<sup>u</sup> in. iv. viii. xvi. 9, 10. xviii. John xv. 16. Acts xiii. 2. Rom. i. 1. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Gal. i. 15.

<sup>v</sup> Num. iii. 51. iv. 15. 1 Kings viii. 3, 4. 6. 1 Chr. xv. 12—15. 26. xxiii. 26. 2 Chr. v. 4, 5.

<sup>w</sup> xviii. 5. 2 Chr. xxiii. 11. Pa. cxxiv. 2. cxxv. 2. Jer. xv. 19. Ez. xiv. 11. 15.

<sup>x</sup> xxi. 5. Num. vi. 23—26. 2 Chr. xxx. 27.

<sup>y</sup> xviii. 1, 2. Num. xviii. 20—24. xxvi. 62. Josh. xiv. 3. Ez. xiv. 28.

<sup>z</sup> ix. 18. 25. Ex. xxiv. 18. xxxiv. 28.

<sup>aa</sup> Or, former days. in. 23—27. ix. 19. Matt. xxvii. 42.

<sup>ab</sup> Ex. xxxii. 34. xxxiii. 1.

<sup>ac</sup> Heb. go in journey.

<sup>ad</sup> Jer. vii. 22, 23. Mic. vi. 8. Matt. xi. 29, 30. 1 John v. 3.

<sup>ae</sup> v. 13. Pa. cxxviii. 1. Jer. cxxii. 39, 40. Acts ix. 31. 1 Pet. i. 17.

<sup>af</sup> See on v. 33.—Josh. xxi. 5. Ps. lxxxi. 13. Ez. xi. 20. Tit. ii. 11, 12. 1 Pet. i. 15, 16.

<sup>ag</sup> See on vi. 5—xi. 13. Matt. xxii. 37. Mark xii. 29—33. Luke x. 27. xi. 42. Rom. viii. 28. 1 John ii. 15. iv. 19, 20. v. 2, 5.

of God to hold up our goings in his ways; and for a more watchful walk, and a life more devoted to his service. This consideration should endear to us the compassionate Intercessor for sinners, and induce us to desire and value a place in the prayers of God's people: and we should also learn to compassionate and pray for our fellow Christians, and for all men; and "in meekness to restore such as "have been overtaken in a fault," and to encourage them, when they shew any hopeful tokens of repentance. (Note, Gal. vi. 1—5.)

## NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1—5. It is evident that the ark of the covenant, and not a temporary ark was here intended; for the two tables of the law continued in it, at the time when Moses delivered this discourse.—Probably, before he ascended the mount the second time, he gave express orders to Bezaleel to get the ark ready against he came down; and, having directed and ordered the making of it, he speaks as if he had made it: thus Solomon is said to have builded the temple, which he caused to be builded by the hands of others. Some however think, that Moses prepared the ark himself as made of shittim-wood, and

carried it up with the tables into the mount; and that Bezaleel afterwards covered it with gold. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xxv. 10—21. xxxiv. 1—3.)

V. 6, 7. These verses so break in upon the connexion of Moses's discourse, and give such an account of the names of places, that they perplex commentators. But several of the places mentioned seem to had more names than one: (marg. Note, Num. xxxiii. 30—39:) and some particulars, which for want of further information we cannot reconcile with other accounts, might be perfectly intelligible to the Israelites. It is evident, that Moses did not much regard exactness of method in this discourse: yet perhaps by some means a transposition has taken place; for these verses would come in more regularly after the eleventh verse.

V. 8, 9. [At that time.] Not after Aaron's death, but soon after the breach was made up, which the golden calf had occasioned. (Notes, Num. iii. 5—10. xviii. 20, 21.)

V. 10. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xxxiv. 8—10. 28.

V. 11. Notes, Ex. xxxii. 34, 35. xxxiii. 1—3. 12—16.

V. 12—15. Marg. Ref.—Notes, vi. 4, 5. vii. 6—8. Is. xli. 8, 9. Rom. ix. 4, 5. xi. 25—32.

<sup>e</sup> See on iv. 29.  
<sup>f</sup> vi. 24. Prov. ix.  
 13. Jer. xxxii.  
 29. Jan. i. 25.  
<sup>g</sup> 1 Kings viii. 27.  
 2 Chr. vi. 18.  
 Neh. ix. 6. Ps.  
 cxv. 16. cxlviii.  
 4. Ia. lxvi. 1.  
<sup>h</sup> Gen. xiv. 19.  
 Ex. ix. 29. Ps.  
 xxiv. 1. Jer. xxvii.  
 5. 6. 1 Cor. x.  
 26. 28.  
<sup>i</sup> See on iv. 37. vii.  
 7. 8.—Num. xiv.  
 8. Rom. ix. 13—  
 29.  
<sup>k</sup> xxxi. 6. Lev. xxvi.  
 41. Jer. iv. 4. 14.  
 Rom. ii. 28. 29.  
 Col. ii. 11.  
<sup>l</sup> See on ix. 6. 13.  
 —xxxj. 27. Jan.  
 i. 6. 7.  
<sup>m</sup> Josh. xxii. 22.  
 1 Chr. xvi. 26.  
 26. Ps. cxxvi.  
 2. Dan. ii. 47.  
 xi. 36.  
<sup>n</sup> Ps. cxxxvi. 3.  
 Rev. xvii. 14.  
 xix. 16.  
<sup>o</sup> vii. 2. Neh. i. 5.  
 iv. 14. ix. 32.  
 Job xxxvii. 22.  
 23. Ps. xcix. 3.  
 Jer. xx. 11.  
<sup>p</sup> 2 Chr. xix. 7.  
 Job xxxiv. 19.  
 Mark xii. 14.  
 Acts x. 34. Rom.  
 ii. 11. Gal. ii. 6.  
 Eph. vi. 9. Col. iii. 25. 1 Pet. i. 17.

to serve the LORD thy God \* with all thy heart and with all thy soul,

13 To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day 'for thy good?

14 Behold, <sup>a</sup> the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, is the LORD's thy God, <sup>b</sup> the earth also with all that therein is.

15 Only the LORD <sup>c</sup> had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, *even* you above all people, as *it is* this day.

16 <sup>d</sup> Circumcise therefore the fore-skin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked.

17 For the LORD your God is <sup>e</sup> God of gods, and <sup>f</sup> Lord of lords, <sup>g</sup> a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which <sup>h</sup> regard-eth not persons, nor taketh reward.

18 He <sup>i</sup> doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and <sup>j</sup> lov-eth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment.

19 <sup>k</sup> Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

20 Thou shalt <sup>l</sup> fear the LORD thy God, him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou <sup>m</sup> cleave, and <sup>n</sup> swear by his name.

21 He is <sup>o</sup> thy praise, and he is thy God, <sup>p</sup> that hath done for thee these great and terrible things which thine eyes have seen.

22 Thy fathers went down into Egypt <sup>q</sup> with threescore and ten per-sons; and now the LORD thy God has made thee <sup>r</sup> as the stars of heaven for multitude.

V. 16. Moses here cautioned the people not to rest in the outward seal of circumcision, by which they were distinguished as the professed worshippers of ЯЕHOVAH; but to seek earnestly that inward renewal to the divine image, and mortification of all depraved affections, of which circumcision was the outward sign, and which distinguishes the spiritual worshipper. (Notes, Rom. ii. 25—29. Phil. iii. 1—7. v. 3.) The figurative language here used denotes the removal of that blindness from the understanding, that obscurity and perverseness from the will, and that insensibility, carnal self-love, and idolatrous love of worldly things, which render us morally incapable of loving God according to his commandments, or profiting either by his mercies or his judgments. (Note, Gen. xvii. 9—12.) This change is therefore the subject both of promises and of precepts. As we ought to love God with our whole heart, it must be our duty to remove whatever prevents our thus loving him; and we are accordingly commanded to do so. (Ezek. xviii. 30—32. Acts iii. 19—21.) But we are, as fallen sinners, of a contrary disposition: and this contrariety to God and his law is *original sin*, the source of all our actual transgressions, and the very essence of guilt and misery; "because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither in deed can be: so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Note, Rom. viii. 5—9.) In this condition the gospel addresses us, with invitations, promises, and precepts: and when we are convinced of the reasonableness and necessity of the required change, and perceive our utter inability to effect it, we have recourse to the promises; and pleading them in prayer, as well as using all other means of grace, we wait on the Lord to work it in us; nor do we ever wait and trust in vain. (Notes, Ps. li. 10. Jer. iv. 3, 4. xvii. 14. xxxi. 18—20. Ez. xi. 17—20.)

V. 17. As the Lord did not "regard persons," the Israelites must expect, in case they imitated the crimes of the nations, on whom they were commissioned to execute the judgments of God, that he would find instruments at

length to inflict similar vengeance on them; notwithstanding those outward distinctions which they disgraced, and religious advantages on which they presumed. (Notes, Acts x. 34, 35. Rom. ii. 1—11.)

V. 18, 19. The universal care and kindness of God, in his providence, to persons of all nations and characters, are expressed by this language. He is represented as the universal Patron of all those, who are peculiarly exposed to oppression or ill treatment; as strangers are in a foreign country, of which the Israelites had had painful experience in Egypt. They were therefore required to imitate the example of the Lord who had been so kind to them, not that of the Egyptians who had been so cruel to them. (Marg. Ref.)—It is evident, that unproselyted gentiles are meant; who were no more of the religion of Israel, than the Israelites were of the religion professed by the Egyptians. Notwithstanding these plain precepts, the Jews in after ages were remarkable for their contempt, hatred, and ill treatment of other nations: and they deemed themselves justifiable in this conduct; which tended very much to their own ruin after the coming of Christ, as it hardened them against the gospel when preached to the Gentiles also.

V. 20—22. Marg. Ref.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The gospel of Christ, when truly believed, prepares the heart to receive, love, and obey the holy law of God; in imitation of him, who said, "I delight to do thy will. 'yea, thy law is within my heart.'" (Notes, Ps. xl. 6—8. John iv. 31—34. Rom. vii. 22—25:) and this forms the conclusive proof that our sins are pardoned, and that God is reconciled to us. And "what doth the LORD require of us," even by the strictest precept of the law, as given to his redeemed people through the hands of the Mediator, which should hinder us from delighting in his service? Having received so many mercies and favours, and having such gracious promises of assistance and acceptance, we cannot say that we want either motive, ability, or encour-

## CHAP. XI.

Love and obedience to God enforced from his past kindnesses, and the good land prepared for the people, 1—12. Conditional promises, warnings, and exhortations, 13—25. A blessing and a curse set before the people, with orders to publish them from mount Gerizim and mount Ebal, 26—32.

**T**HEREFORE <sup>a</sup> thou shalt love the LORD thy God, and <sup>b</sup> keep his charge, and <sup>c</sup> his statutes, and his judgments, and his commandments alway.

**2** ¶ And <sup>d</sup> know you this day: for I  *speak*  not with your children which have not known, and which have not seen <sup>e</sup> the chastisement of the LORD your God, <sup>f</sup> his greatness, <sup>g</sup> his mighty hand, and his stretched-out arm,

**3** And <sup>h</sup> his miracles, and his acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt, unto Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and unto all his land;

**4** And what he did unto the army of Egypt, unto their horses, and to their chariots, <sup>i</sup> how he made the water of the Red sea to overflow them as they pursued after you, and *how* the LORD hath destroyed them unto this day;

**5** And <sup>j</sup> what he did unto you in the wilderness, until ye came into this place;

<sup>a</sup> See on vi. 5. x. 12—xxx. 16—20. Ps. cxvii. 1. b Lev. viii. 35. Zech. iii. 7. c See on iv. 1. 5. 40. vi. 1.—Ps. cv. 45. Luke i. 74, 75. d viii. 19. xxix. 10. Prov. xxii. 19. Acts xxvi. 22.

<sup>e</sup> See on viii. 2—5.

<sup>f</sup> See on v. 24. ix. 26.

<sup>g</sup> See on vii. 19.

<sup>h</sup> See on iv. 34—viii. 19. Ps. lxxviii. 12, 13. cv. 27. &c. cxxxv. 9. Jer. xxxii. 20, 21.

<sup>i</sup> Ex. xiv. 27, 28. xv. 4, 9, 10, 19. Ps. cvii. 11. Heb. xi. 29.

<sup>j</sup> Ps. lxxvii. 20. lxxviii. 14, &c. cv. 30—41. cvi. 12, &c.

**6** And what <sup>k</sup> he did unto Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben; how the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households, and their tents, and all the <sup>l</sup> substance that *was* <sup>m</sup> in their possession, in the midst of all Israel.

**7** But <sup>n</sup> your eyes have seen all the great acts of the LORD, which he did.

**8** <sup>o</sup> Therefore shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day, <sup>p</sup> that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither ye go to possess it:

**9** And that ye may <sup>q</sup> prolong *your* days in the land which the LORD <sup>r</sup> sware unto your fathers to give unto them, and to their seed, <sup>s</sup> a land that floweth with milk and honey.

**10** For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, *is* not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and <sup>t</sup> wateredst *it* with thy foot, as a garden of herbs:

**11** But <sup>u</sup> the land whither ye go to possess it, *is* a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven;

<sup>k</sup> Num. xvi. 1, 31—33. xxvi. 9, 10. xxvii. 3. Ps. cvi. 17.

<sup>l</sup> Or, living substance which followed them. <sup>m</sup> Heb. at their feet.

<sup>n</sup> v. 3. vii. 19. Ps. cvi. 2. cxliv. 4—6. 12. ch. 3.

<sup>o</sup> See on viii. 10, 11. x. 12—15. xxvi. 16—19.—xxviii. 47. Ps. cxvi. 12—16.

<sup>p</sup> xxxi. 23. Josh. i. 6, 7. Ps. cxxxviii. 3. Is. xl. 31. Dan. x. 19. 2Cor. xii. 9, 10. Eph. iii. 16. &c. 10 Phil. iv. 13. Col. i. 11.

<sup>q</sup> o. iv. 40. v. 16. vi. 2. Ps. xxxiv. 12, &c. Prov. iii. 2. 16. ix. 11. x. 27.

<sup>r</sup> See on vi. 18. ix. 5. <sup>s</sup> See on Ex. iii. 8.—Ex. xx. 6.

<sup>t</sup> Zech. xiv. 18.

<sup>u</sup> See on vin. 7—9.—Gen. xxvii. 29. Ps. lxx. 12, 13. cv. 10—13. Is. xxviii. 1. Jer. ii. 7. Heb. vi. 7.

rage for obedience. His majesty and purity, and his excellent loving-kindness and mercy, render it equitable and reasonable, that we should fear and love him with all our soul; and from the united influence of fear and love, that we should obey his commandments, worship him in his ordinances, and walk in all his ways. His commandments are also for our good, and restrain us from nothing, but what is destructive of our own happiness, and that of others; and require nothing, but what conduces to inward tranquillity and present comfort.—In proportion as we obey his precepts, we bear his image, and reflect “the beauty of the LORD our God,” the beauty of his holiness, of his equity, truth, and love; of his compassion and condescension (though he is so highly exalted,) to the mean, to the vile, to the oppressed and wretched. And what pleasure so divine, what honour so exalted, what privilege so desirable, what ornament, praise, or distinction so great, as to have “the God of gods, and Lord of Lords” for our Father and our Friend, to walk with him, and be like him? “This honour have all his saints!” To this they are chosen: this is the fruit of his special love, the effect of his converting grace, and the earnest of eternal glory. Having had a delight in our believing ancestors, he has favoured us with his gospel above many of the nations of the earth; and he has continued the ministry of his word, and has had a remnant of believers, among

us hitherto, which may he increase to an innumerable multitude!—But let us fear coming short of his great salvation; for the Lord is terrible, as well as merciful; and, “without respect of persons, he judgeth according to every man’s work.” (Note, 1 Pet. i. 17—21.) Let us use the means of grace, and pray earnestly that he may circumscribe our hearts, and wash them from every wickedness: let us, without delay or reserve, come to him and cleave to him as our reconciled God in Jesus Christ, that we may love, serve, and obey him acceptably; and be daily “changed into his image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord.”

## NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1. This verse is the practical improvement of the conclusion of the foregoing chapter; while the next verse begins another view of the subject.

V. 2—9. Moses seems here to have addressed himself particularly to the *elders*, who had in their youth witnessed the wonderful works which the Lord had wrought both for them and among them; and who were bound to remember them for their own warning, and likewise that they might testify them to the rising generation who had not been eyewitnesses of them. (Notes, Ex. xiv. 26—30. xv. xvii. Num. xvi.)

V. 10, 11. Rain seldom falls in Egypt, (Zech. xiv. 18,

12 **A** land which the LORD thy God careth for: the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.

13 ¶ And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart, and with all your soul,

14 That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.

15 And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full.

16 Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them;

17 And then the LORD's wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit, and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the LORD giveth you.

18 ¶ Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart, and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.

19 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

20 And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thine house, and upon thy gates;

21 That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.

22 For if ye shall diligently keep all these commandments which I command you to do them, to love the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him;

23 Then will the LORD drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations, and mightier than yourselves.

24 Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness, and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your coast be.

25 There shall no man be able to stand before you: for the LORD your God shall lay the fear of you and the dread of you upon all the land that ye shall tread upon, as he hath said unto you.

19.) and the land is chiefly watered by the inundations of the river Nile; which generally cause great fertility, but also occasion the people much labour in digging trenches, and forming conveyances for the water into the different parts of the country, as if they were watering a garden. And especially the methods taken to prevent a famine, in case the Nile should not swell to its usual height, were indeed immensely laborious and expensive; but at the same time so successful, that entire famines have been seldom known since they have been used. In digging the canals and trenches, and in the various engines for raising the water, and pouring it out on the land, the foot as well as the hand must be frequently employed. But the Israelites in Canaan, "a land of hills and valleys, that drinketh water of the rain of heaven," would be entirely exempted from these labours.—Moses employs all kind of arguments to engage the people to obedience.

V. 12. These expressions imply that the fruitfulness of that favoured land arose from a special interposition of Providence for it, as the intended residence of his people. (Note, xxxii. 8.) At this day the same country

is remarkably barren, that special favour being withdrawn.

V. 13—17. The Israelites were here reminded, that the fertility of the promised land depended entirely on God; and that they would have no ground to expect this favour, unless they cleaved to him in love and obedience. But in this case he would certainly send rain in due season and proportion; especially the former rain to prepare the ground for the seed, and the latter rain to bring forward the harvest: but if they ran into idolatry, they must expect to be punished by famine and desolating judgments. (Notes, xxviii. 1—14. 24. Lev. xxvi. 3, 4, 19.)

V. 18—21. (Notes, vi. 6—9.)—The expression, "as the days of heaven upon the earth," denotes exceedingly long and prosperous lives to individuals, and the continuance of the nation in Canaan to the end of the world; which, doubtless, would have been the consequence of hearty, unreserved obedience. (Marg. Ref.—Note, Is. lxv. 21—23.)

V. 22—25. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. xv. 18—21. Ex. xxiii. 31. Num. xxxiv. 1—12.

xxx. 15—20. Gal.  
iii. 10, 13, 14.

26 ¶ Behold, 'I set before you this day a blessing and a curse;

xxviii. 1—14  
Lev. xxvi. 3—13.  
Pa. xix. 11. Is. i.  
19. iii. 10. Matt.  
v. 3—12. xxv. 31.  
&c. Luke xi. 28.  
John xiii. 17. xiv.  
21—23. Rom. ii.  
7. Jam. i. 26.  
Rev. xxii. 14.  
xxviii. 15, &c.  
xxix.  
Lev. xxvi. 14.  
&c. Is. i. 20. iii.  
11. Matt. xxv.  
41. Rom. ii. 8.  
Gal. iii. 10.

27 " A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day;

28 And \* a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God; but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods which ye have not known.

29 And it shall come to pass, when the LORD thy God hath brought thee in unto the land whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt 'put the blessing upon mount Gerizim, and the curse upon mount Ebal.

30 *Are* they not on the other side Jordan, by the way where the sun

xxvii. 12—26.  
Josh. viii. 30—35

V. 26—30. This significant ceremony is afterwards more explicitly commanded, and the blessing and curse enlarged on; and likewise the observance of it recorded. (Notes, xxvii. 12—27. Josh. viii. 30—35.) Gilgal was on the west side of Jordan, not far from the place where Israel passed that river; and the Canaanites dwelt over against Gilgal, near the plain of Moreh: (Gen. xii. 6 :) so that the blessing and the curse were to be pronounced nigh to the place, where Abraham the blessed had formerly resided. This appointment of it at this time was a pledge of Israel's passing over Jordan.—In this world we believe, and in part experience, that the righteous are blessed and the wicked are accursed: but beyond the grave the reality and extent of the blessing, and of the curse, will be more perfectly apprehended.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

There are certain grand principles in religion, which must be introduced upon every subject; and repetitions in respect of them are so necessary and becoming, that no learning, ingenuity, or eloquence can compensate for the omission. Such are repentance of sin; faith in Jesus Christ; whatever relates to his person, love, atonement, and grace; regeneration; love to God and man, and the future state of righteous and eternal retributions. The more full the heart of the speaker or writer is of "the good treasure," the more will he enlarge on these subjects; to the disgust of such as, under the influence of pride and worldly affections, savour not heavenly things. In one way or another they will be continually resumed, in connexion with every doctrine and precept; and as the practical improvement of every mercy or judgment, of every threatening, example, warning, or exhortation. Indeed they must be used as the bread and salt are to our meals; and they who are duly aware of their vast importance, will watch for opportunities of introducing them, being unwilling to relinquish the hope of gaining attention to them, as to matters of indispensable necessity.—All the Lord's kindness to us, all his wonderful works, his awful judgments, and his precious promises, are intended to

goeth down in the land of the Canaanites, which dwell in the champaign over against 'Gilgal, beside the plains of Moreh?

31 For \* ye shall pass over Jordan to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God giveth you, and ye shall possess it, and dwell therein.

32 And <sup>b</sup> ye shall observe to do all the statutes and judgments which I set before you this day.

z Josh v. 9. Judg. vii. 1.

a ix. Josh. i. 11. iii. 13—17.

b See on v. 32, 33. —xii. 32. Ps. cxix. 6. Matt. vii. 21 —27. xxviii. 20. Luke i. 6. John xv. 14. Thes. iv. 1, 2.

#### CHAP. XII.

Monuments of idolatry must be destroyed, 1—4.

A place must be appointed for sacrifices, oblations, and the holy things; allowing the people however to eat flesh in other places, yet without the blood; and reserving to the priests and Levites their portion, 5—28. The idolatries of the Canaanites must not be enquired after, 29—32.

induce our love and obedience to him; without which our faith is dead, our knowledge vain, our hope delusion and presumption, and we must be miserable for ever.—Upon condition of *perfect love and obedience*, the law of God sets before us a blessing; denouncing also a curse upon the disobedient: but we have broken the law, and are under its curse, without remedy from ourselves. (Notes, Gal. iii. 6—14.) In infinite mercy, however, the gospel again sets before us "a blessing and a curse: a blessing if we obey" the call to repentance, faith, and newness of life; but an awful curse, if we neglect so great salvation. (Note, Heb. ii. 1—4. xii. 22—25.) Let us then thankfully welcome these glad tidings of great joy; and "give the more earnest heed to the things that we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip:" let us not harden our hearts, but hear this voice of God while it is called to day, and while he so kindly invites us to come to him upon a mercy-seat. Urged on by fear of coming short, animated by hope of obtaining the prize, and drawn by love, let us "give diligence to make our calling and election sure." (Notes, 2 Pet. i. 5—11.) And recollecting all that we have heard, learned, and experienced of the Lord's power, faithfulness, righteousness, and mercy, from our very youth, let us bear testimony of them to the rising generation. Indeed we should make these the subjects of our daily converse, and endeavour to bequeath them as a legacy to our children: that they, as well as we, may be "strong in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," encouraged in fighting "the good fight of faith," made conquerors over every enemy, and obtain an inheritance in that better land, which the eyes of the Lord watch over, and the glory of the Lord shineth upon and blesseth, to all eternity.—We should not however forget, that we have no reason to expect even temporal comforts, personal, domestick, or publick; or the continuance of our external religious advantages, by which the Lord hath hitherto shewn his constant care of this land; except as we cleave to him in fear and love, and holy obedience: for in all things sin and misery are most closely connected.

**THESE** are <sup>a</sup>the statutes and judgments which ye shall observe to do in the land which the LORD God of thy fathers giveth thee to possess it, <sup>b</sup>all the days that ye live upon the earth.

2 Ye shall <sup>c</sup>utterly destroy all the places wherein the nations which ye shall <sup>d</sup>possess served their gods, <sup>e</sup>upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree.

3 And ye shall <sup>f</sup>overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, <sup>g</sup>and burn their groves with fire, and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, <sup>h</sup>and destroy the names of them out of that place.

4 Ye <sup>i</sup>shall not do so unto the LORD your God.

5 But <sup>j</sup>unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes, to put his name there, <sup>k</sup>even unto his <sup>l</sup>habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come :

6 And thither ye shall bring <sup>m</sup>your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, and your <sup>n</sup>tithes, and heave-offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your free-will offerings, and the firstlings of your herds, and of your flocks.

7 And there <sup>o</sup>ye shall eat before the LORD your God; and <sup>p</sup>ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein the LORD thy God hath blessed thee.

8 Ye shall not do after all <sup>q</sup>the things that we do here this day, <sup>r</sup>every man whatsoever <sup>s</sup>is right in his own eyes.

9 For ye are not as yet come to the <sup>t</sup>rest and to the inheritance, which the LORD your God giveth you.

10 But <sup>u</sup>when <sup>v</sup>ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and <sup>w</sup>when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that <sup>x</sup>ye dwell in safety;

## NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 2—4. (Note, vii. 25, 26.) Among these monuments of idolatry no mention is made of *temples*: and it is probable that the tabernacle in the wilderness was the first building ever formed, as a habitation for the Deity; and that a misunderstanding of its meaning and intention gave rise to the custom of building temples in after ages. (Note, Ex. xxv. 8.) Before this, men seem to have worshipped in *high* or in *shady* places, as favourable to contemplation, or as supposed to be peculiarly sacred to the Deity, which custom was in many countries retained long afterwards. But the Israelites were strictly enjoined to destroy every thing which could keep up the memory, that such and such places had been sacred to any particular idol; and even, as far as possible, to erase from the memory of man the very names of their false gods; that the idolatry itself might sink into oblivion, through all the land of their inheritance. (Note, Ex. xxiii. 13.) And especially, they must by no means imitate the Canaanites, by offering sacrifices in such places as they chose for themselves, however suitable they might think them for that purpose.

V. 5—7. The people had before been directed to bring all their sacrifices to the door of the tabernacle. (Notes, Lev. xvii. 3—9.) But at this time the general command was particularly explained, with reference to the promised land; and was expatiated on in a manner which evinced that it was of great importance. Idolatry and superstition would be prevented, and the true Object and prescribed method of worship adhered to, when all the sacrifices were offered at the same place, by the priests appointed for that purpose. Brotherly love and harmony in religion would be promoted, by the people thus constantly meeting together from every part of the land, and joining in sacred

ordinances. And the temple, sacrifices, priests, and especially the ark of the covenant, were typical of Christ, through whom alone God can be acceptably worshipped by sinners. Where the ark, in the most holy place of the sanctuary, was stationed by divine appointment; there the LORD “put his NAME” as the one living and true God, the God of Israel, “a just God and a Saviour.” (Ex. xx. 24.—Notes, Ex. xxxiv. 5—7. Is. xlv. 20—22.) There he made known his glorious perfections; and there *only* in ordinary cases, would he accept the sacrifices of his people; that they might feast before him with holy joy, as peculiarly in all things favoured and blessed by him. Yet prayer and praise might be offered any where, with reference to the sacrifices at the altar, and the sprinkling of the blood before the ark.—The place was not at this time appointed; for that was to be done after the people had got possession of the land. Accordingly, Shiloh was long the appointed place; and after some changes, Jerusalem was chosen for the purpose, and continued to enjoy that distinction till the crucifixion of Christ. (Notes, Josh. xviii. 1. 1 Sam. iv. 3—11. 19—22. Ps. lxxviii. 61—69. cxxxii. 7—9. 13, 14. Jer. vii. 12—15.)

V. 8, 9. The ceremonial observances were greatly interrupted in the wilderness, by the want of many things requisite to the due performance of them, when the people had no corn-fields, vineyards, or olive-yards; or by their constant removals: and many things were connived at, which were not according to the strictness of the law. It is plain, that in the best of times hitherto, many things have been neglected or defective in the church of God: and the typical meaning of these institutions was the main thing contained in them; for they were scarcely ever exactly observed in any age.

V. 10—14. Marg. Ref.—Notes, 5—7. xvi. 3—6.

<sup>c</sup> See on 5. xiv. 23.  
xv. 20. xvi. 2.  
18. xvi. 8. xviii.  
6. xxi. 16. xxvi.  
2. xxxi. 11. Josh.  
xviii. 1. 1 Kings  
viii. 13. 29. Jer.  
vii. 12. John iv.  
20—23.

<sup>e</sup> Heb. the choice  
of your vows.

<sup>i</sup> See on 7.—xiv.  
26. 27. 1 Kings  
viii. 66. 2 Chr.  
xxix. 36. xxx. 21  
—26. Neh. viii.  
10—12. Ps. c. 1.  
2. cxlviii. 1. 1 John  
i. 3, 4.  
<sup>u</sup> 19. xiv. 27. xvi.  
11. 14. xviii. 6.  
xxvi. 12.  
<sup>x</sup> x. 9. xviii. 1, 2.  
—See on Num.  
xviii. 20. 23. 24.  
26.—Josh. xiii.  
14. 33. xiv. 4.  
<sup>y</sup> 6. Lev. xvii. 3.  
4. 1 Kings xii. 28  
—32. xv. 34.  
2 Chr. xv. 17.

<sup>t</sup> See on 5. 11. Pa.  
v. 7. ix. 11. 2 Cor.  
v. 19. Heb. x.  
19—22. xiii. 15

<sup>a</sup> 21, 22. Lev. xvii  
3—5.

<sup>b</sup> xiv. 5. xv. 22.  
23.

<sup>c</sup> Gen. ix. 4. See  
on Lev. vii. 26.  
27. xvii. 10—13.  
—Acts xv. 29  
1 Tim. iv. 4.

<sup>d</sup> See on 6. 11. xiv.  
22—29. xxvi. 12.  
14. Lev. xxviii.  
30—32. Num.  
xviii. 21, &c.

<sup>e</sup> See on 12. 19.  
xv. 20.

11 Then there shall be <sup>a</sup> a place which the LORD your God shall choose, to cause his name to dwell there, thither shall ye bring all that I command you; your burnt-offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave-offering of your hand, and all <sup>a</sup> your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD.

12 And <sup>a</sup> ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and <sup>a</sup> the Levite that is within your gates; <sup>a</sup> forasmuch as he hath no part nor inheritance with you.

13 <sup>a</sup> Take heed to thyself, that thou offer not thy burnt-offerings in every place that thou seest:

14 But <sup>a</sup> in the place which the LORD shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt-offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee.

15 Notwithstanding, <sup>a</sup> thou mayest kill and eat flesh in all thy gates, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God, which he hath given thee: <sup>b</sup> the unclean and the clean may eat thereof, as of the roe-buck, and as of the hart.

16 Only <sup>a</sup> ye shall not eat the blood; ye shall pour it upon the earth as water.

17 ¶ Thou mayest not eat within thy gates <sup>d</sup> the tithe of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thy oil, or the firstlings of thy herds, or of thy flock, nor any of thy vows which thou vowest, nor thy free-will offerings, or heave-offering of thine hand;

18 But <sup>a</sup> thou must eat them before the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite that is within thy gates:

and thou shalt <sup>f</sup> rejoice before the LORD thy God in all that thou puttest thine hands unto.

19 <sup>a</sup> Take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite <sup>a</sup> as long as thou livest upon thy earth.

20 ¶ When the LORD thy God shall enlarge thy border, <sup>a</sup> as he hath promised thee, and thou shalt say, 'I will eat flesh, because thy soul longeth to eat flesh; thou mayest eat flesh, whatsoever thy soul lusteth after.

21 If the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen <sup>a</sup> to put his name there, be too far from thee; then thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which the LORD hath given thee, as I have commanded thee, and thou shalt eat in thy gates whatsoever thy soul lusteth after.

22 Even <sup>b</sup> as the roe-buck and the hart is eaten, so thou shalt eat them; the unclean and the clean shall eat of them alike.

23 Only be <sup>a</sup> sure that thou eat not the blood: for <sup>a</sup> the blood is the life; <sup>a</sup> and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh.

24 Thou shalt not eat it; <sup>k</sup> thou shalt pour it upon the earth as water.

25 Thou shalt not eat it; <sup>l</sup> that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, <sup>m</sup> when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the LORD.

26 ¶ Only thy <sup>n</sup> holy things which thou hast, and <sup>a</sup> thy vows, thou shalt take, and go unto the place which the LORD shall choose.

27 And thou shalt offer <sup>p</sup> thy burnt-offerings, the flesh and the blood, upon the altar of the LORD thy God: <sup>q</sup> and the blood of thy sacrifices shall be poured out upon the altar of the LORD thy God, and thou shalt eat the flesh.

28 <sup>a</sup> Observe and hear all these

<sup>f</sup> See on 7.—Ps.  
xxxiii. 11. lxxviii.  
8. Prov. iii. 17.  
Is. xii. 3. Acts  
ii. 46. xvi. 24.  
Gal. v. 22. Phil.  
iii. 1—3.  
<sup>d</sup> xiv. 27—29.  
2 Chr. x. 13, 14.  
xxxi. 4—21.  
Neh. x. 34—39.  
1 Cor. ix. 10—  
14.  
<sup>g</sup> Heb. all thy  
days. See on 1.  
See on vi. 24.—  
xix. 8. Gen. xv  
18—21. xxxviii.  
14. Ex. xxiii. 31.  
xxxiv. 24.  
<sup>f</sup> See on 15.—Gen.  
xxxii. 30. Num.  
xi. 4. 20. 34.  
2 Sam. xiii. 39.  
xxiii. 15. Ps.  
lxxiii. 1. lxxxiv.  
2. cviii. 9. cxix.  
20. 40. 174.  
2 Cor. ix. 14.  
Phil. i. 8. ii. 28.  
<sup>g</sup> See on 5. 11. xiv.  
23. 24. xvi. 6.  
11. xxvi. 2. Ex.  
xx. 24. 1 Kings  
xiv. 21. 2 Chr.  
xii. 18. Ezz. ii.  
12.

<sup>h</sup> See on 15.

<sup>i</sup> Heb. strong  
Gen. ix. 4. Lev.  
iii. 16, 17. xvii.  
11. 14. Matt. xx.  
26. Rev. v. 9.

<sup>k</sup> 16. xv. 23.

<sup>l</sup> —See on vi.  
40. v. 16.—Ps.  
cxii. 2. Is. iii.  
10. xlviii. 18, 19.  
Ez. xxxiii. 25.  
<sup>m</sup> See on vi. 18.—  
xlii. 18. Ex. xv.  
26. 1 Kings xi.  
38.

<sup>n</sup> 6. 11. 18. Num.  
v. 9, 10. xviii.  
19.

<sup>o</sup> See on Gen.  
xxviii. 20. Lev.  
xxii. 18. 1 Sam.  
i. 21—24.—Ps.  
lxxi. 13—15.

<sup>p</sup> See on Lev. i. 5.  
9. 13.

<sup>q</sup> Lev. iv. 30. xvii.  
11.

<sup>r</sup> Lev. 8.—See on  
Ex. xxxiv. 11.  
Lev. xix. 27.—  
2 Chr. vii. 17.  
Neh. i. 5. Ps.  
cv. 45.  
Ez. xxxvii. 24. John  
xv. 3. 10. 14.

V. 15, 16. *Marg. Ref.—Note, 22.*

V. 17, 18. *Tithes.* (17) This means the second tithe; (Notes, xiv. 22—29. xxvi. 12—15;) for the Levites received the whole of the other. (Notes, Num. xviii. 20—32.) In like manner every male firstling was the portion of the priests alone; (Num. xviii. 17, 18;) so that either the female firstling, or some other of their young cattle, being presented

as peace-offerings, were thus to be feasted on before the Lord.

V. 22. All animals slain for food in the wilderness, were ordered to be brought as peace-offerings to the door of the tabernacle; so that the unclean were in fact at that time forbidden to eat any flesh at all: (Notes, Lev. xvii. 10—16;) but this restriction was taken off when they entered on the promised land.—*The clean, &c.*] Notes, xv. 19—23.

See on 25.

words which I command thee, 'that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest *that which is good and right* in the sight of the LORD thy God.

29 ¶ When the LORD thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou 'succeedest them, and dwellest in their land;

30 Take heed to thyself 'that thou be not snared 'by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee: and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise.

31 Thou 'shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination 'to the LORD which he hateth, have they done unto their gods: for 'even

their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.

32 What thing soever I command you observe to do it: 'thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.

### CHAP. XIII.

Enticers to idolatry must be put to death, 1—5. Even the nearest relations must accuse them, and lead the way in stoning them, 6—11. Idolatrous cities must be utterly destroyed, 12—18.

IF there arise among you 'a prophet, or 'a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder;

2 And 'the sign or the wonder come to pass whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them:

3 Thou shalt 'not hearken unto the words of that prophet or that dreamer

z iv. 2. xlii. 18  
Josh. i. 7. Ps. cv  
xxv. 6. Matt.  
xxviii. 26. Rev.  
xxii. 18, 19.

a 1 Kings xlii. 18.  
Is. ix. 15. Jer.  
vi. 13. xxiii. 11.  
Ez. xlii. 2, 3.  
23. Zech. xlii.  
4. Matt. vii.  
15. xxiv. 11.  
Luce vi. 26.  
2 Pet. ii. 1.  
b Jer. xxiii. 25—  
28. xxvii. 3.  
xxix. 8, 24. marg  
Zech. x. 2.  
c xviii. 22. Ez. vii.  
22. 1 Kings xlii.  
8. Matt. vii. 22.  
23. xxiv. 24.  
2 Cor. xi. 13—  
15. 2 Thes. ii.  
9—11. Rev. xlii.  
13, 14.  
d Is. viii. 20. Acts  
xviii. 11. Eph. iv.  
14. 1 John iv. 1.

V. 29—31. Notes, Lev. xviii. 21. 24—30. Ps. cvi. 35—38. Jer. x. 2.

V. 32. Note, iv. 2.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We cannot serve God and Mammon, nor worship the true God and idols, nor depend upon Christ Jesus and superstitious or self-righteous confidences. No coalition ought so much as to be attempted in these cases.—True religion springs from the subversion of every false dependence, and the dethroning of every idol, and tends to the extirpation of every rival and opponent, that the Lord may be our only Portion and Salvation, and receive all our worship and obedience. Nor can we ever approach him with acceptance, but in the way which he has revealed, and in the ordinances which he has appointed; for neither our wisdom, nor our imagination, is in this case at all to be trusted. (Note, Ex. xxv. 40.) In Christ Jesus, as in the true Temple, "all the fulness of the Godhead dwells 'bodily;" to him we come by humble faith, and receive the pardon, the reconciliation, and the grace which he bestows from his mercy-seat: thus we learn to love him, to obey his commandments, and to present our spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, and every work of compassion and kindness performed for his sake. There we find acceptance of our imperfect services, and learn to delight in obedience; for the ways of our reconciled Father are "ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace:" and the repeated calls to "rejoice before the Lord," here, as well as in the New Testament, should be peculiarly noticed. (Notes, Phil. iv. 4. 1 Pet. i. 8, 9.) This holy joy will be excited in our hearts, and generally preserved and increased, in proportion as we abound in love and good works. But we must not be satisfied even with that measure of diligence, which passes current in the visible church; where too often many allow themselves, and are connived at by others, in "doing whatsoever is right in

"their own eyes." We must consider what the word of God requires: we must remember those primitive times, when "great grace was upon all" the company of Christians, and reflect how they lived; and we must by faith contemplate those who have arrived at their rest and inheritance, and endeavour to conceive how they love the Lord and rejoice in serving him, and be ourselves pressing forward after that perfection.—If we would have a comfortable use of our possessions, and be happy in domestic life, we should honour God with our substance, worship him in our families, and train up our children and servants to attend on all his ordinances. Nay, "whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, we should do all to 'the glory of God:" but this cannot be done, without observing the rules of strict temperance, and submission to Providence, in our use of his good creatures, and having all "sanctified by the word of God and prayer;" or without separating a portion for the poor, and for the provision of such as labour in the word and doctrine, and seek not an inheritance of temporal things among their brethren, and must therefore not be forgotten by them. We must likewise "do all in the name of Jesus Christ, "giving thanks to the Father through him:" and exercise in every thing that dominion over our appetites which becomes his disciples, and those who savour heavenly things. And it behoves us to watch against being ensnared by the examples, maxims, fashions, and persuasions of the world; for if we yield at all to them, even in the desires of our hearts, they will draw us into further abominations. But "whatsoever the LORD commands, that must we observe "and do, without adding to it, or diminishing from it," that "it may be well with us, and with our children after "us for ever."

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1—5. It is here supposed, that professed prophets would arise and "give signs and wonders,"

<sup>e</sup> See on viii. 2.—  
Ps. lxxvi. 10.  
Isa. lxxvi. 7. 1 Cor.  
xi. 19. 1 John ii.  
ix. iv. 4.

<sup>f</sup> See on vi. 5.  
2 Cor. viii. 8.

<sup>g</sup> See on vi. 12.—  
2 Kings xliii. 3.  
2 Chr. xxxiv. 31.  
Mic. vi. 8. Luke  
i. 6. Col. i. 10.  
1 Thes. iv. 1, 2.

<sup>h</sup> See on x. 20.—  
xxx. 20. Rom.  
vi. 13. 1 Cor. vi.  
17.

<sup>i</sup> xviii. 20. 1 Kings  
xviii. 40. Is. ix.  
14. 15. xxviii. 17.  
18. Jer. xiv. 15.  
xxviii. 15—17.  
xxix. 21. 22.  
Zech. xiii. 3.  
Rev. xix. 20.

<sup>j</sup> 10. vil. 4. Jer. i.  
6. Acts xlii. 8.  
2 Tim. iv. 4, 5.

<sup>k</sup> Heb. revolt  
against.

of dreams: for the LORD your God  
proveth you, to know whether ye  
love the LORD your God with all your  
heart and with all your soul.

4 Ye shall walk after the LORD your  
God, and fear him, and keep his com-  
mandments, and obey his voice, and ye  
shall serve him and cleave unto him.

5 And that prophet, or that dreamer  
of dreams, shall be put to death; be-  
cause he hath spoken to turn you  
away from the LORD your God, which  
brought you out of the land of Egypt,  
and redeemed you out of the house of  
bondage, to thrust thee out of the way

which the LORD thy God commanded  
thee to walk in: so shalt thou put the  
evil away from the midst of thee.

6 If thy brother, the son of thy  
mother, or thy son, or thy daughter,  
or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend,  
which is as thine own soul, entice  
thee secretly, saying, Let us go and  
serve other gods, which thou hast not  
known, thou, nor thy fathers;

7 Namely, of the gods of the people  
which are round about you, nigh unto  
thee, or far off from thee, from the  
one end of the earth, even unto the  
other end of the earth;

xvii. 7. xxx. 19.  
xxii. 21. 24.  
xix. 1 Cor. v.  
13. Heb. xii.  
14, 15.  
xvii. 2, 3. xxviii.  
54. Prov. xviii.  
24. Mic. vii. 5—  
7. Matt. xxi. 48  
—50. 2 Cor. v.  
16.  
m 1 Sam. xviii. 1.  
3. xx. 17. 2 Sam.  
i. 26.  
n Job xxxi. 27.  
Gal. ii. 4. Eph.  
iv. 14. Col. u. 4.  
2 Pet. ii. 1. 1 John  
ii. 26. 27. Rev.  
xii. 9. xiii. 14.  
xx. 3.  
o xxvii. 16—18.  
Judg. ii. 13. v.  
8. x 6. 1 Kings  
xi. 5—7. 2 Kings  
xvii. 30, 31.

(that is, predict remarkable events which would come to pass accordingly, or work apparent miracles,) and then endeavour to seduce the people into idolatry. Thus a divine interposition would be pleaded in support of a practice directly contrary to the first principles of true religion, as stated in the sacred Scriptures. But those first principles having been sufficiently demonstrated, and it being impossible that God should contradict himself; the Israelites were commanded to treat the prophet as a deceiver, and his apparent miracles and prophecies as impostures; and to consider that the Lord permitted such things, in order to prove whether they were cordially devoted in love to his worship, or were glad of a pretence for turning aside to idolatry. (Note, viii. 2.) Nay, they must put the deceiver to death without mercy.—The existence and perfections of the one living and true God are fully proved, by the works of creation and providence; the revelation made to Israel by Moses had been authenticated by the most publick and stupendous miracles; and the worship of JEHOVAH alone was the fundamental principle of that revelation. No miracles therefore could be admitted as a proof, that the people might violate the first and great commandment of the law, just before given from mount Sinai: for it was impossible such miracles could be wrought by JEHOVAH; and if wrought by another, he must be the rival and enemy of JEHOVAH.—Those things indeed in the law given by Moses, which related to the external forms of worship, being changeable in their nature, might be superseded by a future revelation; and here the evidence of miracles, if publick and incontestable, was admissible. Yet it is observable, that our Lord and his apostles did not rest the Christian revelation on miracles only, but they constantly appealed to the Old Testament; the prophecies and promises of which, when fairly interpreted, were suited to raise an expectation of exactly such a change in externals as they effected, and which at the same time fully established all the grand principles and requirements of preceding revelations. In all cases where the evident testimony of the sacred oracles is not evaded or contradicted, miracles may be considered as the seal of God, to the doctrine taught by those who work them: but when the grand principles of Scripture are opposed, they must be allowed insufficient to counterbalance the immense weight of evidence by which that has been authenticated.—We are too

much in the dark to determine exactly what created power can effect, and what are its limits: and it seems undeniable that Satan, if permitted, could produce changes in nature which would to us appear miraculous: or give intimations of events speedily to take place, which would seem prophetic: though neither of them would be at all worthy to be compared with the stupendous miracles recorded in Scripture, or the system of prophecy therein contained. But as we may be sure this enemy will never interpose to confirm the holy truths of Christianity, (Note, Matt. xii. 25, 26;) so we may rest satisfied, that God will not permit him to deceive his upright servants; though he may allow him to prove them, and to shew the difference between them and plausible hypocrites. (Notes, Matt. xxiv. 23—25. Rev. xiii. 8—10.)—As the revelation of the truth and will of God is now completed, we have no reason to expect miracles; though it is no where expressly declared, that no more true miracles shall ever be performed; and perhaps such may be wrought on some future very extraordinary occasions, as the fall of antichrist, the conversion of the Jews, or the calling of the Gentiles. But all the pretended miracles of the church of Rome, being performed in favour of idolatry, superstition, and antisciptural principles, claims, and practices, are so many proofs that she is the principal antichrist foretold in the New Testament. (Notes, 2 Thes. ii. 8—12. 1 Tim. iv. 1—5. Rev. xiii. 13—17.)—All impressions, visions, and revelations, or pretences to miraculous or prophetic powers, adduced in support of unscriptural tenets, are evidently diabolical delusions or human impostures: and if brought in favour of scriptural principles, they weaken the evidence of them, and disgrace the cause of truth. So far ought we to be, therefore, from listening to the vain reasonings of infidels or hereticks, against the authenticated doctrines and precepts of Scripture, that we should consider even apparent miracles wrought in such a cause, as only permitted in order to prove and try us. We are taught in the Scripture to expect that both profane scoffers, and pretenders to miracles, will thus assault us; and if we properly consider this, the fact itself will “turn to us for a testimony.” “Thus it is written, and thus it must be.”

V. 6—11. By this law, every Israelite was bound in conscience to inform against, to prosecute, and to assist at the execution of any one, even the nearest relation or

<sup>p</sup> Ex. xx. 3. Prov. i. 10. Gal. i. 2. 2. 1 John v. 21. 8 Thou shalt not <sup>p</sup> consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him;

<sup>r</sup> xvii. 2—7. Matt. x. 37. Luke xiv. 26. 9 But <sup>r</sup> thou shalt surely kill him: <sup>r</sup> thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people.

<sup>e</sup> xxi. 21. Lev. xx. 2, 27. xxiv. 14—16. 23. Num. xv. 35, 36. Josh. vii. 25. 2 Chr. xxiv. 21. 10 And thou shalt <sup>e</sup> stone him with stones, that he die; because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the LORD thy God, <sup>e</sup> which brought thee out of the land of Egypt from the house of <sup>e</sup> bondage.

<sup>\*</sup> Heb. bondmen. 11 And <sup>\*</sup> all Israel shall hear and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness as this is among you.

<sup>†</sup> Or, naughty men. 12 ¶ If thou <sup>†</sup> shalt hear *say* in one of thy cities which the LORD thy God hath given thee to dwell there, saying,

13 *Certain* men, <sup>†</sup> the <sup>†</sup> children of Belial, <sup>†</sup> are gone out from among you, and have withdrawn the inhabitants of their city, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which ye have not known; 14 Then shalt thou <sup>†</sup> enquire, and make search, and ask diligently: and

behold, *if it be truth, and* the thing certain, *that* such abomination is wrought among you;

15 Thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, <sup>b</sup> destroying it utterly, and all that is therein, and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword.

16 And thou shalt gather all the spoil of it into the midst of the street thereof, and shalt burn with fire the city, and all the spoil thereof every whit, for the LORD thy God; and it shall be <sup>c</sup> an heap for ever, it shall not be built again.

17 And there shall <sup>d</sup> cleave nought of the <sup>d</sup> cursed thing to thine hand: that <sup>e</sup> the LORD may turn from the fierceness of his anger, and shew thee mercy, and have compassion upon thee, and multiply thee, <sup>f</sup> as he hath sworn unto thy fathers;

18 When thou shalt hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, <sup>g</sup> to keep all his commandments, which I command thee this day, to do *that which is* right in the eyes of the LORD thy God.

<sup>b</sup> ii. 34. vii. 2. 14. Ex. xxiii. 24. Lev. xxvii. 28. Josh. vi. 17—21. 24. Judg. xx. 48. Rev. xviii. 18—24. xix. 2, 3.

<sup>c</sup> Num. xxi. 2, 3. Josh. vi. 26. viii. 28. Is. xvii. 1. xxv. 2. Jer. xlix. 2. Mic. i. 6. <sup>d</sup> See on vii. 26—Josh. vi. 18. <sup>e</sup> Or, devoted. See on Lev. xxvii. 28, 29—1 Cor. xvi. 22. <sup>f</sup> Josh. vii. 26. xxii. 20.

<sup>g</sup> Gen. xxii. 16, 17. xxvi. 4. 24. xxviii. 14.

<sup>h</sup> See on xii. 25. 28, 32. Matt. vi. 33. vii. 21. 24.

friend, who attempted to persuade him to idolatry. (Notes, xxxiii. 9. Ex. xxxii. 27—29. Matt. x. 37—39.) Yet it is observable that parents and husbands are not expressly mentioned, in the list of those who were to be thus accused; perhaps out of deference to the divine appointment of authority and subordination in families.—This singular institution would powerfully operate to produce an abhorrence of idolatry, and to render every one afraid of harbouring a thought in his heart, which he could not disclose to his nearest relations without risking his life.—Israel was under a peculiar covenant, of which idolatry was the grand forfeiture; and this could not be prevented from becoming a national sin, unless individuals, and even cities, that were guilty of it, were punished by publick authority. They were in a special manner under the government of God as a nation, and this crime was, as it were, high treason. They were also a single nation surrounded by idolaters, and prone to idolatry themselves in a surprising degree.—These reasons for punishing this crime by death do not now exist: and there is no command or precedent in the New Testament, commanding or authorizing magistrates to use the sword of publick justice, in punishing their subjects for matters *merely* of conscience towards God; nor does it seem at all to accord with the spirit of Christianity: much less can this law authorize persecution in general. Even the Israelites were not commanded nor allowed to punish idolaters as such; but merely apostates from the worship of the true God to idolatry, within the

limits of their own nation: nor were they required or allowed thus to propagate the worship of JEHOVAH.

V. 12—18. “The children of Belial” are rebels, who cast off the yoke of the divine law; for this is only another name for the children of the devil. (Marg. Ref. y.)—In case a report prevailed, that a whole city in Israel had renounced the worship of God and established idolatry; the rulers and magistrates were required first fairly to investigate the case: and if the fact were fully proved, they were commanded to slay all the inhabitants, and burn the city with all the spoil of it “as an accursed thing,” devoted to destruction, a sacrifice to the offended justice of God. Thus the same dreadful punishment was appointed for idolatrous Israelites, as they had been employed to inflict on the devoted Canaanites: and the city itself, like Jericho and the cities of Arad, must be so entirely destroyed, as never more to be rebuilt, except by an act of direct rebellion against God. (Notes, Num. xxi. 1—3. Josh. vi. 17—21.)—Many distinctions have been made, both by Jewish and Christian expositors, to abate the severity of this law; but the text gives no countenance to any of them. It should not indeed be supposed that the crime was charged on the city, unless a majority of the inhabitants concurred in it; or that any individuals who had entirely escaped the general contagion, might not separate from their guilty neighbours; and perhaps space might on some occasions be allowed for repentance. The destruction of the spoil would evince, that the prosecution and execution were not

## CHAP. XIV.

Israel must be distinguished from other nations in  
 a Gen. vi. 2, 4. their mourning, 1, 2: and in their diet, 3—21. A  
 Ex. iv. 22, 23. Pa. lxxviii. 6, 7. tithe of their increase to be eaten before the Lord; or  
 Jer. iii. 19. Hos. i. 10. John i. 12. the price of it to be spent at the appointed place in re-  
 xi. 52. Rom. viii. 16. ix. 8, 26. ligious feasting, 22—27: but every third year to be  
 2Cor. vi. 18. Gal. ni. 26. Heb. ii. given in works of charity and piety, 28, 29.  
 10. 1 John iii. 1, 2. 10. v. 2.  
 b Lev. xix. 27, 28. xxi. 5. Jer. xvi. 6. xii. 5. xlvii. 6. 1 Thes. iv. 13.

**YE** are <sup>a</sup>the children of the LORD your God: <sup>b</sup>ye shall not cut yourselves,

the effect of avarice, but of zeal for the honour of God and religion; and nothing can be conceived more suited to restrain the people from idolatry than this statute. (Note, vii. 25, 26.) But we never read that it was carried into execution; (Note, Josh. xxii. 12—16;) and have reason to think that this neglect was a national sin, which hastened the Babylonish captivity. Had some mortified limbs been cut off, the life of the state might have been prolonged. (Mic. i. 13.)

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is of the greatest importance to be well acquainted with the truths and precepts of revelation, and well established in them: for we may expect to be proved, not only with that trial of our faith which requires us to suffer, or to renounce our worldly interests, for conscience' sake; but by such plausible temptations as "Satan, transformed into an angel of light," can set before us, to impose upon us with evil in the guise of good, and with error in the appearance of truth: nor can any thing be effectually opposed to such temptations, but a plain, express testimony of Scripture. In order to render these temptations more dangerous, our crafty foe often sends them by persons, whom we have been accustomed to look up to as superiors, teachers, and men of God; or by those, for whom we entertain the most tender affection: the former we can scarcely think capable of deceiving, or of being deceived; to the latter, we can hardly find in our hearts to refuse any request. But we must remember, that in all this "the LORD our God doth prove us;" he is our Master, and we must call no man master upon earth: if therefore the servant contradicts the Lord, we must believe the latter and not the former.—The love and duty which we owe to God are so immensely superior to all other obligations, that we must act even towards our dearest friends, as though we hated them, when his command or his glory requires it. (Note, Luke xiv. 25—27.) And if the offending relative must not be spared or pitied, but be put to death, according to the law of God; surely we are called upon, not only to refuse compliance with those temptations which are enforced by our relations, but plainly to protest against the dangerous tempters, sharply to reprove them, and if we cannot reclaim them, to renounce their friendship.—Nor must we more regard the examples of multitudes, who establish *fashions* of ungodliness, and put piety out of countenance, as singularity, preciseness, or unnecessary scrupulosity. Still we must "cleave to the LORD, and love him, and walk after him," and not after the world; keeping his commandments, and attending on his worship, however others revile or ridicule us for our adherence to

nor make any baldness between your eyes, for the dead:

2 For <sup>a</sup>thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth.

3 Thou shalt not <sup>a</sup>eat any abominable thing.

4 These are <sup>a</sup>the beasts which ye

them.—The fear and service of God form the true interest of communities as well as of individuals; and the progress of ungodliness precedes the approach of public calamities, both in the nature of things, and in the just judgment of God. The magistrate therefore, in good policy as well as in duty, is bound to employ his authority to repress wickedness and promote religion; which may be done by various means, without wielding the persecutor's sword, or violating the rights of private judgment and liberty of conscience; especially by countenancing and encouraging the faithful preaching of God's word. But the end of all human punishments, yea, of all the threatenings and judgments of God, is this; "that men should hear and fear," and repent, and forsake their sins, "that the fierce wrath of God" may be averted from individuals, and from nations.—However enormous any crime may be, and however necessary the punishment of it, none must be proceeded against without diligent investigation and full proof: and every one concerned in the prosecution of criminals, should be careful to make it evident, that he is influenced, not by *selfish* motives, but by a regard to public justice. Yet they who connive at and conceal those enormous crimes, which ought to be punished by the magistrate, become partakers of the guilt, and the obstinate in wickedness are near destruction: we must therefore separate from them if we would escape their doom.—But we should carefully observe, that we have even greater cause to fear the wrath of our holy Lord God, under the Christian dispensation, than the Israelites had; because those spiritual judgments, now inflicted, are infinitely more terrible than the most solemn execution of criminals by the sword of justice; and the more entirely the wicked escape punishment in this world, the greater will be their misery in the world to come.—Let us then fear the *spiritual* idolatry of covetousness, and the love of worldly pleasure; and be careful not to countenance them in our families, by our example, or by the education of our children: and may we also "abstain from all appearance of evil," and in every thing "do that which is right in the eyes of the LORD our God."

## NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1, 2. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xix. 5, 6. Lev. xix. 27—29.

V. 3—20. (Notes, Lev. xi.) The word rendered "the pygarg" (5) marks out a kind of deer, the hinder parts of which are white: "the wild ox" is generally called the *buffalo*: "the chamois" is supposed to be a kind of goat, remarkable for jumping as it walks or runs; called also the *camelopardalis*.

shall eat: the ox, the sheep, and the goat,

5 The hart, and the roe-buck, and the fallow-deer, and the wild goat, and the <sup>a</sup>pygarg, and the wild ox, and the chamois:

<sup>a</sup> Or, bison. Heb dishon.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. i. 1, 2. Prov. xviii. 1. 2 Cor vi. 17.

6 And every beast that <sup>f</sup>parteth the hoof, and cleaveth the cleft into two claws, *and* cheweth the cud, among the beasts; that ye shall eat.

<sup>g</sup> Matt. vii. 22, 23. 26. 2 Tim. iii. 5. Tit. i. 16. 2 Pet. ii. 18—22.

7 Nevertheless, these <sup>g</sup>ye shall not eat, of them that chew the cud, or of them that divide the cloven hoof; *as* the camel, and the hare, and the coney: for they chew the cud, but divide not the hoof; *therefore* they *are* unclean unto you.

<sup>h</sup> Is. lxx. 4. Lev. 3. 17. Luke xv. 15, 16. 2 Pet. ii. 22.

8 And <sup>h</sup>the swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud, it *is* unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor <sup>i</sup>touch their dead carcase.

<sup>i</sup> Lev. xi. 26, 27.

9 These <sup>j</sup>ye shall eat of all that *are* in the waters: all that have fins and scales shall ye eat.

<sup>j</sup> See on Lev. xi. 9—12.

10 And whatsoever hath not fins and scales ye may not eat; it *is* unclean unto you.

11 *Of* all clean birds ye shall eat.

<sup>k</sup> See on Lev. xi. 13—19.

12 But <sup>k</sup>these *are* *they* of which ye shall not eat: the eagle, and the ossifrage, and the ospray,

13 And the glede, and the kite, and the vulture after his kind,

14 And every raven after his kind,

15 And the owl, and the night hawk, and the cuckow, and the hawk after his kind,

16 The little owl, and the great owl, and the swan,

17 And the pelican, and the gier-eagle, and the cormorant,

18 And the stork, and the heron after her kind, and the lapwing, and the bat.

<sup>l</sup> Lev. xi. 20—23. Phil. iii. 19.

19 And <sup>l</sup>every creeping thing that

lieth *is* unclean unto you: they shall not be eaten.

20 *But of* all clean fowls ye may eat.

21 Ye shall not eat of <sup>m</sup>any thing that dieth of itself: thou shalt give it unto <sup>n</sup>the stranger that *is* in thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest sell it unto an alien: for thou *art* <sup>o</sup>an holy people unto the LORD thy God. <sup>p</sup>Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.

<sup>m</sup> Lev. xvii. 15. xxii. 8. Ez. iv. 14. Acts xv. 20.

<sup>n</sup> Ex. xii. 43—45. Lev. xix. 33, 34.

<sup>o</sup> See on 2.—Dan. vii. 24. xli. 7. 1 Pet. i. 16. <sup>p</sup> Ex. xxiii. 19. xxxiv. 26. Rom. xii. 2.

22 ¶ Thou shalt <sup>q</sup>truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year.

<sup>q</sup> xxvi. 12—15. Lev. xxvii. 30—33. Num. xviii. 21. Neh. x. 37.

23 And thou shalt <sup>r</sup>eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds, and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always.

<sup>r</sup> xii. 5—7. 17, 18. xv. 19, 20.

24 And if the way be too long for thee, so that thou art not able to carry it; *or* <sup>s</sup>if the place be too far from thee, <sup>t</sup>which the LORD thy God shall choose to set his name there, when the LORD thy God hath blessed thee:

<sup>s</sup> xi. 24. xii. 21. Ex. xxiii. 31. <sup>t</sup> See on xii. 5.

25 Then shalt thou turn *it* into money, and bind up the money in thine hand, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose.

26 And thou shalt <sup>u</sup>bestow that money for whatsoever <sup>v</sup>thy soul lusteth after, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul <sup>w</sup>desireth: and <sup>x</sup>thou shalt eat there before the LORD thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou and thine household;

<sup>u</sup> Ezr. vii. 15—17. 22. Matt. xxi. 12. Mark xi. 15. John ii. 14—16. xii. 15. 20, 21. Ps. cvi. 14. 1 Cor. vi. 12, 13. x. 5.

27 And <sup>y</sup>the Levite that *is* within thy gates, thou shalt not forsake him: for <sup>z</sup>he hath no part nor inheritance with thee.

<sup>v</sup> Heb. *asketh of thee*.

<sup>x</sup> xii. 7. 12. 18. xxvi. 11.

<sup>y</sup> 29. xii. 12. 19. Gal. vi. 6. 1 Tim. v. 17.

<sup>z</sup> 29. xviii. 1, 2. Num. xviii. 20.

28 At <sup>a</sup>the end of three years thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine

<sup>a</sup> See on 22.—xxvi. 12—18. Am. iv. 4.

V. 21. The allowance to give the flesh of any animal, that died of itself, to a *poor sojourner*; or to sell it to an alien, either journeying through the country, or living on the borders of it; proves beyond controversy, that the law restricting diet was entirely *ceremonial*, though it conveyed moral instruction, and answered at that time valuable religious purposes: for, had the obligation to abstain from certain meats been of a moral nature, disregard to it would

have been sinful in heathens as well as in Israelites; and these must no more be accessory to the commission of sin by others, than commit it themselves. It should also be observed, that as the blood was not separated from these animals, so this allowance likewise proves, that the restriction from eating blood is not of *moral* obligation. (*Note*, Lev. xvii. 10—16.)

V. 22—29. (*Notes*, xii. 17, 18. xxvi. 12—15.) These

increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates.

29 And the Levite, (because he hath no part nor inheritance with thee,) and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat and be satisfied; that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand which thou doest.

#### CHAP. XV.

On the seventh year the debts of the poor must be remitted; nevertheless the people must give and lend liberally, 1—11. Hebrew servants must be released in the seventh year, unless unwilling to depart,

verses require a second tithe from the produce of the land, which, with that appropriated for the maintenance of the Levites, amounted to a fifth part. Two years together the people were commanded to bring this second tithe to Jerusalem, either in kind or in money; and to feast upon it religiously before the Lord, that they might be drawn to spend the more time at the temple, in the society of the priests, at the ordinances of God, and among their brethren. But the third year they were required to spend it in hospitably entertaining and relieving the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow; that is, in every kind of hospitality and charity. This appointment was evidently intended to counteract the covetousness, distrust, and selfishness of the human heart; to promote friendliness, liberality, and cheerfulness; to raise a perpetual fund for the use of the poor; and to teach the people that they would never so comfortably enjoy their worldly portion, as when they shared it with their necessitous brethren. They were taught to convert the common blessings of Providence into a sacred ordinance, by accompanying their most free use of them with the exercises of religion: and this was the way to learn to fear God always, and to obtain his blessing upon all the works of their hands.—Some vindicate *feasting* from these laws: and certainly such temperate, religious, and charitable feasting, is allowable and beneficial. (Note, *Luke* xiv. 12—14.) But what has this in common with sensual, luxurious, and ungodly banquets?

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

Those whom God hath chosen to be his children, he will form to be a holy people, of a peculiar and heavenly disposition, and “zealous of good works.” As they are so highly distinguished from other people, they must be careful to set an example of holy moderation in all their affections, and to avoid every thing which may disgrace their profession. Having a Father in heaven, who ever liveth to supply all their wants and to make up every loss, they need not mourn for earthly friends disconsolately, as others do.—The Lord prohibits us nothing but in a wise and kind regard to our welfare. The language of his prohibitions rightly interpreted, is, “Do thyself no harm;” do not wound thyself; do not ruin thy health, thy reputation, thy domestick comfort, thy peace of mind; especially

12—18. The male firstlings of cattie are devoted to God, 19—23.

AT the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release.

2 And this is the manner of the release: Every creditor that lendeth ought unto his neighbour shall release it; he shall not exact it of his neighbour, or of his brother; because it is called the LORD's release.

3 Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it again: but that which is thine with thy brother, thine hand shall release;

4 † Save when there shall be no poor among you; for the LORD shall greatly

do not murder thy soul; be not the vile slave of thy appetites and passions; do not render all around thee miserable, and thyself the most wretched of all; but aspire at that which is noble, excellent, permanent, and useful. Considering these prohibitions, in connexion with the manifold indulgences which he allows us, we must acknowledge that we should all be happy, if we consulted our own and each other's welfare, as much as the law of God does. Making that our *rule of enjoyment*, we should use providential blessings in subserviency to religious edification, to our own inward peace and satisfaction, to the promotion of brotherly love, and to our mutual usefulness. That “Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness,” is a truth, of which every man will have experimental proof in proportion to his devotedness to God. May we then choose and pursue this happiness, and compassionate and pray for those deluded millions who seek for pleasure in sin, which is the only cause of all the misery in the universe: and let us learn to value every earthly advantage, as enabling us to glorify God, by disseminating the knowledge of his truth, and by communicating to the relief of our distressed brethren and fellow-creatures.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 2. *Exact.*] The debtor no doubt was bound in conscience to pay his debt, if able, at that or any future time; but the creditor was not allowed to sue for it, nor the magistrate to enforce the payment of it: at least if it appeared that the debtor could not without inconvenience part with the money. The word *exact* seems to imply such a limitation; and the law was evidently intended for the relief of the indigent, not for the security of the fraudulent. (Notes, *Neh.* v. 1—13. *Is.* lviii. 3—7. *Matt.* vi. 12.)

V. 3. The Israelites were not allowed to oppress foreigners, or to do injustice to them; yet a difference was here made between strangers and their brethren. We ought to do exact justice to all; but in shewing kindness, we must especially regard “the household of faith.”

V. 4—6. Had the Israelites fulfilled the terms of the national covenant, their great prosperity would have entirely banished poverty from among them. Yet the Lord foresaw that they would not be thus obedient, and fore-

b xvi. 11. 14 xxiv. 19—21. xxvii. 12. 18. Ex. xxii. 22. Lev. xix. 34. Job xxxi. 16—21. Luke xiv. 12—14. Heb. xlii. 2. Jam. i. 27. c xv. 10. Ps. xli. 1. Prov. iii. 9. 10. xi. 24. xix. 17. Is. lviii. 7—12. Mal. iii. 10. 11. Luke vi. 35. xi. 41. 2 Cor. ix 6—11.

a xxxi. 10 Ex. xxi. 2. xxiii. 19. 11. Lev. xxv. 2 —4. Is. lxi. 1—3 Jer. xxxiv. 8—15. Luke iv. 18. 19. \* Heb. master of the lending of his hand. b Neh. v. 7—11. Is. lviii. 3. Am. viii. 4—6. Matt. vi. 12. 14. 15. xviii. 25—28. Luke vi. 34—38. vii. 42. Jam. ii. 13. c xxlii. 20. Ez. xvi. 16. 17. Matt. xxv. 25. 26. John viii. 34. 1 Cor. vi. 6. 7. Gal. vi. 10. † Or, To the end that there be. d See on xiv. 29.—xxviii. 8. 11. Prov. xi. 24. 25. xiv. 21. xxviii. 27. Is. lviii. 10. 11.

blest thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it:

5 \*Only if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all these commandments which I command thee this day.

6 For the LORD thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee; and \*thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and \*thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.

7 If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates, in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, \*thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother;

8 But \*thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.

9 Beware \*that there be not a \*thought in thy wicked heart, saying, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand; and \*thine eye be evil against thy poor brother, and thou givest him nought, and \*he cry unto the LORD against thee, and it be \*sin unto thee.

10 Thou shalt surely give him, and \*thine heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: \*because that for this thing the LORD thy God shall

blest thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto.

11 For \*the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, \*Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.

12 ¶ And \*if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee.

13 And when thou sendest him out free from thee, \*thou shalt not let him go away empty:

14 Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy wine-press: of that wherewith \*the LORD thy God hath blessed thee, thou shalt give unto him.

15 And \*thou shalt remember that thou wast a bond-man in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to-day.

16 And it shall be, \*if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee; (because he loveth thee and thine house, because he is well with thee;)

17 Then thou shalt take an awl, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant \*for ever: and also unto thy maid-servant thou shalt do likewise.

e See on iv. 9. xi. 13-15.—xxviii. 1-15. Lev. xxvi. 3-14. Josh. i. 7. Ps. xix. 11. Is. i. 19, 20. Phil. i. 27.

f xxviii. 12, 44. Ps. xxxvii. 21. 26. cxii. 5. Prov. xxii. 7. Luke vi. 35.

g xxviii. 13. 1 Kings iv. 21. 24. 2 Chr. ix. 28. Ezra iv. 20. Neh. ix. 27.

h 9. Prov. xxi. 13. Matt. xviii. 30. Jam. ii. 15, 16. 1 John iii. 16, 17.

i Ps. xxxvii. 21. cxii. 5-9. c. lvi. 16. Prov. xi. 24. 25. xix. 17. xxi. 9. xxviii. 8, 27.

j Ec. xi. 1, 2. 6. Matt. v. 42. Luke vi. 34-36. 2 Cor. viii. 7-9. ix. 5-13.

k Prov. iv. 23. Jer. xvii. 10. Matt. xv. 19. Mark vii. 21, 22. Rom. vii. 8, 9. Jam. iv. 5.

l Heb. word with thine heart of Bethel.

m xxviii. 54-56. Prov. xxiii. 6. xxiv. 9. xxviii. 22. Matt. xx. 15. Jam. v. 9. 1 Pet. iv. 9.

n xxiv. 15. Ex. iii. 7. xxi. 23. Job xxxiv. 28. Ps. ix. 12. Prov. xxi. 13. Jam. v. 4.

o Matt. xxv. 41. 42. Jam. iv. 17. 1 John iii. 15-17.

p Matt. xxv. 40. Acts xx. 26. Rom. xii. 8. 2 Cor. ix. 7. 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19. 1 Pet. iv. 11.

q See on 4. xiv. 29.—Ps. xli. 1. Prov. xi. 24, 25. Is. xxxiii. 8. lvi. 10. 2 Cor. ix. 8.—11. Phil. iv. 18. 19. Heb. xiii. 16.

p Prov. xxii. 2. Matt. xxvi. 11. Mark xiv. 7. John xii. 8.

q See on 8.—Matt. v. 42. Luke xii. 33. Acts ii. 45. iv. 32-35. xi. 28-30. 2 Cor. viii. 2-9. 1 John iii. 16-18.

r See on 1.—Ex. xxi. 2-6. Lev. xxv. 39-41. Jer. xxxiv. 14. John vii. 35, 36.

s Gen. xxxi. 42. Ex. iii. 21. Lev. xxv. 42-44. Prov. iii. 27, 28. Jer. xxii. 13. Mal. iii. 5. Col. iv. 1.

t Neh. viii. 10. Prov. x. 22. 1 Cor. xii. 2.

u v. 14, 15. xvi. 12. Ex. xx. 2. Matt. vi. 14, 15. xviii. 8, 9. Eph. i. 7. ii. 12. iv. 32. v. 1, 2. Tit. ii. 14. 1 John iii. 16. iv. 9-11.

x See on Ex. xxi. 5, 6.—Ps. xi. 6.—8.

y Lev. xxv. 39-42. 1 Sam. i. 22.

told, that "the poor should never cease from among them" (11), but always remain as a trial of their disposition to do good for his sake. But the words, "Save when there shall be no poor among you," may imply that they ought so liberally to relieve every poor brother, that, all being comfortably provided for, no poverty might be visible among them: according to the margin, "To the end that there may be no poor among you." (Notes, xxviii. 1-14. Lev. xxvi. 3-12.)

V. 9, 10. The righteous and merciful demands of the divine law excite the dormant enmity of man's wicked heart, and prove an occasion of increasing his guilt; (Notes, Rom. vii. 7-14;) for the same law condemns every rising thought of sin. The Israelites were therefore exhorted to beware, lest this equitable statute should awaken their covetousness; and lest they should evade it by refusing to lend the poor in their distress, or by only lending them in a niggardly and grudging manner. The caution may be considered as, in this respect, a divinely inspired comment on the law of "loving our neighbour

"as ourselves." (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xxiii. 10, 11. Lev. xxv. 1-7. Matt. vii. 12.)

V. 11. Marg. Ref. p.

V. 13-15. This addition to the law before commented on, (Notes, Ex. xxi. 2-11,) is likewise a divine interpretation of the law of love, which was enforced upon the Israelites by the consideration of their redemption from the Egyptian bondage, the manner in which the Egyptians were constrained to pay them their wages, and the prosperity to which the Lord had advanced them.—The proportion, which was to be bestowed on servants when liberated, was not fixed; but it was left to every one's conscience in the sight of God, when all circumstances had been well considered. Kindness and charity to poor servants and labourers, and other mean persons, scarcely forms a part of heathen ethicks, or is so much as hinted at by their moralists.

V. 17 Hence it appears that female servants were sometimes purchased for labour, without any purpose of espousing them; and that they were under

18 It shall not seem hard unto thee, when thou sendest him away free from thee; for he hath been worth <sup>a</sup> a double hired servant to thee, in serving thee six years: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all that thou doest.

19 ¶ All <sup>a</sup> the firstling males that come of thy herd, and of thy flock, thou shalt sanctify unto the LORD thy God: <sup>b</sup> thou shalt do no work with the firstling of thy bullock, nor shear the firstling of thy sheep:

20 Thou <sup>c</sup> shalt eat it before the LORD thy God, year by year, in the place which the LORD shall choose, thou and thy household.

21 And <sup>d</sup> if there be any blemish

therein, *as if it be lame, or blind, or have any ill blemish*, thou shalt not sacrifice it unto the LORD thy God:

22 Thou shalt eat it within thy gates: <sup>e</sup> the unclean and the clean *per-son shall eat it alike*, as the roe-buck, and as the hart.

23 Only <sup>f</sup> thou shalt not eat the blood thereof; thou shalt pour it upon the ground as water.

#### CHAP. XVI.

The laws concerning the three great annual feasts recapitulated, with an injunction that every one should then offer according to his ability, 1—17. The appointment and duties of magistrates, 18—20. Groves and images prohibited, 21, 22.

<sup>a</sup> Is. xvi. 14. xxi. 16. Luke xvi. 7, 8.

<sup>e</sup> Ex. xlii. 2. 12. xxxiv. 19. Lev. xxvii. 26. Num. iii. 13. Rom. viii. 29. Heb. xii. 23.

<sup>b</sup> xii. 5—7. 17. xiv. 23. xvi. 11. 14. Num. xviii. 18.

<sup>c</sup> See on xii. 5—7.

<sup>d</sup> xvii. 1. Lev. xxii. 20—24.

<sup>f</sup> See on xii. 16.—Lev. vii. 26. 1 Sam. xiv. 32. Ex. xxxiii. 26.

the same law as the men-servants. (Note, Ex. xxi. 3—6.)

V. 18. It seems that it was not customary for hired servants to serve longer than three years at one time; lest their condition should too much resemble that of those, who sold themselves through poverty, or were sold for their debts or crimes.

V. 19—23. The firstling, being a male, was sacrificed, and those parts which were not burnt upon the altar were eaten by the priests. But if it were a female, it was offered as a peace-offering, and feasted upon by the offerer and his friends; except it were blemished: and then, whether male or female, it was slain when young, and eaten as ordinary food, but without the blood. (Note, xii. 22.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is profitable for us often to recollect that we are debtors to divine justice, have nothing to pay, (Note, Luke vii. 40—43,) and are liable to be sent to the prison of hell on that account; and that we are slaves, and poor, and perishing: but the Lord Jesus Christ, by becoming poor, and shedding his blood, hath made an infinite provision for the payment of our debts, the ransom of our souls, and the full and everlasting supply of all our wants. This provision is revealed and proposed to us, and we are invited to partake of it “freely, without money and without price.” When therefore the gospel is clearly preached, “the acceptable year of the LORD,” the year of release, is proclaimed; and all who truly believe become partakers of Christ, of his freedom, and of all his unsearchable riches. (Notes, Is. lxi. 1—3. Luke iv. 16—19.) These favoured persons especially he requires, with the mild accents of love, to perform the same duties which the law demanded under awful penalties. Thus professed Christians are called upon to prove that their faith is living and works by love; and to shew the sincerity of their love to Christ, by acts of liberal kindness to their brethren for his sake. To favour this trial, among other reasons, the poor always continue among us, and are appointed as the representatives and receivers of our gracious Lord; that by remitting their debts, relieving their distresses, and communicating to

their comfort, we may express our gratitude to our divine Benefactor, and honour and adorn his holy religion. (Notes, Matt. xii. 46—50. xxv. 31—46.) In proportion as faith and love prevail they will triumph over the selfishness of the heart, and over the ingratitude of the world; exclude those numerous excuses which result from unbelief, distrust, and covetousness; and lead us to abound in this grace also.—The aim of every Christian should be daily “to do good to all men, especially to them that are of the household of faith:” and to open his hand liberally, in giving or in lending, according to his ability, and according to the necessity of his brethren, that distressing poverty may have no place among the followers of Christ; especially searching out such are most modest, humble, and backward to complain, or to obtrude upon the notice of others.—Though this is no more than a small acknowledgment of inestimable favours already received; yet it shall be considered as “lending to the LORD,” and be abundantly recompensed.—Let all then watch and pray against an envious, grudging, selfish heart. We need never fear being losers when the Lord stands security for the debt; nor carrying matters to excess whilst we fall so far short of his measure of love to us: and that which the world often calls prudence will be found the greatest folly. In the exercise of this loving-kindness, those ought especially to be provided for, who have been useful to us and spent their strength in our service: and, instead of “it seeming hard to us,” when we thus communicate to their comfort; we should be ambitious of rendering all who live in our families or are connected with us so well satisfied, that they may love us and our houses, and count it their privilege to abide in their situation. Such a Master is our God: all who make trial of his service will account it perfect freedom, and consider it their happiness to join themselves to him, to serve him with all they have and are, and to dwell in his house as his willing servants for ever and ever.—But let us not leave this subject without noticing the benevolent spirit which pervades the sacred Scriptures. For where, in all the admired writings of the Greeks and Romans and other pagans, shall we find so much benevolence and kindness to debtors, slaves, and indigent persons inculcated, as in this single chapter?

**OBSERVE** <sup>a</sup>the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the LORD thy God: <sup>b</sup>for in the month of Abib the LORD thy God brought thee forth out of Egypt by night.

<sup>c</sup>2 Thou shalt therefore <sup>c</sup>sacrifice the passover unto the LORD thy God, of the flock and the herd, <sup>d</sup>in the place which the LORD shall choose to place his name there.

<sup>e</sup>3 Thou shalt eat <sup>e</sup>no leavened bread with it: seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread therewith, *even* <sup>f</sup>the bread of affliction; (for <sup>f</sup>thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt in haste;) that thou <sup>g</sup>mayest remember the day when thou camest forth out of the land of Egypt, all the days of thy life.

<sup>i</sup>4 And <sup>i</sup>there shall be no leavened bread seen with thee in all thy coasts seven days; <sup>j</sup>neither shall there *any thing* of the flesh, which thou sacrificedst the first day at even, remain all night until the morning.

<sup>k</sup>5 Thou mayest not <sup>k</sup>sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee:

6 But at the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the pass-over <sup>l</sup>at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt.

7 And thou shalt <sup>m</sup>roast and eat it <sup>m</sup>in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose: and thou shalt turn in the morning, and go unto thy tents.

8 <sup>n</sup>Six days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day *shall be* <sup>n</sup>a <sup>n</sup>solemn assembly to the LORD thy God; thou shalt do no work therein.

9 ¶ <sup>o</sup>Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from *such time as* thou beginnest *to put* the sickle to the corn.

10 And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the LORD thy God <sup>p</sup>with <sup>p</sup>a tribute of a free-will-offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give *unto the LORD thy God*, <sup>q</sup>according as the LORD thy God hath blessed thee:

11 And <sup>r</sup>thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite that *is* within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that *are* among you, in the place which the LORD thy God hath chosen to place his name there.

12 And <sup>s</sup>thou shalt remember that thou wast a bond-man in Egypt: and thou shalt observe and do these statutes.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1. *By night.*] The Israelites did not actually set off on their journey till the approach of morning: but, while eating the passover, and holding themselves in readiness *during the night*, the first-born of Egypt were destroyed, which made way for their release; and afterwards *by night* they passed the Red Sea, when their deliverance was completed.—Moses repeated these laws, as with his dying lips, to this new generation, just before their entrance into Canaan, to leave the deeper impression upon their minds. (Notes, Ex. xii. 21—37. xiv. 19—31.)

V. 2. The word *passover* is here used for the various sacrifices offered at that festival, whether of the flock, (as the paschal lamb,) or of the herd. (Note, John xviii. 28—32, *beginning*.)—*In the place, &c.*] Note, xii. 5—7.

V. 3—6. The use of unleavened bread was required to be general through the land, by which they, who were confined at home, testified their concurrence with those who *ate the passover* at the tabernacle: but *that* was appointed to be slain and eaten, only in the place where the tabernacle was situated. Thither the males were required to

come, both at the passover and the two other great feasts, unless unavoidably prevented: and the women, though not commanded, frequently attended them.—The people when about to leave Egypt ate the paschal lamb in the posture of travellers; and therefore their departure seems to be dated from the time of eating it. (Notes, Ex. xii. 3—20. xiii. 3—7. Lev. xxiii. 5—8. Num. ix. 1—14. xxviii. 16—25.)

V. 7. *In the morning.*] In case of urgent necessity, the Israelites might return home the next morning after eating the passover. Some, however, think this means the *morning after the conclusion of the feasts*; and the celebration of them employed the day on which the passover was eaten, six intervening days, and the last concluding day of a solemn assembly; being eight in the whole, from the fourteenth to the twenty-first day of the month inclusive.

V. 9. *To put the sickle.*] That is, to reap the sheaf of first-fruits, which was presented on the first day of unleavened bread. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xxiii. 14—18. Lev. xxiii. 15—21.)

V. 11. *Shalt rejoice, &c.*] Note, xii. 5—7. P. O.

<sup>c</sup> xxxi. 10. Ex. xxi. 16. xxxiv. 22. Lev. xxiii. 34—36. Num. xxix. 12. &c. 2 Chr. v. 8. vii. 8—10. viii. 13. Ezra iii. 4. Neh. viii. 14—18. Zech. xiv. 16—18. John vii. 2.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. floor and thy wine-press. <sup>e</sup> See on xii. 12.—xxvii. 11. Neh. viii. 9—12. Eccl. ix. 7. Is. xli. 1—6. xxv. 6—8. xxx. 29. xxxv. 10. 1 Thes. v. 16.

<sup>f</sup> Lev. xxiii. 36—42. Num. xxix. 12—38.

<sup>g</sup> See on 10.—vii. 13. xxvii. 9—12. xxx. 16.

<sup>h</sup> Ex. xxiii. 14—17. xxvii. 22, 23. 1 Kings ix. 26.

<sup>i</sup> Ex. xxiii. 15. xxxiv. 20. 1 Chr. xxix. 8—9. 14—17. Ps. xvi. 8. Prov. iii. 9, 10. Is. xlii. 18. Eccl. 9—9. Hag. i. 9. Matt. ii. 11. Mark xii. 3.

13 ¶ Thou shalt observe <sup>a</sup> the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy <sup>b</sup> corn and thy wine.

14 And <sup>c</sup> thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that <sup>d</sup> are within thy gates.

15 <sup>e</sup> Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the LORD thy God, in the place which the LORD shall choose; <sup>f</sup> because the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thy increase, and in all the works of thine hands; therefore thou shalt surely rejoice.

16 <sup>g</sup> Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and <sup>h</sup> they shall not appear before the LORD empty.

17 Every man <sup>i</sup> shall give <sup>j</sup> as he <sup>k</sup> is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee.

18 ¶ Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment.

19 Thou shalt not <sup>l</sup> wrest judgment; thou shalt not <sup>m</sup> respect persons, neither take a gift; for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the <sup>n</sup> words of the righteous.

20 <sup>o</sup> That which is <sup>p</sup> altogether just shalt thou follow, that thou mayest <sup>q</sup> live, and inherit the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

21 ¶ Thou shalt not <sup>r</sup> plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the LORD thy God, which thou shalt make thee.

22 Neither shalt thou set thee <sup>s</sup> up any <sup>t</sup> image, <sup>u</sup> which the LORD thy God hateth.

<sup>†</sup> Heb. according to the gift of his hand.

<sup>b</sup> See on 10.—Lev. xxvii. 8. Ezra ii. 63. Mark xii. 41.—44. 2 Cor. viii. 12. ix. 6, 7.

<sup>c</sup> i. 16. xvii. 9. 12. xix. 17, 18. xxi. 2. Ex. xviii. 25, 26. xxi. 6. 1 Chr. xxiii. 4. xxxv. 29. 2 Chr. xix. 5—7. Pa. lxxxii. 2, 3. Rom. xiii. 1—6. xxv. 17. xxvii. 19. Ex. xxiii. 2. 6—8. Lev. xix. 15. 1 Sam. viii. 3. xli. 3. Job xxxi. 21, 22. Prov. xvii. 28. Eccl. vii. 7. Is. i. 17. 23. xxxiii. 15. Jer. v. 28. Ez. xxii. 12. Mic. vii. 3. Hab. i. 4. Zeph. iii. 3—5. Acts xvi. 37. xxiii. 3.

<sup>d</sup> See on i. 16, 17. x. 17. Ex. xxiii. 7, 8. Prov. xxiv. 28. Acts x. 34.

<sup>e</sup> Or, matters.

<sup>f</sup> Heb. Justice, justice.

<sup>g</sup> xxv. 13—16. Mic. vi. 8. Phil. iv. 8.

<sup>h</sup> See on iv. 1.—Ex. xxvii. 8, 9. Rom. x. 5.

<sup>i</sup> Ex. xxvii. 13. Judg. iii. 7. 1 Kings xiv. 15. xvi. 33. 2 Kings xvii. 16. xxi. 3. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 3.

<sup>j</sup> Ex. xx. 4. Lev. xxvi. 1.

<sup>k</sup> Or, statue, or pillar.

<sup>l</sup> xii. 31. Jer. xlv. 4. Zech. viii. 17. Rev. ii. 6, 15.

V. 13—17. *Marg. Ref.*—Notes, xxxi. 10—13. Lev. xxiii. 34—43. Num. xxix. 12—38. 1 Kings viii. 63—65. Neh. viii. 14—18. Zech. xiv. 16—19. John vii. 37—39.

V. 18, 19. Besides the judges of the principal court held near the tabernacle, to which in difficult and important cases appeals might be made; inferior magistrates must be appointed in every part of the land, who should execute their office in the *gates*, or most publick places, in every city or considerable town, to administer justice in the simplest and cheapest manner. But the same integrity, impartiality, and disinterestedness, were required in them, as in the superior magistrates. (*Notes*, Ex. xviii. 17—23. xxiii. 1—3. 6—9. 2 Chr. xix. 5—11.)

V. 21. Groves, having been generally adopted in the worship of idols, and made the scenes of the vilest abominations, were expressly and repeatedly prohibited in the worship of God. (*Marg. Ref.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The frequent repetition of the same laws, forms a humiliating reproach of man's unteachableness in spiritual things; for God does nothing in vain.—From the example of Moses, ministers and parents may learn to renew their instructions and admonitions with their latest breath, that the survivors may have them associated with every remembrance of them. (*Note*, 2 Pet. i. 12—15.)—A believer should not forget, for one day, his original state of guilt and misery, his gracious deliverance, and the price which it cost the Redeemer; that gratitude and joy in the Lord may, during the residue of his life, be mingled with godly sorrow, mortification of sin, and humble patience under the tribulations which lie in the way to the kingdom of

heaven.—Every one of our services must be performed in communion with the church of Christ, and in dependence on him, our Temple, Altar, Sacrifice, and Passover; “being accompanied with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” We should indeed be thankful that our attendance on God's ordinances does not require such long and expensive journeys, as that of Israel did: but if our hearts be right with God, we shall so delight in his service, that the labour required in it will be our pleasure, or we shall be ashamed that it is not. The expense incurred in making the heart of the poor and destitute rejoice, according to the Lord's blessing upon us, will be our own heartfelt satisfaction: and we shall not so much as wish to “appear before the Lord empty;” but shall desire to be “rich in good works, ready to distribute, and willing to communicate,” in whatever can glorify God or do good to mankind. (*Note*, Heb. xiii. 15, 16.) For while the Lord so graciously even commands us to rejoice before him, we should desire to help the joy of all our brethren.—Let us likewise note that magistracy is the express appointment of God; as such we are bound to submit to it, with thankfulness for its advantages, patience under the inconveniences attending its undue administration, and prayers for those placed over us. (*Notes*, Rom. xiii. 1—8.) But magistrates likewise should consider their accountableness to God for the use of their authority; and study to know and do their duty in uprightness, disinterestedness, and impartiality; that they may both be publick blessings, and heirs of everlasting life, as the true disciples of him who “loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity.” And none of us should fear any thing so much, as doing that “which the LORD our God hateth.”

## CHAP. XVII.

The sacrifices are required to be unblemished, 1. Idolaters to be punished with death, 2—7. Difficult cases must be referred to the priests and judges at the sanctuary, and such as refused to submit to their decision put to death, 8—13. Instructions concerning the appointment and duty of a king, 14—20.

**THOU** <sup>a</sup> shalt not sacrifice unto the LORD thy God *any* bullock or <sup>\*</sup> sheep wherein is blemish, or <sup>b</sup> any evil-favour-  
edness: <sup>c</sup> for that is an abomination unto the LORD thy God.

**2** ¶ If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee, <sup>a</sup> man or woman that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the LORD thy God, <sup>c</sup> in transgressing his covenant;

**3** And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either <sup>a</sup> the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, <sup>a</sup> which I have not commanded;

**4** And it be told thee, and thou hast heard *of it*, and <sup>b</sup> enquired diligently, and, behold, *it be true*, and the thing certain, *that* such abomination is wrought in Israel:

**5** Then shalt thou bring forth that man, or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, *even* that man or that woman, and shalt <sup>a</sup> stone them with stones till they die.

**6** At <sup>k</sup> the mouth of two witnesses,

or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; *but* at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.

**7** The <sup>l</sup> hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people; <sup>m</sup> so thou shalt put the evil away from among you.

**8** ¶ If there <sup>a</sup> arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, <sup>c</sup> between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, *being* matters of controversy, within thy gates; then shalt thou arise, and <sup>p</sup> get thee up into the place which the LORD thy God shall choose:

**9** And thou shalt come unto <sup>a</sup> the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and enquire; and <sup>a</sup> they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment.

**10** And <sup>a</sup> thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place which the LORD shall choose shall shew thee; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee:

**11** According to <sup>a</sup> the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee, <sup>a</sup> to the right hand nor to the left.

**12** And the man that <sup>a</sup> will do presumptuously, <sup>a</sup> and will not hearken

## NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, Lev. xxii. 18—25.*

V. 2—7. The expression, “within any of thy gates,” denoted all residing in the cities, and all who went in and came out at the gates of them: so that it included the inhabitants of the whole land.—This law enjoined that those who committed idolatry should be stoned, as well as those who seduced others to commit it: for that crime especially “transgressed the covenant,” and would become a national forfeiture, if not thus punished.—Had men been commanded to worship creatures, however exalted, it might have been complained of as a degradation; much more if they had been required to worship beasts, inanimate figures, and stocks or stones. But God “had not commanded” such practices, nay he had expressly forbidden them; and they were entirely man’s own foolish inventions, and Satan’s abominable suggestions.—This law was the magistrate’s rule in administering justice to individuals; as that

before considered regulated informations of idolatry, and the punishment of cities, which were guilty of that crime. (Notes, xiii.) In both cases the witnesses were required to take the lead in the execution of the criminal, that they might be rendered more cautious in their testimony: for though the false witness was the actual murderer of the person put to death unjustly; yet perhaps he would not be so shocked by it, when another was the executioner of the sentence, as when he himself was required to perform that painful office.

*Two witnesses, &c.* (6) (Notes, xix. 15—21. Num. xxxv. 24—30. Matt. xviii. 15—17. 1 Tim. v. 19, 20.) Great weight is laid on this, throughout the scripture; and it is matter of serious enquiry, whether in any ordinary case, the testimony of one unsupported witness, even of fair character, should be depended on, especially when the life of man is at stake.

V. 8—13. This law is addressed to the magistrates before mentioned in the different parts of the land. (Note, xvi. 18, 19.)—In many cases of life and death, or of pro-

<sup>v</sup> *x. 8. xviii. 5, 7.* unto <sup>\*</sup>the priest that standeth to minister there before the LORD thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die; and <sup>y</sup>thou shalt put away the evil from Israel.

*y* See on 7. xiii. 5.  
—Prov. xxi. 11.  
1 Tim. v. 20.

<sup>z</sup> See on xiii. 11.  
*a* See on Num. xv. 30, 31.

*b* vii. 1. xii. 9, 10.  
xviii. 9. xxvi. 1.  
9. Lev. xiv. 84.  
Josh. i. 18.

*c* 1 Sam. viii. 5—  
7. 19, 20. xii. 19.

13 And all the people <sup>\*</sup>shall hear, and fear, and do no more <sup>\*</sup>presumptuously.

14 ¶ When <sup>b</sup>thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, <sup>c</sup>I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me:

15 Thou shalt in any wise set *him* king over thee <sup>d</sup>whom the LORD thy God shall choose; *one* <sup>\*</sup>from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother.

*d* 1 Sam. ix. 15, 6.  
x. 24. xvi. 12.  
13. 2 Sam. v. 2.  
1 Chr. xii. 23.  
xxii. 10. xxviii.  
5. Ps. ii. 2, 6.  
Jer. xxx. 21  
Matt. xxii. 17

16 But he shall not <sup>e</sup>multiply horses to himself, nor <sup>f</sup>cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, <sup>h</sup>Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.

*f* 1 Sam. viii. 11.  
2 Sam. viii. 4.  
1 Kings i. 5. iv.  
26. x. 26—28.  
2 Chr. ix. 26.  
Ps. xx. 9.  
Is. xxxvi. 8, 9.  
g Is. xxxi. 1—3.  
Jer. xlii. 14. Ez.  
xvii. 15.  
h xxviii. 68. Ex.  
xiii. 17. xiv. 18.  
Num. xiv. 8, 4.  
Jer. xlii. 15, 16.  
Hos. xi. 5.

perty, or concerning the law of retaliation, they might find perplexing difficulties. (*Marg. Ref. o.*) Such causes were therefore to be referred to the decision of the superior tribunals, which would be held at the place where the tabernacle would be fixed. (*Ex. xviii. 22.*)—The priests and Levites, having the most leisure, and being especially appointed to the study of the law, which was not only the *rule of conscience*, but likewise the *law of the land*, by their learning would be best qualified to act as judges; and probably the sanhedrim and other superior courts of justice were chiefly composed of them, though not without some persons of the other tribes. “The judge” here mentioned (9) may mean either the high priest, or such other supreme magistrate, as God from time to time should raise up among them. To these the appeal must be made: and, with all their advantages, it was not likely they would give a false sentence, while they continued free from gross apostasy in religion, and corruption in morals. As, however, the law related, not to *matters of faith and conscience*, but merely to the *administration of justice in the land*; it would be better that an individual should sometimes be aggrieved, than that the advantages of magistracy should be abridged: therefore he who presumptuously refused to submit, whether magistrate or private person, was ordered to be put to death. (*Marg. Ref. v—z.*)—In every State there must be some final award, from which there lies no appeal; and that must be submitted to, even though in some cases it should be unjust: but this gives no countenance to the monstrous claim, which some have made, of being *absolute interpreters of doctrines and precepts, in matters of conscience*, to which all ought to submit, however evidently their decisions contradict the word of God. In this case it suffices to say, “we must obey” and believe “God rather than man;” as Peter replied to the successors of those very persons, to whom this authority was originally given, and on whom it had at that time devolved. (*Notes, Acts iv. 13—22. v. 29—31.*)

*The priests the Levites.* (9) The priests, who were also Levites, seem especially intended. Yet the ordinary Levites acted as magistrates in the days of David, (*Notes, 1 Chr. xxiii. 2—6. xxvi. 29;*) but probably in inferior situations.

V. 14. The appointment of a king is not here *commanded*, nor so much as *counselled*; nay it is implied, that such a change in their government would originate from a desire of being “like the nations,” to whom God would

have his people unlike: and it is certain that they sinned when they asked a king. (*Notes, 1 Sam. viii. 1—9. xii. 16—19.*) Yet the Lord foresaw that this would take place, and he previously gave rules respecting it.—They therefore argue very inconclusively, who infer the lawfulness of slavery, polygamy, or divorces, from those laws which suppose their existence, and establish regulations concerning them: for all such questions must be determined by the plain precepts or general tenour of Scripture, and not by these *judicial regulations*. (*Note, Ex. xxi. 2.*)

V. 15. Though the people sinned in the days of Samuel, by desiring a king; yet they obeyed this law in referring the choice of one to God. (*Notes, 1 Sam. viii. 19—22. x. 17—22. xi. 12—15. 2 Sam. v. 1, 2.*) He first chose Saul: but rejecting him, he chose David, and then Solomon, whose posterity reigned till the Babylonish captivity. The Israelites were forbidden to set a *stranger* over them; not so much lest he should oppress them, as lest he should lead them into idolatry. This referred to a king whom they should appoint for themselves; not to a ruler which in providence might be placed over them, without their own concurrence, or, as a punishment of their sins: (*Jer. xxvii. 12. 14. 17. Note, Jer. xxix. 4—7*;) but the interpreters of the law, in the days of Christ, deduced from this clause the unlawfulness of *submitting* to a foreign yoke, and incited the people to continual rebellions, which at length terminated in their ruin. (*Note, Matt. xxii. 15—22.*)

V. 16. Multiplying horses for chariots of war and cavalry, or for luxury, would increase the splendour of the monarch, and form a ground of confidence distinct from a proper confidence in God, and inconsistent with it, and with considering him as the glory of Israel. Egypt abounded in horses; and the desire of multiplying these would induce the prince to encourage a trade with that kingdom; and this might make way for the Israelites being again subjugated by the Egyptians, or at least corrupted by their idolatries and vices. Whereas, it was the command of God that they should no more return thither, but be totally detached from them.—Accordingly we find, that till the days of Solomon, horses were little used by the Israelites, and they had not much intercourse with Egypt: but afterwards the horses of that kingdom proved a continual source of temptation and sin to them. (*Notes, 1 Kings x. 24—29. Ps. xx. 6—8. Is. xxx. 15—17. xxxi. 1—3.*)

<sup>i</sup> Gen. ii. 24.  
2 Sam. iii. 2—5.  
1 Kings xi. 1—4.  
Neh. xiii. 26.  
Mal. ii. 15. Matt.  
xix. 5.  
<sup>k</sup> 1 Kings x. 21.  
Ps. lxxii. 10. Prov.  
xxx. 8, 9. Matt.  
vi. 19, 20. xiii.  
22. xix. 23, 24.  
Luke xii. 15.  
1 Tim. vi. 9, 17.  
2 Kings xi. 12.  
<sup>m</sup> xxxi. 9. 26, 26.  
2 Kings xxii. 8.  
2 Chr. xxxiv. 15.  
<sup>n</sup> vi. 6—9. xi. 18.  
Josh. i. 8. Ps.  
i. 2. cxix. 97—  
100. John v. 39.  
2 Tim. iii. 15—  
17.  
<sup>o</sup> viii. 2. 18, 14.  
2 Kings xiv. 10.  
2 Chr. xxv. 19.  
xxvi. 16. xxxiii.  
25, 26. xxxiii.  
12. 19. 23. xxxiv.  
27. Ps. cxxxi. 1.  
2. Is. ii. 12.  
Dan. v. 20—23.  
Hab. ii. 4. 2 Cor.  
xii. 7. 1 Pet. v. 5.

17 Neither <sup>1</sup> shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away; <sup>2</sup> neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.

18 And it shall be when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, <sup>1</sup> that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, <sup>m</sup> out of *that which is* before the priests the Levites:

19 And <sup>a</sup> it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law, and these statutes, to do them:

20 That <sup>a</sup> his heart be not lifted up

above his brethren, and that <sup>p</sup> he turn not aside from the commandment, *to* <sup>q</sup> the right hand or *to* the left; to the end that he may prolong *his* days in his kingdom, he and his children, in the midst of Israel.

### CHAP. XVIII.

The portion of the priests and Levites, 1—8. Idolatry and witchcraft prohibited, 9—14. A prophet like unto Moses promised, 15—19. False prophets must be put to death, 20. How they were to be known, 21, 22.

**T**HE priests the Levites, *and* all the tribe of Levi, <sup>a</sup> shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel: <sup>b</sup> they shall eat

<sup>p</sup> See on iv. 2. v. 32. xii. 26. 28.  
32. 1 Kings xv. 5.  
<sup>q</sup> See on 11.—  
1 Sam. xiii. 13.  
14. xv. 23.  
1 Kings xi. 12.  
13. 34. 36.  
2 Kings x. 30.  
Ps. xlx. 11.  
cxxxii. 12. Prov.  
xxvii. 24. Ec.  
viii. 13.

<sup>a</sup> x. 9. xii. 19.  
Num. xviii. 20.  
xxvi. 62. Josh.  
xiii. 33. xviii. 7.  
1 Pet. v. 2—4.  
<sup>b</sup> Num. xviii. 8, 9.  
Josh. xiii. 14.  
1 Cor. ix. 13.

V. 17. *Marg. Ref.*—Notes, 2 Sam. v. 13—16. 1 Kings xi. 1—8.

V. 18—20. Some interpret this command, of the book of Deuteronomy alone: but it is most probable, that the whole law was intended: and if Moses, with his immense engagements, found time for *compiling* and *writing* the whole, it could not be an intolerable task imposed upon any future prince to *transcribe* it. This would have a very great effect in rendering him well acquainted with the law in every part; for writing not only assists the memory, but causes us to notice every single word of what we transcribe. It is probable, however, that this law was very seldom observed by the kings of Judah, and never by those of Israel. (*Marg. Ref.*)

### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We are continually called on to remember the pure and spotless sacrifice of Christ, and reminded to serve God with the best of our abilities, time, and possessions; otherwise our professed obedience will be an abomination. To him all worship and love belong: and idolatry and irreligion of every kind will assuredly be punished, in this world or in the next, with at least as great severity as those crimes which disturb the peace of society.—We are also repeatedly cautioned against rashness in bearing testimony, or in punishing accused persons; that the innocent may not be involved in the same doom with the guilty.—Ministers and magistrates should, in their several places, give diligence to obtain exact and extensive knowledge, as well as to act with integrity and impartiality, that they may not mislead or injure those, who place confidence in their decisions. In both cases, however, there lies an appeal to the infallible Teacher and Judge of the world, who will set all right, and effectually redress all those that trust in him.—The presumptuous offender, who refused to submit to the award of human justice, with all its imperfections, was condemned to die: of what punishment then will the obstinate rebel against the righteous Governor of the universe be adjudged worthy? and with what vengeance will he be recompensed, who despises or abuses the grace of the gospel? (*Note, Heb. x. 28—31.*)—The Lord sees the hearts of his own people too much disposed to be like the world around them; and for their chastisement he fre-

quently permits them to obtain the objects of their foolish desires; still regulating the whole ultimately for their good.—The higher any person is exalted, the more strongly must he be tempted to pride, covetousness, luxury, and lust, those fatal enemies to true godliness. Against those evils, princes especially need to watch, and ought to be cautioned by those who have access to them; lest the extensive influence of their example and authority should become ruinous to millions, who look up to them for protection and prosperity. But alas! who hath boldness, disinterestedness, and zeal, sufficient to venture the loss of their favour, and the consequences of their displeasure, by reminding them of such salutary but offensive truths? (*Notes, 1 Kings xxii. 8, 13, 14, 26, 27.*) Almost all men rather choose to occupy the more pleasing and profitable place of flatterers; and the remaining few either observe a timid silence, or soon are driven from the verge of courts. (*Note, Amos vii. 12, 13.*) Kings themselves have therefore the more need to be employed in the daily study of the Scriptures, and of whatever can enable them to understand the Scripture; that they may become well acquainted with the truth and will of God; and learn that true wisdom, which begins in the fear of him, and in habitual regard to his authority, and to that great day of account, in which there will be no respect of persons. But alas! how much of God's word is overlooked by his professed people! One is almost induced to think that this chapter was omitted in Solomon's copy of the law, and in those of the other Kings of Israel and Judah. And might not an impartial and well-informed person suppose the same respecting some of our Bibles, with reference to those chapters which immediately instruct men in the duties of their several stations, and improvement of their talents, especially the highest and most important stations, in the community, and in the church of God? We all however ought more carefully and exactly to study the Scriptures, to examine ourselves, to watch our hearts, to avoid temptations, and to pray for faith and grace, by which we may be enabled to observe all the commandments of God; for "in keeping of them there is great reward."

### NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1, 2. *Marg. Ref.*

the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and his inheritance.

2 Therefore shall they have no inheritance among their brethren; <sup>c</sup> the LORD is their inheritance, as he hath said unto them.

3 And this shall be the priest's due from the people, from them that <sup>d</sup> offer a sacrifice, whether *it be* ox or sheep: and they shall give unto the priest the shoulder, and the two cheeks and the maw.

4 The <sup>e</sup> first-fruit *also* of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the first of <sup>f</sup> the fleece of thy sheep, shalt thou give him.

5 For the LORD thy God hath <sup>g</sup> chosen him out of all thy tribes, to stand to minister in the name of the LORD, him and his sons for ever.

6 And if a Levite <sup>h</sup> come from any of thy gates out of all Israel, where he sojourned, and <sup>i</sup> come with all the desire of his mind <sup>j</sup> unto the place which the LORD shall choose;

7 Then he shall minister in the

name of the LORD his God, <sup>k</sup> as all his brethren the Levites *do*, which stand there before the LORD.

8 They shall have <sup>l</sup> like portions to eat, beside <sup>m</sup> that which cometh of the sale of his patrimony.

9 ¶ When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, <sup>n</sup> thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

10 There shall not be found among you *any one* that <sup>o</sup> maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or <sup>p</sup> that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,

11 Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, <sup>q</sup> or a necromancer.

12 For all that do these things *are* an abomination unto the LORD: and because <sup>r</sup> of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

13 Thou <sup>s</sup> shalt be <sup>t</sup> perfect with the LORD thy God.

c Gen. xv. 1. Ps. xvi. 5. lxxviii. 24-26. lxxxiv. 11. cxix. 57. 1s. lxi. 6. Lam. iii. 24. 1 Pet. ii. 5. 9. Rev. i. 5, 6.

d xii. 27. Lev. vii. 30-34.

e xxvi. 9, 10. Ex. xxii. 29. xxiii. 19. Lev. xxiii. 10, 17. Num. xviii. 12-24. 2 Chr. xxxi. 4-10. Neh. xii. 44-47.

f Job xxi. 20.

g x. 8. Ex. xxviii. 1, &c. Num. iii. 10. xvi. 5, 9, 10. xvii. 5-9. xxv. 13.

h See on Num. xxxv. 2, 3.

i Ps. xvi. 8. xxvii. 4. lxxii. 1. 2. lxxxiv. 10. 1 Tim. iii. 1. 1 Pet. v. 2.

j See on xii. 5. xvi. 2.

k Lev. vii. 8, 9. 14. Neh. i. xii. 44. 47. Luke x. 7. 1 Cor. ix. 7-14. 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.

l Heb. his sale by the fathers.

m See on xii. 29, 30. Lev. xviii. 26, 27, 30.

n xii. 31. Lev. xviii. 21. xx. 2-5. 2 Kings xvi. 3. xvii. 17. xxi. 6. 2 Chr. xxviii. 3. Pa. cvi. 37. 38. Jer. xix. 4-6. xxxii. 35.

o Ex. xxii. 18. Lev. xix. 26, 31. xx. 26, 27. 1 Sam. xxviii. 3. 7. 9. 1 Chr. x. 13. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 6. Is. viii. 19, 20. xivii. 13. Acts xix. 19. Gal. v. 20.

p 1 Sam. xxviii. 11-14.

q See on ix. 4. Lev. xviii. 24. 27.

r Gen. vi. 9. xvii. 1. Job i. 1. 8. Pa. xxxvii. 37. Matt. v. 48. Phil. iii. 12, 15. Rev. iii. 2.

s Or, upright, or, sincere.

V. 3. The two cheeks, (probably the whole head with the tongue,) and the maw, are supposed to have been at this time first granted out of the peace-offerings, in addition to what had before been allotted the priests and Levites: for they are not mentioned in the preceding laws. (Note, Lev. vii. 29-34.)

V. 4, 5. The proportion of each particular to be offered as first-fruits is no where fixed; and it seems to have been left to every man's own conscience, according to his circumstances, and as a test of his zeal and liberality.

V. 6-8. It seems that the Levites officiated by courses, or according to some rule, from their first establishment in Canaan: but if any one, out of his course, from cordial love of the ordinances and courts of the Lord, preferred officiating as a servant to the priests at the sanctuary, to living at his own city, he was to be encouraged by some addition to his maintenance. The words rendered "the sale of his patrimony" are variously interpreted, and are obscure to us; but probably they mean, that the Levite must not be deprived of any part of what would otherwise accrue to him, whether from the sale of his portion of the tithes, or the rent of houses in the cities allotted to that tribe, or any private property which he had acquired.—Some indeed suppose, that the priests exclusively are meant; because the expression, "minister in the name of the LORD" properly belongs to them; and because the Levites had no portions out of the sacrifices. But in performing their services at the tabernacle they ministered to the Lord, though as servants to the priests. (1 Sam. ii. 18. iii. 1.) And as the people were repeatedly enjoined to be liberal to them, they would doubtless, at

the sanctuary, frequently share the peace-offerings, and all other oblations; except the holy things, of which none but the priests and their families might eat. (xii. 12, 18, 19. xiv. 29. xvi. 11.) Both priests and ordinary Levites indeed seem to be intended.

V. 9-12. The several terms here employed, must include every species of that superstition or idolatry, which consists in seeking such information or help from invisible beings, real or supposed, as cannot be obtained from God; or in establishing other rules of conduct than his precepts, explained by the sober use of our rational faculties. And we can expect no instruction or help from him, except in the use of such means as are naturally efficacious, or in attending on his instituted ordinances. The translation itself, without criticizing the original terms, indisputably proves that the venerable translators supposed all calculations of lucky or unlucky days for undertaking any enterprise, all attempts to charm away diseases by unmeaning observations, all amulets or spells by way of preservative, as well as every kind of fortune-telling, to be prohibited.—Not only would such practices be abominable in the Israelites; but they were so offensive, even in the Canaanites, as to form a chief cause of their dreadful extirpation: being all of them either human imposture, or diabolical delusion; and either way conducive to the gratification of that ambitious spirit, who aspires, in every form, to be the god and prince of this world. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xxii. 18. Lev. xviii. 21, 24-30. xix. 26. xx. 2-5.)

V. 13. Be perfect.] That is, Be singly dependent on the Lord, and devoted to him. (Notes, Job. i. 1. Matt. v. 43-48.)

14 For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the LORD thy God hath not suffered thee so to do.

15 The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken:

16 According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God: neither let me see

this great fire any more, that I die not.

17 And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken.

18 I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

19 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

a See on v. 23.  
b See on 15.  
c v. 5. xxxiii. f. Ex. xi. 26—29. Num. xii. 6—8. Ps. ii. 6. cx. 4. Is. ix. 6. 7. Zech. vi. 13. Luke xxiv. 19. Gal. iii. 19. 20. 1 Tim. ii. 5. Heb. iii. 5, 6, vii. 22. xii. 24, 25.  
d Is. i. 4. ii. 16. John xvii. 8.  
e John iv. 25. viii. 28. xii. 49, 50. xv. 15.  
f Mark xvi. 16. Acts iii. 23. Heb. iii. 7. x. 26. xii. 25, 26.

V. 15—19. In order to counteract the temptation, to which the Israelites would be exposed, to imitate the Gentiles in the various arts of divination; the Lord gave them intimations, that he intended to afford them supernatural information, as far as profitable for them.—Many expositors, both Jewish and Christian, suppose, that a succession of prophets, till the times of the Messiah, is intended in the promise. But if this be well grounded, (as the context may seem to give some countenance to it,) they must be considered as speaking by the Spirit of Christ, and as preparing the way for his coming; without which all the rest would by no means have been an adequate completion of it. This however is certain, that it is a prediction which has had its main accomplishment in our blessed Saviour. As the great Antitype, he resembled Moses more than any other prophet ever did; and with much greater exactness, than he did any of the prophets or typical persons mentioned in the Old Testament.—Born in the reign of a persecuting tyrant, his life was sought in his infancy, and wonderfully preserved whilst many other infants were destroyed. (Notes, Ex. ii. Matt. ii.) At the entrance of his work, he rejected the proposal of “the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;” as Moses did the prospect of honour and affluence in Egypt; and preferred a suffering, poor, and despised life. (Notes, Matt. iv. 8—11. Heb. xi. 24—26.) He was opposed by those very persons, for whose sake he had thus voluntarily impoverished himself; yet, in the appointed time and manner, he accomplished the redemption of his people. (Note, Acts vii. 30—36.) His meekness and patience far exceeded those by which Moses was distinguished. He united in one person the offices of Prophet, Priest, and King. His transfiguration reminds us of Moses’s face shining when he came down from the mount. He feeds his people with the true manna, and gives them living water to drink. Many of his miracles resembled those of Moses; but especially his commanding the winds and waves, and walking upon the sea, remind us of the Red Sea divided at the word of Moses, that Israel might pass through. He was opposed by his brethren as well as by the people; and was especially objected to for espousing the Gentiles as his church. All the prophets and apostles spake as his delegates; even as all the former enforced the law of Moses: the whole Scripture is his word, and all ministers obtain their authority and receive their instruc-

tions from him. His knowledge of the Father, and his intimate fellowship with him, are unexampled and appropriate. His life was spent, and laid down, for the benefit of his people, and for their sins; and his resurrection precluded the exact knowledge of his sepulchre, and should have prevented the superstitious veneration for it. When he left his disciples he promised them another Teacher and Comforter, as Moses, before he left Israel, promised them a Prophet like unto himself. And it will most awfully be required of those who reject his salvation, who will not hearken to his instructions, or who refuse to have him to reign over them. (Notes, Acts ii. 22, 23. vii. 37—43.)—But the grand point in which this resemblance calls for our attention, is that marked out to us in the sixteenth verse. Moses acted as mediator between God and Israel, when the people, appalled at the terrors of mount Sinai, said, “Let us not hear again the voice of the LORD our God, neither let us see this great fire any more, that we die not;” and when the LORD said, “They have well spoken that which they have spoken.” (Notes, v. 22—29. Ex. xx. 18—20.) Thenceforth the LORD put his words into the mouth of Moses, through whose intervention they were instructed, in a manner more suited to their character and circumstances; and through whose intercession they were specially favoured as the people of God. But Christ is the “One Mediator between God and man.” He was “raised up from the midst of his brethren:” yea, he assumed our nature for that very purpose. “No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.” (Note, Matt. xi. 27.) To these “it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven;” but to such as refuse to hear him, “all things are spoken in parables.” “No man cometh to the Father but by him:” for “he is able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” No one of Adam’s fallen race can know God, or learn his truth and will, or approach him with comfort and acceptance, except through Christ; any more than Israel could have endured the revelation of God, and his words from Sinai’s fiery top, without the typical mediation of Moses. This is unspeakably the most important resemblance; and so decided and unambiguous a divine declaration on this infinitely important subject, in this ancient book, is peculiarly worthy of observation.—In other things a lively fancy might trace some specious

<sup>g</sup> xiii. 5. Jer. xiv. 14, 15. xxiii. 13—16. 31. xxvii. 15. Ez. xiii. 6. Matt. vii. 15, 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2.  
<sup>h</sup> xiii. 1, 2. 1 Kings xviii. 19. 27. 40. Jer. ii. 8. Zech. xiii. 3. Rev. xix. 20.

20 But <sup>a</sup>the prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak <sup>b</sup>in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.

21 And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken?

22 When a prophet <sup>k</sup> speaketh in the name of the LORD, <sup>l</sup>if the thing

follow not, nor come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, *but* the prophet hath spoken it <sup>m</sup>presumptuously; thou shalt not be afraid of him. <sup>m 20. Jer. xxviii. 15—17.</sup>

## CHAP. XIX.

The law concerning the cities of refuge enforced and explained, 1—13. Landmarks must not be removed, 14. Two witnesses required in a criminal cause, 15. How the false witness must be punished, 16—21.

similitude between several prophets and Moses; but in this, none except Jesus Christ ever bore the most remote resemblance to him. At the same time this prediction was a plain intimation, that the dispensation of Moses, and the law which he gave, (except as coincident with the preceptive part of all divine revelation,) were to endure only for a time: for not only would prophets arise to enforce his law; but another Prophet also like to him, who, as a Law-giver and Mediator, would introduce a new and more spiritual and permanent dispensation. (*Notes, Heb. vii. 11—17. viii. 7—13.*)

V. 20—22. These verses contain a clear prediction, that there should “also arise false prophets among the people,” and at length deceivers pretending to be the promised Messiah; and they constitute a direct command to the rulers to punish them with death, as presumptuous transgressors of the divine law. If such impostors spake in the name of any other God than JEHOVAH, the case was clear, and no further proof of guilt was needful; and accordingly, Elijah ordered the immediate execution of all Baal’s prophets. (*Note, 1 Kings xviii. 40.*) If the pretended message from God was evidently contrary to the grand principles of the law, the case coincided with that before stated. (*Note, xiii. 1—5.*) If a man only exhorted the people to obey the commands of God, he certainly needed no other credentials: but if his message was doubtful in this respect; and being required to give some proof of his divine mission, he should declare that such or such an event would take place at a certain time, (as Moses had done repeatedly to Pharaoh,) and the event did not take place; the people might be sure he was a deceiver and need not fear his denunciations.—When a prophet threatened judgments on the people for their sins, there was always an implied hope of mercy in case they repented: and in some instances, general promises of prosperity might be connected with the supposition of continued good behaviour. (*Note, Jer. xviii. 7—10.*) But when made *absolute*, and when the time was fixed, (as in Hananiah’s prediction, *Jer. xxviii.*) the failure was full proof of imposture. The Jews, in demanding of our Lord a sign from heaven, after all the undeniable and beneficent miracles which he had performed, seem to have had this law in mind. But his doctrine perfectly accorded to the preceding Scriptures rightly understood; he appealed to the testimony of Moses and the prophets, as well as that of John the Baptist, in connexion with his own miracles; every thing in the preceding dispensations was suited to lead the impartial and pious mind to expect such a Messiah as he

was, and such a change as he shewed an intention to effect; and finally, it was foretold, that he should be put to death by the teachers and rulers of Israel: he would therefore give them no other sign than that of Jonah, which, being answered in his death and resurrection on the third day, was in all respects perfectly satisfactory. (*Notes, Matt. xii. 38—42.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.<sup>n</sup>

The ministers of the gospel should, by a decent provision, be preserved from pressing temptations to entangle themselves with the affairs of this life, that they may be at leisure for their proper employment; and they are absolutely inexcusable, if covetousness, and other carnal principles, engage them in contentions, law-suits, or selfish projects. (*Note, 2 Tim. ii. 3—7.*)—We do nothing to good purpose, that we do not engage in “with all the desire of our mind.” It is well when this influences us “to leave all for the sake of Christ and the gospel.” He will not suffer such disciples to “lose their reward;” and it is *his* appointment, that those ministers, who “labour most in the word and doctrine” should be best provided for. Yea, they who will do no more in God’s service than man will pay them for, are not worthy of being called the ministers of Christ at all. (*Note, Mal. i. 9—11.*)—Christians are required simply to trust the Lord, and submit to him; and cannot want any information, security, or assistance, which he will not afford them: and the Lord their God not only doth not suffer them to do such things, as he abhorred in the Canaanites, and will much more abhor in them; but he calls upon them to bear testimony against every evil work.—We have a Prophet like unto Moses, but infinitely superior, to shew us the truth and will of God, the way of acceptance and of holiness; nay, to “shew us the Father;” for “he that hath seen him hath seen the Father:” “he dwelleth in the Father, and the Father in him.” (*Note, John xiv. 7—14.*) Yet is he raised up from among his brethren, and dwells likewise in human nature. That view of God which he gives, will not terrify or overwhelm, but encourage us: he speaks with fraternal affection and divine authority conjoined. Woe then be to those who refuse to hearken to his voice, to accept of his salvation, or yield obedience to his sway! But happy they who trust and obey him! He will lead them into the paths of safety and of peace; he will teach them to distinguish his ministers from those of Satan, however disguised; and he will preserve them from every delusion, until he bring them to the land of perfect light, purity, and felicity.

**WHEN** the LORD thy God <sup>a</sup> hath cut off the nations, whose land the LORD thy God giveth thee, and thou <sup>\*</sup> succeedest them, and dwellest in their cities, and in their houses;

2 Thou shalt <sup>b</sup> separate three cities for thee in the midst of thy land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it.

3 Thou shalt <sup>c</sup> prepare thee a way, and divide the coasts of thy land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee to inherit, into three parts, that every slayer may flee thither.

4 And this is the case of <sup>d</sup> the slayer which shall flee thither, that he may live: whoso killeth his neighbour ignorantly, whom he hated not <sup>e</sup> in time past;

5 As when a man goeth into the wood with his neighbour to hew wood, and his hand fetcheth a stroke with the axe to cut down the tree, and the <sup>f</sup> head slippeth from the <sup>g</sup> helve, and <sup>h</sup> lighteth upon his neighbour, that he die; <sup>i</sup> he shall flee unto one of those cities and live:

6 Lest <sup>j</sup> the avenger of the blood pursue the slayer, while his heart is hot, and overtake him, because the way is long, and <sup>k</sup> slay him; whereas he <sup>l</sup> was <sup>m</sup> not worthy of death, inasmuch as he hated him not <sup>n</sup> in time past.

7 Wherefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt separate three cities for thee.

8 And if the LORD thy God <sup>o</sup> enlarge thy coast, as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, and give thee all the land

which he promised to give unto thy fathers;

9 (<sup>i</sup> If thou shalt keep all these commandments to do them, which I command thee this day, to love the LORD thy God, and to walk ever in his ways;) then shalt thou add three cities more for thee, beside these three:

10 That <sup>j</sup> innocent blood be not shed <sup>k</sup> in thy land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and so blood be upon thee.

11 But <sup>l</sup> if any man hate his neighbour, and lie in wait for him, and rise up against him, and smite him <sup>m</sup> mortally that he die, and fleeth into one of these cities;

12 Then the elders of his city shall send and <sup>n</sup> fetch him thence, and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die.

13 <sup>o</sup> Thine eye shall not pity him; but <sup>p</sup> thou shalt put away *the guilt of* innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with thee.

14 ¶ Thou <sup>q</sup> shalt not remove thy neighbour's land-mark, which they of old time have set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it.

15 ¶ One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: <sup>r</sup> at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.

16 If <sup>s</sup> a false witness rise up against

## NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 2—10. (Notes, and P. O. Num. xxxv. 9—34. Josh. xx.) Three cities of refuge had already been allotted on the east of Jordan; (iv. 41—43:) and the other three were ordered to be set apart, as soon as the people were settled in the country west of Jordan: and in case their boundaries should in after ages be enlarged, three more were to be added. In selecting these cities they were commanded to be careful to proportion the distances, "that the way might not be too long" to some one of them, from any part of the land: and the way was also to be prepared; "that innocent blood should not be shed in their land," by the avenger of blood overtaking the unfortunate man-slayer, before he arrived at a place of refuge. —The promise of still further enlarging the possessions of Israel, was conditional; and by their disobedience they

so far forfeited it, that these additional cities of refuge seem never to have been appointed. The Jews flatter themselves with the expectation of a future accomplishment of these promises, when this addition will be made.

V. 11—13. Notes, Ex. xxi. 12—14. Num. xxxv. 16—25.

V. 14. As land-marks constituted the customary method of distinguishing landed property, in those days; removing them would be a crime among the Israelites, similar to forging, altering, destroying, or concealing the title-deeds of estates at this day; and it would occasion atrocious injustice, and make way for dispute and law-suits. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 15—21. One witness was insufficient to prove a crime against any person; (Notes, xvii. 2—7. 1 Tim. v. 19, 20;) and if his evidence was suspected to be false, he would himself be liable to a prosecution. But as it might

• Or, *falling away*. any man, to testify against him *that which is wrong*;

17 Then both the men, between whom the controversy *is*, shall stand before the LORD, *before the priests and the judges which shall be in those days*.

18 And the judges shall make *diligent inquisition*: and, behold, *if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother*;

19 Then *'shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother*: *"so shalt thou put away the evil from among you*.

20 And those which remain shall *'hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among you*.

21 And *'thine eye shall not pity; but 'life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot*.

#### CHAP. XX.

The priest required to exhort the soldiers before they engage in battle, 1—4. What persons the officers must permit to retire, 5—9. How the cities, which

accept or refuse peace, must be treated, 10—15. The devoted nations to be extirpated, 16—18. Fruit-trees must be spared in a siege, 19, 20.

WHEN thou *'goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest <sup>b</sup> horses and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for <sup>c</sup> the LORD thy God is with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt*.

2 And it shall be, when ye are come nigh unto the battle, that *'the priest shall approach, and speak unto the people*,

3 And shall say unto them, Hear, O Israel; Ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies; *'let not your hearts <sup>f</sup>faint; fear not, and do not <sup>†</sup>tremble, neither <sup>f</sup>'be ye terrified because of them*:

4 For the LORD your God *is he that goeth with you, <sup>§</sup>to fight for you against your enemies, to save you*.

5 ¶ And the *<sup>h</sup>officers shall speak unto the people, saying, What man is there that hath built a new house, and*

be difficult to decide such a cause, it must be referred to the supreme court: and if on strict enquiry he was found guilty, the law of retaliation must be adopted and strictly executed, as the impartial rule of the magistrates in punishing him, without yielding to pity; that the fatal effects of false and malicious testimony might be prevented. (*Marg. Ref.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In conveying instruction, familiar examples and illustrations, though taken from the most ordinary occupations or scenes of life, are of very great use, to give determinate ideas of the thing to be inculcated: and in laws especially, precision should be studied, that the distinction between the innocent and the guilty, and between a man's crime and his calamity, may be as plainly specified as it is possible. For whether the criminal escape unpunished, or the innocent suffer, injustice is committed; and in case of blood-shed, guilt is brought upon the land where it takes place. On such occasions, compassion for the offender may become cruelty to numbers: it must therefore be moderated; or counteracted by the fear of God, the love of justice, and general benevolence. But to avoid the horrid crime of murder, we must watch and pray against the first emotions of hatred and anger: and to be preserved from injustice, we must beware of covetousness, which is wonderfully ingenious, in devising such methods of defrauding as may escape detection, censure, or human punishment. (*Notes, Ex. xx. 13. 15. 17.*)—Alas! what a reproach is it to the whole human species, that God him-

self forbids the testimony of any one man to be taken in things of consequence! Verily he judges all men to be liars, and none absolutely and in all cases to be trusted; which is not only a caution to judges and juries, but a reason for watchfulness and humiliation to us all.—Few crimes are more atrocious in their nature, pernicious in their effects, or affronting to God, than bearing false witness in matters of great importance; and with us especially, since it is *always* connected with perjury. It is greatly to be wished that it was more commonly and severely punished by man, according to this most excellent and equitable law: but it will assuredly meet with its due punishment from a righteous God! Let all Christians however be cautious not only in *bearing publick testimony*, but also not to propagate *private slanders*; and let those whose consciences accuse them of these or other crimes, without delay flee for refuge to the hope set before us in Jesus Christ.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1—4. In all the wars, which Israel waged according to the will of God, they might assuredly expect his special assistance. This should have been their only confidence; of this his former wonderful works were their assurance; and of these the priests were required to remind them for their encouragement. It is generally thought, that one of the most considerable of the priests always accompanied their armies, to perform the service here stated.

V. 5—9. The Israelites were accustomed to enter on

<sup>1</sup> Neh. xii. 27. Pa. **xxx Title.** hath not <sup>1</sup>dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. *made is common.* Lev. xix. 23—25. Jer xxxi. 5. <sup>3</sup> Is. lxxv. 22. Zeph i. 13. 6 And what man *is he* that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not *yet* <sup>4</sup> eaten of it? let him *also* go and return unto his house, <sup>5</sup> lest he die in the battle, and another man eat of it.

<sup>6</sup> xxiii. 23—25. xxiv. 5. Matt i. 18. 7 And what man *is there* that hath <sup>7</sup> betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, <sup>8</sup> lest he die in battle, and another man take her.

<sup>9</sup> And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, What man *is there that is* <sup>10</sup> fearful and faint-hearted? let him go and return unto his house, <sup>11</sup> lest his brethren's heart <sup>12</sup> faint as well as his heart.

<sup>13</sup> And it shall be, when the officers have made an end of speaking unto the people, that they shall make captains of the armies <sup>14</sup> to lead the people.

<sup>15</sup> ¶ When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, <sup>16</sup> then proclaim peace unto it.

<sup>17</sup> And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, *that* all the people *that* <sup>18</sup> is found therein shall be <sup>19</sup> tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee.

12 And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it.

13 And when the LORD thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, <sup>14</sup> thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword.

14 But <sup>15</sup> the women and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, *even* all the spoil thereof, shalt thou <sup>16</sup> take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the LORD thy God hath given thee.

15 Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities *which are* very far off from thee, which *are* not of the cities of these nations.

16 But <sup>17</sup> of the cities of these people, which the LORD thy God doth give thee *for* an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth:

17 But <sup>18</sup> thou shalt utterly destroy them, *namely*, <sup>19</sup> the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee:

18 That they <sup>19</sup> teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; so should ye sin against the LORD your God.

<sup>1</sup> See on Num. xxxi. 7, 17, 18. 1 Kings xi. 16. Ps. ii. 6—12. xxi. 8, 9. cx. 1. Luke xix. 27. 2 Thes. i. 7—9. Num. xxxi. 9. 12. 18. 35. &c. Josh. viii. 2. xi. 14. 2 Chr. xiv. 18—15. xx. 25. Pa. lxxviii. 12. Rom. viii. 37. Heb. *spoil*.

<sup>1</sup> vil. 2, 3. 16 Num. xxi. 2. Josh. vi. 17. 21. ix. 24. 27. x. 28. 40. xl. 11, 12. 14.

<sup>1</sup> Is. xxxiv. 5, 6. Jer. xlviii. 10. 1. 35—40. Ez. xxxviii. 21—23. Rev. xix. 18. x See on vil. i.

<sup>1</sup> vil. 4, 5. xii. 30. 31. Ex. xxxiii. 33. Josh. xxi. 13. Judg. ii. 3. Pa. cvi. 34—40. 1 Cor. xv. 33. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Thes. iii. 14. 1 Tim. vi. 5. 2 Tim. ii. 17. 18. Rev. xviii. 3—5.

their houses when finished, by making a cheerful feast for their friends; accompanied, as it seems reasonable to conclude, with a solemn act of devotion, by which their habitations were put under the immediate protection of God, and the blessings of his grace and peace were supplicated, that they might prove houses of harmony and piety. (*Note, Ps. xxx. title.*)—It is probable, that these regulations were not intended to take place in the first wars of Canaan, in which all who were able were required to enlist; but in those in which the nation might afterwards engage. They however contain a remarkable illustration of the Lord's condescension to all the allowable affections of human nature, and were calculated to compose armies constituted of persons whose minds were free from discomposure and dismay. Some suppose that the *fearful* were such as were intimidated by a guilty conscience; and thence infer, that atrocious sinners are an encumbrance and a curse to armies, as well as churches. (xxiii. 9. *Notes, Josh. vii. 10—12. P. O. 10—15. Judg. vii. 2, 3.*) This is indeed very different from the principles of modern tactics, and the practice of modern statesmen and commanders.—However, until the cowards were dismissed, the subordinate officers must not be appointed.

V. 10—18. We must suppose, in the cases here intended, that the Israelites had some warrantable cause of

levying war; which covetousness, ambition, and the thirst of dominion could not be. When, therefore, they had been injured or assaulted by any foreign nation, they were required to proceed in the manner here prescribed: for the Lord purposed by these means to enlarge their dominions, whilst they continued obedient. There were doubtless wise reasons why they were not only *allowed*, but, as it seems, *commanded*, to put to death all the males who were capable of resistance. The lives and property of all men are the Lord's, forfeited to his justice, to be disposed of at his pleasure and for his glory. These regulations, however, are not the rule of our conduct, which must be directed by the general *law of love*; and that prohibits unnecessary bloodshed and plunder, in war as well as in peace.—One reason of this severity might be, to shadow forth the fatal consequences of persisting in rebellion, and enmity against God, and in contempt of the proposal of peace and reconciliation set before men in the gospel.—Some are of opinion that no terms of peace might, in any case whatever, be offered or allowed to the devoted inhabitants of Canaan; because their measure of wickedness was filled up, and they would be a constant temptation to the Israelites: but we shall meet with events in the course of this history, which will not easily comport with the absolute interpretation. (*Notes, Josh. ii. 8—16. vi. 22, 23.*)

19 ¶ When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an axe against them: for thou mayest eat of them, and <sup>a</sup>thou shalt not cut them down (<sup>a</sup> for the <sup>a</sup> tree of the field is man's life)

† to employ *them* in the siege.

20 Only the trees, which thou knowest that they *be* not trees for meat, thou shalt destroy, and cut them down; and thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee, until it <sup>2</sup> be subdued.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. iii. 10. vii. 15—20. xxi. 19. Luke xiii. 7—9. John xv. 2—8.

<sup>a</sup> Or, for, O man, the tree of the field is to be employed in the siege.

<sup>a</sup> xxiv. 6.

† Heb. to go from before thee.

<sup>b</sup> i. 28. 2 Chr. xxvi. 15. Ec. ix. 14. Is. xxxvii. 33. Jer. vi. 6. xxxiii. 4. Ez. xvii. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. come down.

4. Ez. xvii. 17.

† Heb. come down.

ix. xi. 19, 20.) Others, therefore, suppose the meaning to be, that in case the Canaanites rejected peace and servitude, this entire extirpation was to take place: whereas only the grown males were to be put to death, in other cities, in similar circumstances; and the rest of the inhabitants reduced to subjection, as tributaries under the rulers of Israel, but not to personal slavery.—The Jewish writers assert that they might not be spared unless they renounced idolatry: but this would introduce a law enacting persecution, which is no where to be found in Scripture, nor any thing like one. The Canaanites, as condemned criminals, were ordered for execution; and it is doubtful, whether peace were to be offered them on any terms; and idolatrous Israelites were to be capitally punished: but the nation had no commission to use the sword in propagating religion; though some Christian writers express themselves as if they had.

V. 19, 20. The original words, rendered “for the tree of the field is man's life,” are variously interpreted; (*marg.*) but our translation probably gives the true meaning. The instruction evidently is, that the Israelites should not make unnecessary waste of things useful to man's life, as fruit-trees were; and therefore in sieges they should form their machines of timber-trees only.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

War is an express appeal to the righteous Governor of the world, and should be undertaken and conducted upon such principles, and such only, as he approves. When the cause warrants this awful appeal, our confidence should be placed, not in chariots and horses, not in fleets and armies, not in experienced commanders and brave soldiers, but in the Lord of hosts himself.—Though the faithful ministers of religion are generally slighted by those, who “jeopardy their lives in the high places of the field;” yet in reality none so much want their instructions, counsels, and prayers, both *individually*, and with respect to the common cause. Nor is any valour *rational*, but that which springs from faith, a good conscience, a sense of duty, reliance on God, and a hope of heaven: for he who neither fears those who kill the body, nor him who is able to “destroy both body and soul in hell,” is not valiant, but absolutely mad.—In war itself, justice and the love of peace should dictate every measure; the voice of humanity should be heard distinctly, even in the noise of battle;

#### CHAP. XXI.

Expiation to be made for the land from murder, when the murderer was concealed, 1—9. How the marriage of an Israelite with a captive maid must be regulated, 10—14. The first-born not to be disinherited to please the beloved wife, 15—17. The rebellious son to be stoned, 18—21. Malefactors not to remain all night on a tree, 22, 23.

IF one be <sup>a</sup>found slain in the land, which the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it, lying in the field, and it be not known who hath slain him;

2 Then <sup>b</sup>thy elders and thy judges shall come forth, and they shall mea-

Ps. v. 6. ix. 12. Prov. xxviii. 17. Is. xxvi. 21. Acts xxviii. 4.

<sup>b</sup> See on xvi. 18, 19.—Rom. xiii. 3, 4.

and wanton cruelty or waste should never sully the soldier's reputation.—Yet in all cases and with every possible mitigation, the horrors of war must, when reflected upon, give pain to the feeling heart; and can only be considered as evidences of the depravity of man, and the power and malice of Satan; and of the just vengeance of God, who thus scourges a guilty world. May he hasten the time when “swords shall be beaten into plough-shares, and men shall learn war no more!”—But how dreadful is the case of those, who are engaged in unequal contest with their Maker, who refuse his proposals of peace, and who will not submit to be his servants, and render him the easy tribute of worship and praise, and subjection to his easy yoke, and kind commandments! Inevitable ruin awaits them. May we follow peace with God and man; and wage war against our lusts and the powers of darkness, with undaunted courage and unrelenting severity. In this contest, neither the number nor power of our enemies should dismay us; nay, our own weakness should not cause us to tremble or faint: for the Lord himself will fight for us, and save us; and all his wonders wrought for his church ensure our victory. But none can fight this good fight, whose hearts are inordinately attached to worldly objects, or who are afraid of the cross, or the conflict; for they will themselves desert, and discourage others. Above all, ministers should be valiant in the cause, and by their example, as well as exhortations, animate the people for the contest. Finally, whilst we shew no mercy to any sin, and will have no friendship with any tempter; let us shew a spirit of peace, forgiveness, and benevolence towards all mankind.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1—9. This law was enacted to increase the horror of murder, and to promote the detection of the criminal, by a public and solemn transaction, under the management of the magistrates of the nearest city, associated with the priests; by putting numbers upon enquiry; by calling upon every one to clear himself; and by warning all men not to conceal the criminal.—The “heifer, which had not drawn in the yoke,” represented the murderer, the son of Belial, who refused to bear the yoke of God's law: and the “rough valley” might denote the worthlessness of the criminal's character, or the disagreeableness of the transaction. “Striking off the neck

sure unto the cities which *are* round about him that is slain.

3 And it shall be, *that* the city which is next unto the slain man, even the elders of that city shall take <sup>a</sup>an heifer which hath not been wrought with, *and* which hath not drawn in the yoke.

4 And the elders of that city shall bring down the heifer unto a rough valley which is neither eared nor sown, and <sup>d</sup>shall strike off the heifer's neck there in the valley:

5 And the priests the sons of Levi shall come near: <sup>a</sup>for them the LORD thy God hath chosen to minister unto him, and to bless in the name of the LORD, and <sup>b</sup>by their <sup>a</sup>word shall every controversy and every stroke be *tried*;

6 And all the elders of that city, *that are* next unto the slain man shall <sup>e</sup>wash their hands over the heifer that is beheaded in the valley.

7 And they shall answer and say, <sup>b</sup>Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen *it*.

8 Be merciful, O LORD, unto thy people Israel, whom thou hast redeemed, and <sup>c</sup>lay not innocent blood <sup>d</sup>unto thy people of Israel's charge. And the blood shall be forgiven them.

<sup>c</sup> Num. xix. 2.  
Jer. xxxi. 8.  
Matt. xi. 28—30.  
Phil. ii. 8.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 21—24.  
Is. 18.

<sup>e</sup> See on x. 8.  
xxviii. 5.—Num.  
vi. 22—27. 1 Chr.  
xxiii. 13.

<sup>f</sup> See on xvii. 8—  
12.—Mat. ii. 7.  
<sup>g</sup> Heb. mouth.

<sup>g</sup> Job ix. 30. Ps.  
xix. 12. xxvi. 6.  
II. 2. 7. 14. xxxiii.  
13. Jer. ii. 22.  
Matt. xxvii. 24.  
25. Heb. ix. 10.  
<sup>h</sup> Num. v. 17—28.  
2 Sam. xvi. 8.  
Job xxx. 2.—23.  
37—40. Ps. vii.  
3. 4.

<sup>i</sup> Num. xxxv. 33.  
2 Sam. iii. 28.  
2 Kings xxiv. 4.  
Jer. xxvi. 15.  
Ez. xxii. 3. 24.  
25. Jon. i. 14.  
Matt. xxiii. 35.  
1 Thes. ii. 15, 16.  
<sup>j</sup> Heb. in the  
mist.

9 So <sup>k</sup>thalt thou put away the *guilt* <sup>k</sup>of innocent blood from among you, <sup>l</sup>when thou shalt do *that which is right* in the sight of the LORD.

10 ¶ When <sup>m</sup>thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the LORD thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive,

11 And seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast <sup>n</sup>a desire unto her, <sup>o</sup>that thou wouldest have her to thy wife;

12 Then thou shalt bring her home to thine house, and <sup>p</sup>she shall shave her head and <sup>q</sup>pare her nails;

13 And she shall put the raiment of her captivity from off her, and shall remain in thine house, and <sup>r</sup>bewail her father and her mother a full month: and after that thou shalt go in unto her, and be her husband, and she shall be thy wife.

14 And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will; but <sup>s</sup>thou shalt not sell her at all for money, thou shalt not make merchandize of her, <sup>t</sup>because thou hast humbled her.

15 ¶ If a man have <sup>u</sup>two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they

<sup>k</sup> See on xix. 12.  
13.  
<sup>l</sup> xlii. 18. 2 Kings  
x. 30, 31.

<sup>m</sup> See on xx. 10—  
16

<sup>n</sup> Gen. v. 2. xii.  
14, 15. xxix. 18  
—20. xxxiv. 3. 8.  
Judg. xiv. 2. 3.  
Prov. vi. 25.  
xxxi. 10. 30.  
<sup>o</sup> Num. xxxi. 18.

<sup>p</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 6.  
Eph. iv. 22.  
<sup>q</sup> Or, *pluck* to  
grow. Heb.  
make, or, dress.

<sup>r</sup> Ps. xlv. 10, 11.  
Luke xiv. 26,  
27.

<sup>s</sup> Ex. xxi. 7—11.

<sup>t</sup> xxii. 19. 24. 29.  
Gen. xxxiv. 2.  
Judg. xix. 24.

<sup>u</sup> Gen. xxix. 30.  
31. 33. 1 Sam. i.  
4, 5.

“of the heifer,” not by the priests but by the elders, expressed the desert of the criminal, and their readiness thus to punish him if they could detect him. “Washing their hands” was an external sign of the protestation of innocence and ignorance concerning the murder, which they were required to make: (Note, Matt. xxvii. 24, 25;) the prayer, which the *priests* are supposed to have added, strongly declared that murder contaminates, and leaves guilt upon, every land and every person, that does not endeavour by all proper means to bring the criminal to condign punishment: (Note, Num. xxxv. 31—34;) and the whole shadowed forth the atonement and intercession of Christ, through which iniquity is pardoned by a merciful God to his redeemed people.

V. 10—14. The case here regulated would inevitably take place on some occasions: and this statute implies no approbation of an Israelite's marrying a heathen captive, induced merely by her beauty; especially as it does not exclude the case of those, who were previously married. If however, a man became enamoured of his captive, he was not allowed to use force or authority to gratify his inclination, or to proceed with precipitation; but to take time for reflection. (Note, Num. xxxi. 14—18.) By taking the captive into the house, and there keeping her retired, her disposition would be discovered more easily; and if that proved disagreeable, the passion might abate. The

becoming attire and ornaments, in which she might be taken captive, being changed for the mean habit of a mourner, might tend to diminish her attractions. “Shaving her head” would certainly have this effect; and the words rendered, *paring her nails*, seem rather to mean, *letting them grow*. Some, however, think she was in this interim to be instructed in the law; and that these were external tokens of her renouncing idolatry, and embracing the religion of Israel. Her grief also for the death of her parents, if slain, or for her separation from them, would subside, and her mind be more reconciled to her condition; and if at last the Israelite continued in the same mind, he might marry her.—But in case he *humbled* her, and afterwards did not choose to continue her as his wife, he must not keep her as a slave, or sell her, but must give her her liberty, and act towards her according to the regulations made concerning women when divorced by their husbands. (Notes, xxiv. 1—4.)—All these circumstances would help to increase the caution of the Israelites, and tend to prevent them from rashly entering into these improper connexions.

V. 15—17. This law does not appear exclusively to apply to the case of polygamy, but to him also who had two wives in succession. In either case, the double portion, which according to custom was allotted to the heir, must be given to the eldest son, though not the son of the

have born him children, *both* the beloved and the hated: and *if* the first-born son be her's that was hated;

16 Then it shall be, "when he maketh his sons to inherit *that* which he hath, *that* he may not make the son of the beloved first-born, before the son of the hated, *which is indeed* the first-born:

17 But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated *for* the first-born, "by giving him a double portion of all "that he hath: for he *is* "the beginning of his strength; the right of the first-born *is* his.

18 ¶ If a man have "a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not "obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and *that*, "when they have chastened him, "will not hearken unto them;

19 Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, "and bring

him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place:

20 And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son *is* stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; "he *is* a glutton and a drunkard.

21 And "all the men of his city shall stone him with stones that he die: "so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.

22 ¶ And if a man have committed "a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and "thou hang him on a tree;

23 His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for "he that *is* hanged *is* "accursed of God;) that "thy land be not defiled, which the Lord thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance.

1 Chr. xxvi. 10.  
2 Chr. xi. 19—  
22. xxi. 3. Rom.  
viii. 29. Phil. iv.  
8. Heb. xii. 16,  
17.

x Gen. xxv. 5, 6.  
32. 34. 1 Chr. v.  
1, 2.

\* Heb. *that is*  
found with him.  
y Gen. xlix. 3. 1s.  
cv. 36.

z Prov. xxviii. 24.  
xxx. 11. 17. 1s.  
i. 2.

a xxvii. 16. Ex. xx.  
12. xxi. 15. 17.  
Lev. xix. 3. xxi.  
9. Prov. xv. 6.  
xx. 20. Ez. xxxii.  
7.

b viii. 5. 2 Sam.  
vii. 14. Prov.  
xiii. 24. xix. 18.  
xxii. 15. xxxiii.  
13, 14. xxix. 17.  
Heb. xii. 9—11.

c 1s. i. 5. Jer v. 8.  
xxxi. 18. Ez.  
xxiv. 13. Amos  
iv. 11, 12.

d 2. xvi. 18. xxv.  
7. Zech. xiii. 3.

e Prov. xix. 26.  
xx. 1. xxxiii. 20,  
21. 29—35.

f xiii. 10, 11. xvi.  
5. Lev. xxiv. 16.  
Num. xv. 35.  
g xiii. 5. xix. 19.  
20. xxii. 21. 24.

h xix. 6. xxii. 26.  
1 Sam. xxvi. 16.  
Matt. xxvii. 66.  
Acts xxiii. 29.  
xxv. 11. 25. xxvi.  
31.

i Josh. viii. 29. x.  
26, 27. 2 Sam.  
iv. 12. xxi. 6, 9.  
Luke xxiii. 33.  
John xix. 31—  
38.

k 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal.  
iii. 13.

† Heb. *the curse*  
of God. vii. 26.  
Num. xxv. 4.  
Josh. vii. 12.  
Rom. ix. 3.  
1 Cor. xvi. 22.  
l Lev. xxiii. 25.  
Num. xxxv. 34.

best beloved wife; which would counteract the effect of unjust and unreasonable partialities, and be a sort of compensation to her, who had the misfortune to be comparatively slighted and hated. (Notes, Gen. xxix. 30—35. xlix. 3, 4. 1 Chr. v. 1, 2.)

V. 18—21. This law has great wisdom and mercy, couched under its apparent severity; and it could not fail of producing most salutary effects, as far as any regard was paid to it. The parents were the only prosecutors; both must concur in the prosecution; and the elders of the city must decide the cause. The prosecution could not be admitted, but for stubbornness and rebellion, connected with gluttony and drunkenness, and persisted in after rebukes and corrections: and these vices tended directly to ruin families and communities. The offender must be convicted and proved incorrigible, by evidence sufficient to induce the judges to denounce sentence, and the men of the city to execute it. Natural affection would seldom be so overcome, even by the basest crimes, as to admit both parents thus to join in prosecuting a son, much less to do so without sufficient cause: and in the very few instances, in which hasty rage, or implacable resentment might induce parents to attempt such a horrid, unnatural murder, as a needless prosecution must imply; the most effectual precautions were taken to prevent the consequences. The execution of the law must of course very seldom take place; and if ever it did, it could not fail to excite general attention and alarm, and prove a salutary warning to tens of thousands.—Its very existence, as far as known, would exceedingly strengthen the authority of parents; give weight to their commands, reproofs, and corrections; and create an additional fear of provoking their deep resentment. It would fortify young men against the enticements of bad companions, and the force of strong temptations, and thus check the progress of wickedness. Moreover, it would be a constant admonition to parents to watch over

their children, and not improperly to indulge them, or withhold correction; but to establish their authority over them while young, to pray for them, to check the first buddings of vice, and to set them a good example. This statute therefore, so harmless and beneficial in its operation, yet so contrary to human policy, rather proves than invalidates the divine authority of the book in which it stands recorded.—No impostor would ever have thought of enacting such a law.

V. 22, 23. The Israelites did not execute criminals by *strangulation*, as among us, or by *crucifixion*; yet after they were dead, in detestation to their crimes, their bodies were sometimes ignominiously suspended, or gibbeted, on a tree, or piece of wood. But in honour of human nature, (at first formed after the image of God, afterwards made the Temple in which "all the fulness of the God—"head dwells," and hereafter in innumerable instances to partake of a glorious resurrection;) the body of an Israelite might not hang all night in this situation, whatever his crimes had been; as that would even defile the land. (Notes, Josh. viii. 29. 2 Sam. xxi. 9—14. John xix. 31—37.) In the current opinion, they who were thus suspended, were deemed *accursed of God*, and devoted to utter destruction: but the Holy Spirit doubtless dictated this expression with reference to him who "was made a "curse for us." (Note, Gal. iii. 10—14.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Those laws are framed most wisely, which have the most effectual tendency to prevent crimes and punishments; and by this rule let the reader judge of the laws before us, compared with the municipal laws of other countries. For whatever can increase our horror of enormous wickedness, or cause the conscience to recoil at the thought of it, must counteract the violence of the passions and the force of temptations, and excite watchfulness against the occasions

## CHAP. XXII.

Strayed cattle and lost property to be restored, and another's ass or ox, if fallen, to be lifted up, 1—4. The sexes to be distinguished by apparel, 5. The dam not to be taken with her young, 6, 7. Battlements to be made on every house, 8. Improper mixtures to be avoided, 9—11. Fringes to be worn on garments, 12. The case of a woman accused of unchastity before marriage, 13—21. Adultery to be punished with death, the betrothed virgin being adjudged a wife, 22—24. Rapes to be punished with death, 25—27. Of fornication, 28, 29. Incest forbidden, 30.

**THOU** "shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray, and <sup>b</sup>hide thyself from them; thou shalt in any case bring them again unto thy brother.

2 And if thy brother *be* not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not,

then thou shalt bring it unto thine own house, and it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it, and <sup>c</sup>thou shalt restore it to him again.

3 In like manner shalt thou do with his ass, and so shalt thou do with his raiment; and with all lost things of thy brother's, which he hath lost, and thou hast found, shalt thou do likewise: thou mayest not hide thyself.

4 Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them; <sup>d</sup>thou shalt surely help him to lift *them* up again.

5 ¶ The <sup>e</sup>woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so *are* <sup>f</sup>abominations unto the LORD thy God.

<sup>c</sup> Matt. vii. 12.  
<sup>d</sup> 1 Thes. iv. 6.

<sup>d</sup> Ex. xxiii. 5.  
Matt. v. 44.  
Luke x. 29—37.  
Rom. xv. 1.  
2 Cor. xii. 15.  
Gal. vi. 1, 2.  
1 Thes. v. 14.  
Heb. xii. 12, 13.  
<sup>e</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 4—16.

<sup>f</sup> See on xviii. 12.

and inlets to disobedience. The dread of murder should especially be deeply impressed on every heart: and in detecting and punishing all who in any form are guilty of it, magistrates, ministers, old and young, ought to concur; and that man should be adjudged a public enemy, not only who is accessory to the commission of this crime, but who assists the criminal in eluding or escaping justice, by which the guilt of innocent blood rests upon the land.—But alas! all that most of us can do, in preventing the increase of this *national guilt*, is by our earnest prayers.—Reason and religion, with combined force, forbid us to lay the reins upon the neck of our headstrong lusts, and command us to teach our strongest inclinations to brook denial or delay, and to view the objects of our inordinate affections, as stript of all their adventitious charms, and with all their defects and deformities, in order to abate the vehemence of passion. Considering things thus coolly, we may, perhaps before it be too late, have our admiration changed into disgust, and many fatal consequences may be prevented. But inhumanity, treachery, and injustice, can in no case be palliated or excused, though called by soft names and varnished over with plausible pretences.—Irregular indulgences frequently end in dislike and ill-treatment of the very object that was inordinately loved! thus, instead of compensation for an injury, (for which indeed no adequate compensation can be rendered,) more injuries are committed.—The Lord will plead the cause of the oppressed, and will not allow that injustice should be done to any one, either from *partiality*, or covetousness. And let it not be passed over slightly, that great iniquity is frequently committed by men, in disposing of their substance by will; and sometimes this forms the last action of their lives.—Disobedience to parental authority must be extremely criminal, when so severe a punishment of it was denounced by God himself; nor is it less provoking to him now, though it generally escapes punishment in this world.—But when young people early become slaves to their appetites, the heart soon grows hard, and the conscience cal-

lous, and we can expect no other than obstinate rebellion and utter destruction. They who would escape ruin must flee youthful lusts, listen to the instructions of their parents, and submit to reproof and correction; and if parents would not have their children their greatest sorrow, they should "train them up in the nurture and admonition of the "Lord."—What then do we deserve for our rebellion against "the Father of our spirits?" We were indeed under an awful curse; but Christ hath purchased redemption by becoming a curse for us: yet, whilst we continue in sin, no benefit will thence accrue to us; but rather our condemnation will thus be aggravated. Let us then fear adding obstinacy to rebellion: and let us remember, that though the human body after death ought not to be treated with degradation by man; yet God will doom both the bodies and souls of the wicked, "to depart accursed into "everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels;" while "the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the "kingdom of their Father."

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1—4. (Note, Ex. xxiii. 4, 5.) The nature of the case here leads us to understand by *brother*, any human being; as our Lord explains the word *neighbour*. When the owner of lost goods is not known, the finder at least knows *that they are not his*; nor can be, unless after diligent search and waiting no owner can be found.

V. 5. The prohibition no doubt was intended to exclude the customs of the heathen worshippers, who shamefully violated it for the worst of purposes: yet it is of *moral tendency*, and of *general obligation*; as it is added, "for all "that do so are an abomination unto the LORD," which is never annexed to a *merely ceremonial institution*. The practice prohibited is not only indecent and of bad appearance, but has in all ages been made subservient to lewdness, and to obtain opportunities of perpetrating the grossest crimes; to prevent which it is of great importance, that

6 If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way, in any tree, or on the ground, *whether they be young ones, or eggs*, and the dam sitting upon the young, or upon the eggs, <sup>g</sup>thou shalt not take the dam with the young:

7 But thou shalt, in any wise, let the dam go, and take the young to thee: <sup>a</sup>that it may be well with thee, and *that* thou mayest prolong *thy* days.

8 When thou buildest a new house, <sup>i</sup>then thou shalt make a battlement for <sup>j</sup>thy roof, that <sup>k</sup>thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence.

9 Thou <sup>l</sup>shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds; lest the <sup>m</sup>fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled.

10 Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together.

11 Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, *as* of woollen and linen together.

12 Thou shalt make thee <sup>n</sup>fringes upon the four <sup>o</sup>quarters of thy vesture, wherewith thou coverest *thyself*.

13 ¶ If any man take a wife, and <sup>p</sup>go in unto her, and hate her,

14 And give <sup>q</sup>occasions of speech against her, and bring up an evil name upon her, and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid:

15 Then shall the father of the damsel and her mother take and bring forth *the tokens of* the damsel's virginity, unto the elders of the city in the gate:

16 And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, I gave my daughter unto this man to wife, and he hateth her;

17 And lo, he hath given occasions of speech *against her*, saying, I found not thy daughter a maid; and yet these *are the tokens of* my daughter's virginity: and they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city.

18 And the elders of that city shall take that man, and chastise him;

19 And they shall amerce him in an hundred *shekels* of silver, and give *them* unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel, and she shall be his wife: <sup>r</sup>he may not put her away all his days.

20 But if this thing be true, *and the tokens of* virginity be not found for the damsel;

21 Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall <sup>s</sup>stone her with stones that she die; because <sup>t</sup>she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: <sup>u</sup>so shalt thou put evil away from among you.

<sup>g</sup> Gen. viii. 17.  
xxii. 11. Lev.  
xxii. 28. Prov.  
xii. 10. Hos. x.  
14.

<sup>h</sup> See on iv. 40

<sup>i</sup> Ex. xxi. 28—36.  
xxii. 6. Rom.  
xiv. 18. 1 Cor. x.  
32. Phil. i. 10.  
1 Thes. v. 22.  
2 Sam. xi. 2. 1s.  
xxii. 1. Jer. xix.  
13. Matt. x. 27.  
Mark ii. 4. Acts  
x. 9.

<sup>k</sup> Ez. iii. 18. 20.  
xxxiii. 2—9.  
Matt. xviii. 6, 7.  
Acts xx. 26, 27.

<sup>l</sup> Lev. xix. 19.  
Matt. vi. 24. ix.  
16. Rom. xi. 6.  
2 Cor. i. 12. vi.  
14—16. xi. 3.  
Jam. i. 6—8. iii.  
10.

<sup>m</sup> Heb. fulness

<sup>n</sup> Num. xv. 38,  
39. Matt. xxiii.  
5.

<sup>o</sup> Heb. wings

<sup>p</sup> Gen. xix. 23.  
31. Judg. xv. 1.  
2. Eph. v. 28, 29.  
<sup>q</sup> 19. Ex. xx. 16.  
xxiii. 1. Prov.  
xviii. 8. 21.

<sup>r</sup> 29. xxi. 1—4.  
Matt. xix. 8, 9.

<sup>s</sup> 22. 24. xiii. 10.  
xvii. 5. xxi. 21.  
Lev. xxiv. 16.  
23. Num. xv. 35,  
36.  
<sup>t</sup> Gen. xxxiv. 7.  
Lev. xxi. 9. 2 Sam.  
xiii. 13.

<sup>u</sup> xiii. 5. xvii. 7.  
xix. 19

the distinction of the sexes should be visibly marked in their garments, without variation.—Let stage-players and others of similar occupations well consider, (among many other and great evils connected with their line of life,) how they will answer to God, for their continual violation of this express commandment. And they who encourage and reward them for this disobedience, should ask themselves how far they are accessaries to their guilt: and let young people remember that this change of apparel is not to be considered as a frolic, but as an act of rebellion against God.—The spirit of the commandment also requires the distinction of the appearance, deportment, and occupations of the sexes. A man appearing effeminate, and affecting the appropriate employments of women; and a woman of a masculine appearance and behaviour, who engages in the exercises of men; are unnatural and offensive characters. (Note, 1 Cor. xi. 2—16.)

V. 6, 7. The design of this law might be to enjoin the exercise of tenderness and compassion, and to prevent the destruction of any species of animals. But perhaps some of these requirements were intended for tests, by which it

would be proved, whether the people would prefer the will of God to their own inclination, when the reason of the command was not obvious. (Note, Gen. ii. 16, 17.)

V. 8. The roofs of the houses in those countries were generally flat, and used for various purposes, as may be seen by consulting the marginal references. If therefore no battlement were made, the builder would fail of taking proper precautions, and might occasion the death of some person who chanced to fall from it; and this would in a measure render him guilty, and his house defiled. (Notes, Ex. xxi. 28—36.)

V. 9—12. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Lev. xix. 19. Num. xv. 38—40.

V. 13—21. This law, like many others, was intended to prevent wickedness, by the fear of detection and punishment. The dread of a future discovery, productive of such tremendous consequences, could not fail to increase the natural barriers of chastity, and counteract the effects of sinful passions and strong temptations, among the young women of Israel. And it would also prevent a hard hearted husband from robbing his injured wife of her reputation,

<sup>t</sup> Lev. xx. 10. **22 ¶** If 'a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, *both* the man that lay with the woman, and the woman. So shalt thou put away evil from Israel.

<sup>u</sup> See on xx. 7.—<sup>v</sup> **23** If a damsel *that is* a virgin be betrothed unto a husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her:

<sup>x</sup> Gen. xxix. 21. <sup>y</sup> **24** Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel, because she cried not, *being* in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife: <sup>z</sup> so thou shalt put away evil from among you.

<sup>a</sup> Or, take strong hold of her. <sup>b</sup> **25** But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field, and the man force her, and lie with her; then

the man only that lay with her shall die:

**26** But unto the damsel thou shalt do nothing; *there is* in the damsel <sup>z</sup> no sin *worthy* of death: for as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and slayeth him, even so *is* this matter:

**27** For he found her in the field, and the betrothed damsel <sup>a</sup> cried, and *there was* none to save her.

**28** If a man find <sup>b</sup> a damsel *that is* a virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found;

**29** Then the man that lay with her, shall give unto the damsel's father fifty *shekels* of silver, and she shall be his wife; <sup>c</sup> because he hath humbled her, he may not put her away all his days.

**30** A <sup>d</sup> man shall not take his father's wife, nor <sup>e</sup> discover his father's skirt.

when his affections were transferred to another object. The imposition practised by a woman upon the man she married, was considered in this case as equivalent to infidelity to his bed after marriage.

V. 23—27. In these laws, the betrothed damsel was considered as the *wife* of the man to whom she was engaged, though they had not come together; and therefore the crime was adjudged adultery. (*Notes*, Matt. i. 18—21.) But a charitable supposition is admitted in the damsel's favour, in case she was found in a solitary place. (24. *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 28, 29. *Note*, Ex. xxii. 16, 17.

V. 30. *Marg. Ref.*

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If we duly regarded the golden rule of "doing to others, as we would they should do unto us," many particular precepts of God's word might be omitted. Equity and benevolence would teach us, not to regard trouble and expense in doing a kind action to our neighbour; and would remind us, that we can have no property in any thing that is found, so long as there is a probability of discovering the owner. If a merciful man would assist another's beast that was fallen down, much more should we hasten to the relief of a brother, who is fallen into distress or poverty: and above all we should be ready to restore in the spirit of meekness, him who has been overcome by temptation, and has fallen into sin; conscious that we may soon want the same gentleness and assistance.—If we would approve ourselves to be the peculiar people of God, we must have respect to his will and glory, and not to the vain fashions of the world. Even in putting on our garments, as well as in eating and drinking, all must be done with a serious regard to the preservation of our own and others' purity in heart and action; that our garb may testify whose servants we are, and remind us what our conduct ought to be. (*Notes*, Rom. xii. 1, 2. 1 Cor. x.

29—33. Col. iii. 16, 17. 1 Tim. ii. 8—10.) Our obedience should also be universal, and not only to the weightier, but even to the minuter matters of the law, that it may be well with us. Yea, our eye should be single, our heart simple, and our behaviour in all things consistent.—The violation of chastity, being so great a wickedness, and in females especially of such fatal consequences; how cautious should they be what company they keep, what places they frequent, to what language they listen, what books they read, and into what situations they venture! Indeed both men and women should seriously and daily meditate on God's abhorrence of unchastity; on the certain detection and punishment of the wicked in a future state, and the fatal effects which will probably follow in this world: that their minds may be fortified against temptation, by a dread of sin and of its consequences. How carefully should parents keep out of the sight and way of their children, whatever can pollute their imaginations or inflame their passions! and how should all join in execrating those wretches, who wantonly bring ruin upon their fellow-creatures for the sake of gratifying a mean sensual inclination! Nor is the cruelty of those much less to be abhorred, who rob the innocent of their reputation by infamous slanders, from malice or any other base passion.—We should never forget the peculiar atrociousness of adultery in every form, and the punishment which awaits those who are guilty of it. We may also recollect, that all *deception* in contracting marriage is both very wicked, and a source of future misery; that the nearer we stand related to God, the more inexcusable are our crimes, "folly in Israel" being worse than elsewhere; and that the most favourable construction should be put on doubtful actions, and a discrimination made between different degrees of criminality. Finally, our purity should be dearer to us than our life; and our cry to God for help in temptation should be no less earnest, than the cry of a person in danger of being murdered. When we thus call upon him, he is ever near and

## CHAP. XXIII.

What Israelites must not enter into the congregation, 1, 2. An Ammonite, or Moabite, is excluded to the tenth generation; an Edomite or Egyptian to the third, 3—8. The camps of Israel to be kept pure from moral, ceremonial, and natural pollution, 9—14. Fugitive slaves to be protected, 15, 16. Whoredom, sodomy, and usury, to be strictly guarded against, 17—20. Vows must be performed, 21—23. How to act in a neighbour's vineyard and corn-field, 24, 25.

<sup>a</sup> Lev. xxi. 17—21. xxii. 22—24. Gal. iii. 28.

<sup>b</sup> 2, 3, 8. Neh. xiii. 1—3. Is. lvi. 3. 4. Lam. i. 10.

<sup>c</sup> Is. lvii. 3. Zech. ix. 6. John viii. 41. Heb. xii. 8.

**H**E that is <sup>a</sup>wounded in the stones, or hath his privy member cut off, <sup>b</sup>shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD.

**2** A <sup>c</sup>bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to his tenth generation shall he not

ready to assist us, and his grace will be always sufficient for us.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 1. It is evident that this law was not meant to exclude mutilated Israelites, either from the common benefits of civil society, or any essential religious advantages; but merely to lay them under a disgraceful distinction. This would tend to discourage parents from thus mutilating their children; a practice which was exceedingly common in those ages and countries. To this they might often be induced by the custom which prevailed, of employing eunuchs in the houses of the great and the courts of princes: so that they often rose to the highest posts of honour and authority. (Notes, 2 Kings xx. 17, 18. Dan. i. 3—7.) Some expositors therefore consider the phrase, “shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD,” as meaning, that they should be incapable of bearing any office in that government, which was placed over the people of God, who must thus enter a protest against this custom, and deliver selfish parents from this temptation. But others think, that the persons intended might not enter the inner court of the sanctuary, or join in celebrating the sacred feasts, as in full communion with the congregation of the LORD; but must be contented to worship without, as uncircumcised gentiles were allowed to do. Indeed it is probable that the exclusion related to both these particulars: for, as the blemished priests might not officiate at the altar, it is reasonable to conclude, that the blemished Israelite must neither enter the inner court of the sanctuary, nor fill up any publick office in the congregation; in order that the people and ordinances of God might be preserved in purity and honour.

V. 2. The word “bastard” must be understood according to the *judicial law*, which does not regard the children of a concubine, when owned by the father, as spurious; but only those which sprang from such connexions as were expressly prohibited with an annexed penalty, and who would therefore be often disowned and always disgraceful; or the offspring of harlots, whose fathers were not known. The exclusion of such persons, and their posterity, from the court of the sanctuary, and from publick

enter into the congregation of the LORD.

**3** An <sup>d</sup>Ammonite or Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to their tenth generation shall they not enter into the congregation of the LORD for ever:

**4** <sup>e</sup>Because they met you not with bread and with water in the way, when ye came forth out of Egypt; and <sup>f</sup>because they hired against thee Balaam the son of Beor, of Pethor of Mesopotamia, to curse thee.

**5** Nevertheless <sup>g</sup>the LORD thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but the LORD thy God turned the curse

<sup>d</sup> Ruth iv. 6. 13—22. Neh. iv. 3. 7. xiii. 1. 23.

<sup>e</sup> ii. 28, 29. Gen. xiv. 17, 18. 1 Sam. xxv. 11. 1 Kings xviii. 4. Is. lxiii. 9. Zech. ii. 8. Matt. xxv. 45. Acts ix. 4.

<sup>f</sup> See on Num. xxii. 5. 7. 17. Neh. xiii. 2.

<sup>g</sup> Num. xxii. 35. xxiii. 5—12. 16—26. xxiv. 9. Mic. vi. 5. Rom. viii. 31. 2 Cor. iv. 17.

offices, would not be a hardship on them, worthy to be put in competition with the advantage arising from the tendency of this law, to restrain men from such practices as would disgrace their offspring from age to age.—Some expositors, especially the Jewish, suppose that by “not entering into the congregation of the LORD” we should understand, *not marrying an Israelitish woman*: but, as the bastards, being Israelites, were forbidden to intermarry with the gentiles, this interpretation would leave them scarcely any opportunity of marrying; which the mention of their posterity supposes them to do. For the allowance to marry Hebrew slaves, or proselyted gentile slaves, seems only made to avoid the difficulty; and the distinction has no foundation in Scripture: for Hebrew slaves, and gentiles when fully proselyted, were a part of the congregation of the LORD, and admissible to all sacred ordinances; with only the exception made in the next verses.

V. 3—5. It is supposed that the Ammonites were the more criminal, in refusing to assist the Israelites; though nothing is recorded concerning it: as the Moabites were in hiring Balaam to curse them. They were both descended from an incestuous connexion: (Note, Gen. xix. 31—38 :) yet that is not here mentioned, but merely their enmity to Israel. It was therefore settled by a perpetual ordinance “for ever,” that the descendants of an Ammonite or Moabite, who had been proselyted, should not enter into the congregation to the tenth generation: and some interpret this to mean, that his posterity must never be admitted. (Note, Neh. xiii. 1—3.)—As Ruth the Moabitess was married to Boaz, and from her David and the kings of his race descended; it has been thought that the law only related to males, and not to females: of this however no sufficient proof seems to be given. It does not appear that intermarriages were particularly intended; and the conduct of Boaz, being required by another law, was not faulty. (Note, Ruth iv. 1—8 :) perhaps the excellent character of Ruth might be supposed to except her and her posterity from the general rule; and in respect to David and the kings of his line, they were not chosen by Israel, but appointed by God himself. Had the law been intended to prohibit intermarriages with the several persons mentioned, no doubt that would have been expressly stated; as it is, when inter-

into a blessing unto thee, <sup>b</sup> because the LORD thy God loved thee.

6 Thou shalt <sup>1</sup>not seek their peace nor their <sup>\*</sup>prosperity all thy days for ever.

7 Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for <sup>1</sup>he is thy brother: thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian; <sup>b</sup> because thou wast a stranger in his land.

8 The children that are begotten of them shall <sup>1</sup>enter into the congregation of the LORD, in their <sup>3</sup>third generation.

9 ¶ When the host goeth forth against thine enemies, then <sup>a</sup>keep thee from every wicked thing.

10 If there be among you any man <sup>o</sup>that is not clean, by reason of uncleanness that chanceth him by night, then shall he go abroad out of the camp, he shall not come within the camp:

11 But it shall be, <sup>p</sup>when evening <sup>†</sup>cometh on, he shall <sup>q</sup>wash himself with water: and, when the sun is down, he shall come into the camp again.

12 Thou shalt have a place also without the camp, whither thou shalt go forth abroad.

13 And thou shalt have a paddle upon thy weapon: and it shall be when thou <sup>\*</sup>wilt ease thyself abroad, thou shalt dig therewith, and shalt turn back, and <sup>\*</sup>cover that which cometh from thee:

14 For the LORD thy God <sup>\*</sup>walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee: therefore shall thy camp be holy, that he see no <sup>1</sup>unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee.

15 ¶ Thou <sup>¶</sup>shalt not deliver unto his master, the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee:

16 He <sup>\*</sup>shall dwell with thee, *even* among you, in that place which he shall choose, in one of thy gates where it <sup>1</sup>liketh him best: <sup>\*</sup>thou shalt not oppress him.

17 ¶ There <sup>\*</sup>shall be no <sup>\*</sup>whore of the daughters of Israel, nor a <sup>\*</sup>sodomite of the sons of Israel.

18 Thou shalt not bring the <sup>1</sup>hire of a whore, or the price <sup>\*</sup>of a dog, into the house of the LORD thy God <sup>\*</sup>for any vow: for even both these are <sup>1</sup>abomination unto the LORD thy God.

marriages with the Canaanites and other idolaters are forbidden.

V. 6. This did not prohibit the Israelites from shewing kindness to individuals among the Moabites and Ammonites, especially when proselyted; much less did it allow them to make war on them without reason, or to refuse them terms of peace: but it merely forbade them to enter into any strict alliance with the nations so long as they existed, or intimate connexions with individuals while they continued idolaters. This was the more requisite, as that part of Israel, which dwelt east of Jordan, bordered upon the Ammonites and Moabites, and they were continually liable to be seduced or injured by them.

V. 7, 8. The Edomites were more nearly related to Israel, than the Moabites and Ammonites were; and therefore, though they had in some degree been unfriendly, they must be regarded more favourably, and not shunned and excluded from them, as the nations before mentioned. And as the Israelites had, at first in their extreme distress, been hospitably entertained in Egypt; they were required to forgive the *subsequent* oppression which they had suffered, and to requite the *preceding* kindness: so that the descendants of a proselyte, either of Edom or Egypt, in the third generation must be allowed to become entitled to all the privileges of a native Israelite.

V. 9—14. These precepts not only related to the camp of Israel, previously to their conquest of the promised land, and settlement in it; but at all times when they

went forth to fight their enemies. They were first reminded to use vigorous measures for reformation, and to pay a strict attention to their ceremonial purifications; (*Notes, Lev. xv.*) and then not to forget a due regard to natural cleanliness, not only from decency and for health's sake, but from respect to that God of purity, who, as it were, headed their armies and encamped among them; and also as an emblem of their inward purity.

V. 15, 16. We cannot suppose, that this law required the Israelites to entertain slaves, who had robbed their masters, or left their service without cause; but such only as were cruelly treated, and fled to them for protection, especially from the neighbouring nations. (*Marg. Ref.*) To such they were commanded to afford shelter and shew great kindness; both in order to recommend their religion, and to give them an opportunity of learning it.

V. 17, 18. The magistrate was commanded not to connive at, (much less to license,) houses of prostitution and uncleanness; and not to allow any person openly to carry on the infamous trade of a prostitute or sodomite, but to expel and extirpate such nuisances to the uttermost.—The words used, denote persons *dedicated*, or *consecrated*, that is to the basest kinds of lewdness; according to the infamous licentiousness and unnatural vices often openly perpetrated at the temples of idolaters, from which much of the gains of the priests and priestesses arose. For neither in this, nor any other place, where the word *sodomite* is used in our translation, is there, in the original, any allu-

<sup>b</sup> Ex. xxii. 25. **19 ¶** Thou shalt not <sup>b</sup> lend upon usury to thy brother: usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury.

<sup>c</sup> xiv. 21. xv. 8. Lev. xix. 33, 34. **20** Unto <sup>c</sup> a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury, but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury; <sup>d</sup> that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to, in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

<sup>e</sup> 18. Gen. xxviii. 20. xxxv. 1-3. Lev. xxvii. 2. &c. Num. xxx. 2. &c. Ps. lvi. 12. lxxvi. 13, 14. lxxvi. 11. cxvi. 18. Jon. i. 16. ii. 9. Nah. i. 15. **21 \*** When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee.

**22** But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee.

<sup>f</sup> Judg. xi. 30, 31. 35. 1 Sam. i. 11. Prov. xx. 25. Ec. v. 4, 5. **23** 'That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; *even*

a free-will-offering, according as thou <sup>g</sup> hast vowed unto the Lord thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth.

**24 ¶** When thou comest into thy neighbour's vineyard, then <sup>h</sup> thou mayest eat grapes thy fill, at thine own pleasure; but thou shalt not put *any* in thy vessel.

**25** When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, <sup>i</sup> then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand: but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn.

#### CHAP. XXIV.

The law of divorces, 1-4. Newly-married men exempted for one year from war and publick services, 5. Laws for the punishment of men-stealers; concerning pledges, and the separation of lepers, 6-13.

sion to Sodom, or its inhabitants. (*Marg. Ref. x. Heb.*)—The priests must not receive any oblations or sacrifices brought by persons of such vile characters: for God would not accept them; though they should attempt to cloke their wickedness, or compensate for it, by making and performing religious vows. (*Prov. vii. 14.*)—If the price of a dog be understood literally, not only the meanness of the animals, but their greediness, and resemblance of shamelessly lewd persons, must be considered as the reason of the restriction, and the extraordinary association. (*Marg. Ref.*) Many, however, understand it of the hire of unnatural crimes: yet figurative language seems hardly admissible in statutes.

V. 19, 20. *Note, Ex. xxii. 25-27.*

V. 21-23. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. xxviii. 20-22. Num. xxx. 2. Ec. v. 4-7.*

V. 24, 25. This law was a valuable kindness to the labourer, the poor, the widow, and the traveller; it was a pledge to the Israelites of the fruitfulness of the land, whilst they continued obedient; it inculcated liberality, and at the same time instructed them not to encroach upon each other.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We ought to value the privileges of the Lord's people, both for ourselves and for our children, above all other advantages; and should carefully avoid whatever may throw a hindrance in the way of their possessing them. No personal blemishes, no crimes of progenitors, no difference of nations, can exclude us from these blessings: but an unsound heart will deprive us of them; and a bad example, an improper education, and even unsuitable marriages, may occasion the loss of them to our children.—The conduct of God, as the righteous Governor of the universe, is not recorded for the imitation of private persons; but all men ought to follow the example of his patience, lenity, readiness to forgive, and kindness to his enemies. Nor should we ever forget how he turns the

curses of opposers into blessings, in behalf of those whom he loves, and teaches to love him.—The more imminent and evident the danger we are exposed to, the greater should be our watchfulness, diligence in self-examination, and earnestness in prayer for forgiveness, peace with God, and protection from him: and the scourge of war should remind the governors of kingdoms, and the commanders of armies, to exert themselves for reformation, and an attendance upon the ordinances of God. Nor can the help of the Lord be warrantably depended on by societies, or by individuals, while iniquity is indulged and connived at.—No natural filthiness is so loathsome to our senses, as the uncleanness of the heart is offensive to a holy God: in vain therefore do men, by pompous forms of godliness, costly oblations, or multiplied acts of shewy beneficence, strive to compensate for their iniquity, while they indulge unlawful inclinations. Such services are an attempt to bribe the Judge of the earth to "acquit the wicked;" but he abhors the blasphemous endeavour. It is the bounden duty of legislators and magistrates, to do all in their power, to prevent, to repress, and extirpate, the recesses of licentiousness here forbidden; and surely immensely more might be done, than is so much as attempted in Christian countries, or in this land, and its great cities: but whether they can, or cannot banish such pernicious criminals, God will exclude for ever from the holy city, and shut up for ever in the lake of fire, all who persist in or encourage them.—The people of God must also keep at a distance from cruelty and oppression; and ever be ready to patronize the cause of the oppressed. Fidelity to their engagements, and liberality without grudging to all around them, should mark their characters; for God is able to make all sufficiency to abound towards them: and at the same time they should be the last persons to encroach upon others. In fine, temperance, chastity, purity, equity, mercy, and truth, are the never failing fruits of that Spirit, which dwells in all the true disciples of Jesus Christ.

The hire of servants not to be detained, 14, 15. Parents and children not punishable for each other's crimes, 16. Justice must be done to the friendless, 17, 18. Liberal gleanings to be left for the poor, 19—22.

<sup>a</sup> xxi. 15. xxii. 13  
Ex. xxi. 10.

<sup>\*</sup> Heb. *matter of nakedness.*

<sup>b</sup> 3. Jer. iii. 8. Matt. v. 31. xix. 7—9. Mark x. 4—12.

<sup>†</sup> Heb. *cutting off.* Is. i. 1.

<sup>c</sup> xxii. 19, 29. Mal. ii. 16. Matt. i. 19. Luke xvi. 18. 1 Cor. vii. 11, 12.

<sup>d</sup> Lev. xxi. 7, 14. xxii. 13. Num. xxx. 9. Ez. xlv. 22. Matt. v. 32. Mark x. 11. 1 Cor. vii. 15.

**W**HEN a man <sup>a</sup> hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some <sup>\*</sup> uncleanness in her; then <sup>b</sup> let him write her a bill of <sup>†</sup> divorcement, and give *it* in her hand, <sup>c</sup> and send her out of his house.

2 And when she is departed out of his house, <sup>d</sup> she may go and be another man's wife.

3 And *if* the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth *it* in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife:

4 <sup>e</sup> Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that *is* abomination before the LORD: and 'thou shalt not cause the land to sin which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance.

5 ¶ When <sup>e</sup> a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, <sup>\*</sup> neither shall he be charged with any business, *but* he shall be free at home one year, and shall <sup>b</sup> cheer up his wife which he hath taken.

6 ¶ No man <sup>i</sup> shall take the nether or the upper millstone to pledge: for he taketh *a man's* <sup>k</sup> life to pledge.

7 If a man be <sup>i</sup> found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and maketh merchandise of him, or selleth him; <sup>m</sup> then that thief shall die, <sup>n</sup> and thou shalt put evil away from among you.

<sup>f</sup> Lev. xviii. 24—28. Josh. xxii. 17, 18.

<sup>g</sup> See on xx. 7.—Gen. ii. 24. Matt. xix. 4—6. Mark x. 6—9. 1 Cor. vii. 10—15. Eph. v. 28, 29. Tit. ii. 4, 5.

<sup>h</sup> Heb. *not any thing shall pass upon him.*

<sup>i</sup> Prov. v. 18. Ec. ix. 9. 1 Cor. vii. 29.

<sup>j</sup> Ez. xxii. 26, 27. Rev. xviii. 22.

<sup>k</sup> xx. 19. Gen. xlv. 30. Luke xii. 15. Ex. xxi. 16. Ez. xxvii. 13. 1 Tim. i. 10. Rev. xviii. 13.

<sup>m</sup> See on Ex. xxi. 16. xxii. 1—4.

<sup>n</sup> See on xix. 19.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 1—4. Divorces were always a deviation from the original institution of marriage, consequent upon man's depravity as a fallen creature, arising from the inconstancy of his mind, and the impetuosity of his passions. This customary deviation God did not please, in the judicial law, the magistrate's rule, totally to prohibit; lest it should occasion the cruel treatment, or even the murder, of those women, who were become disagreeable to their husbands. The *uncleanness*, on account of which the Israelites were "*suffered for the hardness of their hearts, to put away their wives,*" was not adultery, or any suspicion of it; for both these cases were otherwise provided against: (xxii. 22. Lev. xx. 10.—Notes, Num. v. 12—31:) but some ceremonial uncleanness, or disease, or some natural or moral objection which formed a real grievance.—In the days of Christ, the Jewish teachers, having construed the *permission* into a *commandment*, extended it to the most frivolous matters; so that a licentious mind could not desire more allowance. Hence divorces prevailed to the disuse of polygamy, and to the still greater hardship of the women, who were sent away, one after another, under colour of this law, on various pretexts, to make way for a new object of the roving affections. This accounts for the discourses of Christ being more explicitly against *divorces*; though the reason of them equally determines against *polygamy*; "for from the beginning it was not so." (Notes, Matt. v. 31, 32. xix. 3—9. Mark x. 2—12.)—But whilst divorces were allowed, they were also regulated. A man could not in a fit of anger send away his wife, but must have time for reflection, while the legal instrument was preparing. For he must give her a bill of divorce properly authenticated, and probably specifying the reason; and we may suppose some provision was also made her out of her husband's substance. And it was no part of God's law

to prohibit either party from marrying again; which restraint, when imposed by an absurd policy, is often no better than authorizing fornication. The woman might marry again and again, if set at liberty; but she must never more return to her former husband. This restriction, while it would operate as a check to inconstancy and rashness in the husband, would prevent the shameful practice of exchanging and lending wives, which prevailed in many nations. Israel would be preserved from that national guilt which such crimes enhance; and, as far as these regulations were adhered to, some of the worst effects of divorces would in good measure be prevented.

V. 5. This most condescending exemption would operate in fixing the affections of married persons, and in preventing divorces; for early or long separations tend to alienate the affections, and form temptations to inconstancy.

V. 6. Hand-mills were then generally used, in every family, for grinding their corn; and men would be deprived of the means of preparing their necessary food, if their millstones were taken from them. The same reason holds good against receiving in pledge, or distraining for debt, any of those instruments of labour, by which men are accustomed to earn their livelihood. (*Marg. Ref. Note, Ex. xxii. 25—27.*)

V. 7. Christianity has annihilated that distinction of nations, which, for typical and political reasons, was during a time established; and in this respect every man is now our brother, whatever be his nation, complexion, or creed. How then can the merchandise of men and women be carried on, without transgressing this commandment, or abetting those who do? An inhabitant of England, if he stay at home, and steal a horse, or a sheep, is condemned to death: but if he take a voyage to Africa, he may steal, or purchase of those who do steal, hundreds of men and women, and not only escape with impunity, but grow

8 ¶ Take heed in \*the plague of leprosy, that thou observe diligently and do according to all that the priests the Levites shall teach you: as I commanded them, so ye shall observe to do.

9 Remember what the LORD thy God did unto \*Miriam by the way, after that ye were come forth out of Egypt.

10 ¶ When 'thou dost \*lend thy brother any thing, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge.

11 Thou shalt stand abroad; and the man, to whom thou dost lend, shall bring out the pledge abroad unto thee.

12 And \*if the man *be* poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge.

13 In any case thou shalt \*deliver him the pledge again when \*the sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own raiment, and bless thee; and it \*shall be righteousness unto thee before the LORD thy God.

14 Thou shalt not \*oppress a hired servant *that is* poor and needy, *whether he be* of thy brethren, or of thy strangers that *are* in thy land within thy gates:

15 At \*his day thou shalt give him

his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it; for he *is* poor, and \*setteth his heart upon it: \*lest he cry against thee unto the LORD, and it be sin unto thee.

16 The <sup>b</sup> fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.

17 Thou shalt not \*pervert the judgment of the stranger, *nor* of the fatherless, \*nor take a widow's raiment to pledge:

18 But \*thou shalt remember that thou wast a bond-man in Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee thence: therefore I command thee to do this thing.

19 When 'thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: \*it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that the LORD thy God <sup>b</sup> may bless thee in all the works of thine hands.

20 When thou beatest thine olive-

great like a prince. According to the law of God, whoever stole cattle restored four or five fold; whoever stole one human being, though an infant or an idiot, must die. May we not call upon British legislators to rectify this flagrant abuse?—Since this was written, the author, with tens of thousands more, has to bless God, that this expectation has been answered, in the abolition of the slave-trade, by an act of the legislature; but further powerfully coercive measures are still needful, fully to accomplish the benevolent design. (*Notes, Ex. xxi. 15—17. Rev. xviii. 11—19.*)

V. 9. The leprosy of Miriam was inflicted by the Lord, and she humbled herself under the rebuke, notwithstanding her rank and character: yet she was excluded from the camp during seven days; but was restored upon her submission at the request of Moses. Hence the people might learn how to submit themselves in similar circumstances. (*Notes and P. O. Lev. xiii. xiv. Num. xii.*)

V. 10—13. Though the Israelites might not take increase of their brethren, they might take a pledge; provided it were something which the borrower could conveniently part with, and which he willingly proposed. But if, in his necessity, he brought what he could not well spare, they were commanded, from conscience towards God, to restore it by sun-set: and this, when done from a right motive, would be accepted as an act of righteousness by a merciful God, and rewarded accordingly; and he would also punish the neglect of it. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xxii. 25—27. Ez. xviii. 5—9.*)

Not go into his house, &c. (10) 'As if the legislator said, Intrude not into his abode, if he is not willing to expose to the stranger's eye, the humiliating circumstances of want and nakedness, which attend his destitute state: or perhaps, there is some little monument of his better days, which he reserves to console his misery, which he would not wish the person of whom he implores aid to see, lest he should demand that in pledge, and either, if denied, refuse relief, or by tearing away this almost sacred relic, to which his heart clings, to embitter his distress. No, says the law, the hovel of the poor must be sacred as an holy asylum: the eye of scorn, and the foot of pride must not dare to intrude: even the agent of mercy must not enter abruptly and unbid, without consulting the feelings of its wretched inhabitant.' *Graves on the Pentateuch*, vol. ii. p. 27.—It need scarcely be said, how worthy these well grounded remarks on the humane requirements of the divine law are of the serious consideration of all concerned in granting or refusing relief to paupers in this Christian land; and in respect of the conditions, on which relief is generally granted or withheld.

V. 14, 15. *Marg. Ref.—Note, Lev. xix. 13.*

V. 16. God himself, who can bring good to individuals out of public calamities, might justly involve the children in the parent's punishment; but he would not allow the magistrate to do it, especially in matters of life and death. (*Notes, Ex. xx. 5.—2 Kings xiv. 5, 6.*)

V. 17, 18. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, v. 12—15. xv. 13—15.*

V. 19—21. *Marg. Ref.—Note, Lev. xix. 9, 10.*

\* Heb. *bough* it tree; thou shalt not \* go over the boughs after thee again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

† See on 19.—Lev xix. 9, 10. 21 When thou <sup>†</sup> gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it <sup>†</sup> afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

‡ 18.—See on v. 1-4, 15, vii. 8.—Is. li. 1. 2 Cor. viii. 8, 9. Eph. v. 1, 2. 1 John iv. 10, 11. 22 And <sup>‡</sup> thou shalt remember that thou wast a bond-man in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing.

## CHAP. XXV.

Not more than forty stripes must be inflicted on malefactors, 1—3. Oxen treading out the corn not to be muzzled, 4. The widow of him who died childless to be married by his brother, who if he refused to take her, must be disgraced, 5—10. The punishment of an immodest woman, 11, 12. Just weights and measures to be used, 13—16. The memory of Amalek to be blotted out, 17—19.

IF there be a \* controversy between men, and they come unto judgment

that *the judges* may judge them, then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.

2 And it shall be if the wicked man *be* <sup>‡</sup> worthy to be beaten, that the judge shall cause him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face, according to his fault by a certain number.

3 Forty stripes he may give him, and \* not exceed: lest, *if* he should exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes, then thy brother should seem <sup>‡</sup> vile unto thee.

4 Thou shalt not \* muzzle the ox when he <sup>‡</sup> treadeth out *the corn*.

5 ¶ If \* brethren dwell together, and one of them die and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her <sup>†</sup> husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her.

6 And it shall be, *that* <sup>‡</sup> the first-

b Matt. x. 17. xxvii. 26. Luke xii. 47. Acts v. 40. xvi. 22—24. 1 Pet. ii. 20. 24.

c 2 Cor. xi. 24, 26.

d Job xviii. 3. Luke xv. 30. xviii. 9—12.

e Prov. xii. 10.

f 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10.

g 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.

h Heb. *thresheth*.

i Is. xxviii. 27.

j Hos. x. 11.

k Matt. xxii. 24.

l Mark xii. 19.

m Luke xx. 28.

n Or, *next kinsman*.

o Gen. xxxviii. 8. Ruth i. 12, 13. iii. 9.

p iv. 5.

q Gen. xxxviii. 9, 10.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The impetuous lusts and selfish hardness of men's hearts, if not restrained by a constant miracle, or subdued by divine grace, will inevitably occasion manifold abuses in every society, contrary to the moral law of God; nor can the best human laws, or their most impartial and steady administration, wholly prevent them. But these abuses proportionably mar all our comforts, and neither conscience nor prudence will permit a true Christian to join in them.—Even where Providence, or indiscreet choice in marriage, hath allotted a Christian a trial, instead of a useful and pleasant companion; he will from his heart prefer this affliction, to such relief as tends ultimately to licentiousness, confusion, and misery: and divine grace will sanctify it, support him under it, and teach him so to behave as will gradually render it more tolerable. But every method should be used to cement the affections of married persons, and to exclude temptations to inconstancy.—While we leave those to the tribunal of God, who prosper by the most horrible oppression, or most infamous traffick; it suffices here to observe, that there are readers who would be disgusted, were we to follow the inspired writer, in his repeated exhortations to humiliation before God, to purity, piety, justice, mercy, kindness, impartiality, and beneficent consideration of the poor and destitute, the fatherless, the widow, and the stranger, and to enlarged liberality in every thing.—It is not hard to prove that these things are calculated to ensure from our merciful and gracious God, in answer to the prayers of those who partake of our kindness, a blessing upon every work of our hands, instead of the curse which is brought down by the cry of the oppressed; the only difficulty is, to bring our minds habitually and steadily to attend to them in our daily walk and conversation.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXV. V. 1. *Marg. Ref.* a.—Notes, Job xxix. 7—17. Ps. lxxxii. 2—4. Prov. xxxi. 8, 9. Is. i. 16—20.

V. 2, 3. Many crimes had been mentioned, for which no punishment was specified. In all these cases, it is supposed that scourging was used at the discretion of the magistrates, and according to the degree and aggravations of the crime. This punishment was inflicted in open court, under the inspection of the judge, and without respect to the rank of the criminal. (*Marg. Ref.*) But lest the malefactor should seem vile, as a slave or a beast, the number of forty stripes must not be exceeded; and lest they should miscount, the Jewish magistrates always confined themselves to thirty-nine, which St. Paul repeatedly endured. (2 Cor. xi. 24.)—If petty offences were more generally thus chastised, and capital punishments were less frequent among us, it might be immensely more advantageous to the community. But the excessive severity of inflicting several hundred lashes for one crime tends, among other things, to prejudice the minds of Englishmen against this punishment; though it is peculiarly salutary, when prudently and moderately inflicted, on young offenders especially.

V. 4. The Israelites, and most of the ancients, were accustomed to beat out their grain with the feet of oxen, or with instruments drawn by them. (Notes, Hos. x. 9—11. 1 Cor. ix. 7—12. 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.)

V. 5—10. The custom here regulated had long prevailed; (Notes, Gen. xxxviii. 8. 14—16;) and was probably introduced, to preserve some remembrance of those who died childless. It seems to have been adopted into the Mosaic law, mainly to keep the inheritances separate, as allotted to each family, and to preserve the genealogies distinct until the coming of Christ; as well as to provide

born which she beareth, shall succeed in the name of his brother, *which is* dead, <sup>b</sup> that his name be not put out of Israel.

<sup>b</sup> ix. 14. xxix. 20.  
Ruth iv. 10 Ps  
ix. 5. cix. 13

7 And if the man like not to take his <sup>a</sup> brother's wife, then let his brother's wife <sup>c</sup> go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother.

<sup>a</sup> Or, next kinsman's wife.  
<sup>c</sup> xxi. 19. Ruth iv. 1—7.

8 Then the elders of the city shall call him, and speak unto him and *if* he stand *to it*, and say, I like not to take her:

9 Then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and <sup>k</sup> loose his shoe from off his foot, and <sup>l</sup> spit in his face, and shall answer and say, <sup>m</sup> So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house.

<sup>k</sup> Ruth iv. 7, 8.  
Is. xx. 2. Mark  
i. 7. John i. 27.  
<sup>l</sup> Num. xii. 14.  
Job xxx. 10. Is.  
i. 6. Matt. xxvi.  
67. xxvii. 30.  
Mark x. 34.  
<sup>m</sup> Gen. xxxviii. 8  
—10. Ruth iv.  
10, 11. 1 Sam. ii.  
30.

10 And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed.

11 ¶ When men strive together, one with another, and the wife of the one draweth near for <sup>n</sup> to deliver her husband out of the hand of him that smiteth him, and putteth forth her hand, and taketh him by the secrets;

<sup>n</sup> Rom. iii.  
1 Tim. ii. 9.

for the destitute widow, when the estate devolved on the next heir. If a married man died without issue, his brother or near kinsman was required to marry the widow; and the eldest son of this marriage inherited the estate of the deceased, and thus preserved his name in the genealogies.—If any one refused to comply with this custom, being averse from the person or character of the widow, he must be publicly disgraced. By pulling off the shoe he was rendered like the slaves, who generally went barefoot; and the widow even spit in, or *before*, his face, in contempt of the man who had thus disgraced her, and shewn such disrespect to the memory of the deceased.—It is not agreed among commentators, whether married men were concerned in this law or not; and it is not material to us, as it had reference to a particular case which no longer exists, and our duty is not in the least affected by the determination. (Notes, Ruth iv. 1—10. Matt. xxii. 23—33.)

V. 13—16. The Israelites were not only forbidden to use divers weights and measures, a large one to buy with, and a small one to sell with; but they were not allowed to keep such in their houses. It is observable that these too common practices are branded as “an abomination to the LORD” equally with idolatry, adultery, and other most scandalous crimes. (Marg. Ref. p. r.)

12 Then thou shalt cut off her hand, <sup>o</sup> thine eye shall not pity *her*.

13 ¶ Thou shalt not have <sup>p</sup> in thy bag <sup>q</sup> divers weights, a great and a small.

14 Thou shalt not have in thine <sup>r</sup> house <sup>s</sup> divers measures, a great and a small.

15 *But* thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have; <sup>t</sup> that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

16 For all that do such things, and <sup>u</sup> all that do unrighteously, *are* an abomination unto the LORD thy God.

17 ¶ Remember <sup>v</sup> what Amalek did unto thee by the way, when ye were <sup>w</sup> come forth out of Egypt;

18 How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, *even* all *that were* feeble behind thee, when thou *wast* faint and weary; and <sup>x</sup> he feared not God.

19 Therefore it shall be, <sup>y</sup> when the LORD thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance to possess it, *that* <sup>z</sup> thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget *it*.

<sup>o</sup> See on xix. 13  
21.

Lev. xix. 35, 36.  
Prov. xvi. 11.  
xx. 10. Ez. xiv  
10, 11. Am. viii.  
5. Mic. vi. 11,  
12.

<sup>r</sup> Heb. a stone and  
a stone.

<sup>s</sup> Heb. an ephah  
and an ephah.

<sup>q</sup> Lev. 40. v. 16. 33.  
vi. 18. xi. 9. xvii  
20. Ez. xx. 12.  
Ps. xxxiv. 12.  
Eph. vi. 3. 1 Pet.  
iii. 10.

<sup>t</sup> xviii. 12. xxii. 5.  
Prov. xli. 1. xx.  
23. Am. viii. 5—  
7. 1 Cor. vi. 9—  
11. 1 Thes. iv. 6.  
Rev. xxi. 27.  
Ex. xviii. 8. Num.  
xxiv. 20. xxv.  
17, 8.

<sup>u</sup> Neh. v. 9. 15. Ps.  
xxxvi. 1. Prov.  
xvi. 6. Rom. iii  
18.

<sup>v</sup> Josh. xxiii. 1.

<sup>x</sup> ix. 14. Ez. xvii  
14. 16. Judg. vi.  
8. vii. 12. 22—  
25. 1 Sam. xiv.  
48. xv. xxviii. 6.  
xxx. 1—17. 1 Chr.  
iv. 43. Esth. iii.  
i. vii. 10. ix. 7—  
10. Ps. lxxxiii. 7  
—17.

V. 17—19. (Notes, Ex. xvii. 8—16.) The Lord commanded Moses to write the sentence against Amalek, “as a memorial” in a book: and accordingly he here again repeats it almost at the close of the whole law, that it might not be forgotten by posterity. (Marg. Ref.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In administering justice, impartiality in distinguishing between the innocent and the guilty, and proportioning punishments to crimes, is peculiarly requisite; but it is generally advisable to incline towards the side of lenity rather than that of severity, aiming at the reformation, and not the destruction of the criminal, as far as public security will admit. Every punishment should be inflicted with solemnity, and in most cases publicly, that all the spectators may be impressed with dread, and be warned not to offend in like manner. And though criminals must be put to shame, as well as to pain, for their warning and humiliation; yet care should be taken, if possible, that they do not appear totally vile: lest having no further reputation to lose they should become desperate.—Kindness is due, not only to men, but even to the beasts; and every living creature which contributes to our ease, pleasure, or advantage, should receive from us such reciprocal satis

## CHAP. XXVI.

The thankful acknowledgements to be made at presenting the first-fruits, 1—11. A profession and prayer for every third year respecting the second tithe, 12—15. A summary of the covenant between God and Israel, 16—19.

<sup>a</sup> T. 31. vi. 1. 10.  
<sup>ii</sup>. 1. xii. 1. 9.  
 xvii. 14. xviii. 9.  
 Num. xv. 2. 18.

<sup>b</sup> xvi. 10. xviii. 4.  
 Ez. xxiii. 16.  
 19. xxxiv. 26.  
 Lev. ii. 12. 14.  
 Num. xviii. 12.  
 13. 2 Kings iv.  
 42. 2 Chr. xxxi.  
 5. Neh. x. 35—  
 37. xii. 44. xiii.  
 31. Prov. iii. 9.  
 10. Jer. ii. 3. Ez.  
 xx. 40. xlv. 30.  
 xlviii. 14. Rom.  
 viii. 23. xi. 16.  
 xvi. 5. 1 Cor.  
 xv. 20. 23. xvi.  
 2. Jam. i. 18.  
 Rev. xiv. 4.  
<sup>c</sup> See on xii. 5, 6.  
 —Josh. xviii. 1.  
 2 Chr. vi. 6.  
<sup>d</sup> xix. 17. Heb. vii.  
 26. x. 21. xiii.  
 15. 1 Pet. ii. 5.  
<sup>e</sup> Gen. xvii. 8.  
 xxvi. 3. Ps. cv.  
 9. 10. Luke i.  
 72, 73. Heb. vi.  
 16—18.

**AND** it shall be <sup>a</sup> when thou art come in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein; 2 That <sup>b</sup> thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shalt <sup>c</sup> go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name there. 3 And thou shalt go unto <sup>d</sup> the priest that shall be in those days, and say unto him, I profess this day unto the LORD thy God, that I am come unto the country <sup>e</sup> which the LORD sware unto our fathers for to give us.

factions as it is capable of, in proportion to the benefits conferred: much more then should servants and labourers be suitably recompensed; and, by parity of reason, ministers, who are instrumental to men's salvation, should be maintained comfortably at their expense.—In all our actions we ought to aim at the good of those around us, especially of the Lord's people; and to promote the continuance of true religion in the next generation, and its diffusion into those places which are at present destitute of it: and in contracting marriage particularly we should "seek a godly seed," who may preserve the name of deceased believers, and fill up their places in the church; in every way shewing respect to dead, and kindness to living relatives: for whatever disgrace we, without cause, put upon others, will in the event rebound upon ourselves.—A solemn and testified ratification ought to distinguish the honourable relation of marriage from all illicit connexions; and married persons should be known as such, to preserve them and others from temptation: and though affections cannot be forced, yet they should be subordinated to reason and religion.—The customs and manners of different ages may render that consistent with female delicacy at one time, which would not be deemed so at another: but there are certain outrages to modesty, which no age can tolerate, no provocation or extremity palliate; but which must ever be branded with infamy, and should be punished with un pitying severity.—Every kind and degree of fraud is abhorred by the righteous God, and should be dreaded by us; for dishonest gain always brings a curse upon men's property, families, and souls: and the day of judgment will bring strange things to light in this respect. Happy they, who now judge themselves; and thus repent, and forsake their sins, that they may not be condemned at that awful season.—Let every persecutor and injurer of

4 And the priest shall take the basket out of thine hand, and set it down before the altar of the LORD thy God.

5 And thou shalt speak and say before the LORD thy God, <sup>a</sup> A Syrian <sup>b</sup> ready to perish was my father, and <sup>c</sup> he went down into Egypt, and so-journed there with <sup>d</sup> a few, and <sup>e</sup> became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous:

6 And <sup>m</sup> the Egyptians evil entreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage:

7 And when <sup>n</sup> we cried unto the LORD God of our fathers, the LORD heard our voice, and <sup>o</sup> looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression:

8 And <sup>p</sup> the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an out-stretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs and with wonders.

9 And <sup>q</sup> he hath brought us into this

<sup>f</sup> Matt. v. 23, 24.  
 xxiii. 19. Heb.  
 xiii. 10—12.

<sup>g</sup> Gen. xxiv. 4.  
 xxv. 20. xxviii.  
 5. xxxi. 20. 24.  
 Hos. xii. 12.

<sup>h</sup> Gen. xxvii. 41.  
 xxxi. 40. xlii. 1.  
 2. xiv. 7. 11. 1a.  
 li. 1, 2.

<sup>i</sup> Gen. xlv. 1—7.  
 Ps. cv. 23, 24.  
 Acts vii. 16

<sup>k</sup> Gen. xlv. 27.  
 Ex. i. 5.

<sup>l</sup> See on x. 23—  
 Gen. xlvii. 27.  
 Ex. i. 7. 12.

<sup>m</sup> iv. 20. Ex. i. 11.  
 14. 16. 22. v. 9.  
 19. 23.

<sup>n</sup> Ex. ii. 23—25.  
 iii. 9. vi. 5. Ps.  
 i. 15. ciii. 1. 2.  
 cxvi. 1—4. Jer.  
 xxxiii. 8. Eph.  
 iii. 20, 21.

<sup>o</sup> Ex. iv. 31. 1 Sam.  
 ix. 16. 2 Sam.  
 xvi. 12. Ps. cli  
 19, 20. cxix. 132.

<sup>p</sup> See on iv. 34—  
 v. 15. Ex. xii.  
 37. 41. 61. xiii  
 8. xiv. 16. &c.  
 Ps. lxxviii. 12.  
 13. cv. 27—38.  
 cvi. 7—10. 1a.  
 lxiii. 12.

<sup>q</sup> Josh. xxiii. 14  
 1 Sam. vii. 12.  
 Ps. cv. 44. cxvii.  
 7, 8. Acts xxvi.  
 22.

the Lord's people hear, and take warning from the example of the Amalekites: however they now cast off the fear of God, and behave with cruelty and despite to the meek and poor; he will one day plead the cause of his servants, avenge all the injustice done them, and "blot out the name of every enemy from under heaven:" and the longer judgment tarries, the more dreadful will be its execution at last.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXVI. V. 1—4. All the people, when settled in Canaan, were required to present annually some part of its several kinds of fruits, and the first ripe of each; of which the priests had the use, after it had been solemnly offered to God with a thankful acknowledgement of his faithfulness, and after it had been placed before the altar. The quantity was not prescribed; (Note, xv. 13—15;) for it was a free-will offering, to the denial of their own appetite, which would especially crave the first ripe fruit. (Mic. vii. 1.) Every production would not be ripe at the same time, and some could not be preserved till the rest were ready. It is therefore, generally thought that these first-fruits were presented at the feast of Pentecost, by those who went up together to worship: but we must suppose, that the best and choicest and such as could be preserved were thus presented, and the rest, as occasion required, were offered to the priests in their several cities; or, as others think, carried to the sanctuary at some other time. (Note, Jer. xxiv. 1.)

V. 5—11. Jacob is called "a Syrian," because he lived many years in *Padan-aram*, or *Mesopotamia*, which was one division of Syria. His mother also was a Syrian by birth. (Marg. Ref. g.)—He was greatly distressed when he went to Laban; and when he returned, his life

place, and hath given us this land, *even* 'a land that floweth with milk and honey.

<sup>r</sup> Ex. iii. 8. Ez. xxi. 6. 15.

10 And now, behold, 'I have brought the first-fruits of the land which thou, O LORD, hast given me. 'And thou shalt set it before the LORD thy God, 'and worship before the LORD thy God.

<sup>a</sup> See on 2.—xvii. 17. 1 Chr. xxix. 14. Rom. xii. 1. 1 Pet. iv. 10, 11.

<sup>t</sup> d. xviii. 4. Ex. xxii. 29. Num. xviii. 11—13.

<sup>u</sup> vi. 10—13. Ps. xxii. 27. lxxxvi. 9. xcv. 6. Ia. lxxvi. 23. Rev. xxi. 9.

<sup>x</sup> See on xii. 7. 12. 18.—xvi. 11. xxviii. 47. Ps. lxxiii. 5—6. c. 1. 2. Ia. lxxv. 14. Zech. ix. 17. Acts ii. 46. 47. Phil. iv. 4. 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.

11 And thou shalt 'rejoice in every good *thing* which the LORD thy God hath given unto thee, and unto thine house, thou, and the Levite, and the stranger that is among you.

<sup>y</sup> See on xiv. 22—29.

<sup>z</sup> xii. 17—19. xvi. 14. Prov. xiv. 21. Phil. iv. 18, 19.

12 ¶ When thou hast made an end of tithing all the tithes of thine increase, 'the third year, *which is* the year of tithing, and 'hast given *it* unto the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that they may eat within thy gates, and be filled;

13 Then thou shalt say before the LORD thy God, I have brought away the hallowed things out of *mine* house, and also have given them unto the 'Levite, and unto the stranger, to the fatherless, and to the widow, according to all thy commandments, which thou hast commanded me; 'I have not transgressed thy commandments, neither have I 'forgotten *them*;

<sup>a</sup> 12. xiv. 29. xxiv. 19—21. Job xxxi. 16—20.

<sup>b</sup> Ps. xviii. 21—24. xxvi. 1—8. Acts xxiv. 16. 2 Cor. i. 12. xl. 31. 1 Thes. ii. 10. 1 John iii. 17—22.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. cxix. 93. 139. 141. 153. 176. Prov. iii. 1.

<sup>d</sup> xvi. 11. Lev. vii. 20. xxi. 1. 11. Hos. ix. 4. Mal. ii. 13.

14 I have not 'eaten thereof in my

mourning, neither have I taken away *ought* thereof for *any* unclean *use*, nor given *ought* thereof for 'the dead; *but* I have hearkened to the voice of the LORD my God, *and* have done according to all that thou hast commanded me.

<sup>e</sup> Ps. cvi. 28. Es. xxiv. 17.

15 'Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven, and 'bless thy people Israel, and the land which thou hast given us, as thou swarest unto our fathers, a land that floweth with milk and honey.

<sup>f</sup> See on 7.—1 Kings viii. 27. 43. Ps. cii. 19, 20. Ia. lxxii. 15. lxxiii. 18. lxxvi. 1. 2. Zech. ii. 13. Matt. vi. 9. Acts vii. 49. Ps. xxvii. 9. ii. 18. xc. 17. cxv. 12—15. cxxxvii. 5. 6. Jer. xxxi. 23.

16 ¶ 'This day the LORD thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore 'keep and do them with all thine heart, and all thy soul.

<sup>h</sup> See on iv. 1—6. vi. 1.—xi. 1. xii. 1. 32. Matt. xxviii. 20.

17 Thou hast 'avouched the LORD this day to be thy God, 'and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to 'hearken unto his voice:

<sup>i</sup> vi. 5. 17. viii. 2. xiii. 3. 4. John xiv. 15. 21—24. 1 John v. 2. 3.

18 And 'the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that *thou* shouldest keep all his commandments;

<sup>k</sup> v. 2. 3. Ex. xv. 2. xxiv. 7. Ia. xii. 2. xlv. 5. Zech. xiii. 9. Acts xxvii. 23. Rom. vi. 13. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

19 And to make thee 'high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the LORD thy God, as he hath spoken.

<sup>l</sup> See on x. 12, 13. xiii. 4. 5.—xxx. 16. Josh. xxii. 5. 1 Kings ii. 3, 4. m See on xiii. 18. xv. 5.

<sup>n</sup> See on vii. 6. xiv. 2.—xxviii. 9. Ex. xix. 5. 6. Jer. xxxi. 32—34. Ez. xxxvi. 25—27. Tit. ii. 14.

<sup>o</sup> iv. 7, 8. xxviii. 1. Ps. cxlviii. 14. Ia. lxxii. 12. lxxvi. 20, 21. Jer. xiii. 11. xxxiii. 9. Ez. xvi. 12—14. Zeph. iii. 19. 1 Pet. ii. 5. Rev. i. 6, 6.

those purposes for which it was appropriated: and that no part had been used by them in mourning, or at funerals, which rendered them unclean; or in any superstitious ceremony, in imitation of the idolaters around them. As the matter lay very much between God and their conscience, this protestation was the more suitable, and would tend both to remind them of their duty and render them afraid of neglecting it. (*Marg. Ref.*—Notes, xii. 5—7. xviii. 6—8.)

V. 17—19. By thus personally acceding to the national covenant, every Israelite openly professed himself the servant and worshipper of JEHOVAH, and engaged to walk obediently in his commandments: and by admitting each into it individually, as well as the nation as an incorporated society, the Lord avouched himself to be their God, their Protector and Portion; and engaged that while they were obedient he would prosper them, and advance them to honour and distinction above all other nations, as well as continue to them the religious advantages by which they were distinguished from all others. This was a figure of that covenant-relation, which subsists between a reconciled God and every true believer; and of the privileges and duties belonging to it and resulting from it.

*Peculiar people.* (18) עַם קָדוֹשׁ Note, Ex. xix. 5.

was endangered, both from him, and from his brother Esau. (Notes, Gen. xxviii—xxxii.) He was afterwards ready to perish by famine in Canaan, which occasioned his removal into Egypt, where his posterity were miserably enslaved: (Notes, Gen. xvi. Ex. i. 2:) yet, notwithstanding all these straits and dangers, the Lord's promises to him had been punctually performed. These mercies the Israelites were directed to acknowledge annually, in this public and solemn manner, in order to humble them; to remind them of their obligations to love and serve God, and to offer him their tribute of praise and gratitude; and thus to render them more cheerful and liberal in the enjoyment of his bounty.

V. 12—15. This related to the second tithe before considered. (Note, xiv. 22—29.)—'Two years together 'they paid the Levites' tithe, and the festival tithe; but 'in the third year, they paid the Levites' tithe, and the 'poor man's tithe: that is, what was wont in other years 'to be spent in feasting, was wholly spent every third year 'upon the poor.' *Mede quoted by Bp. Patrick.*—Once in three years this solemn protestation was required from every proprietor of land in Canaan, probably in the presence of the priests at the tabernacle. They all declared, that the whole of this second tithe had been employed to

## CHAP. XXVII.

A command to write the law on plaistered stones, set up on mount Ebal; where an altar of whole stones must be built, and sacrifices offered, 1—10. Six tribes are directed to stand to bless on mount Gerizim; and six to curse, on mount Ebal, 11—13. Curses to be pronounced by the Levites, and confirmed by the people, 14—26.

**AND** Moses, with the elders of Israel, commanded the people, saying, <sup>a</sup> Keep all the commandments which I command you this day.

<sup>2</sup> And it shall be, <sup>b</sup> on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan, <sup>c</sup> unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up <sup>d</sup> great stones, and plaister them with plaister:

<sup>3</sup> And <sup>e</sup> thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over, that thou mayest go in

unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, <sup>f</sup> a land that floweth with milk and honey, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee.

<sup>4</sup> Therefore it shall be, when ye be gone over Jordan, <sup>g</sup> that ye shall set up these stones, which I command you this day, <sup>h</sup> in mount Ebal, and thou shalt plaister them with plaister.

<sup>5</sup> And <sup>i</sup> there shalt thou build an altar unto the LORD thy God, an altar of stones: <sup>j</sup> thou shalt not lift up <sup>k</sup> any iron tool upon them.

<sup>6</sup> Thou shalt build the altar of the LORD thy God of whole stones; and thou shalt offer <sup>l</sup> burnt-offerings thereon unto the LORD thy God.

<sup>7</sup> And thou shalt offer <sup>m</sup> peace-offerings, and shalt eat there, and <sup>n</sup> rejoice before the LORD thy God.

<sup>a</sup> See on iv. 1—3. xi. 32. xxvi. 16. —Luke xi. 28. John xv. 14. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2. Jam. ii. 10.

<sup>b</sup> vi. 1. ix. 1. xi. 31. Josh. i. 11. iv. 1. 5.

<sup>c</sup> 3.—See on xxvi. 1.

<sup>d</sup> Ex. xi. 19. xxxvi. 26.

<sup>e</sup> Josh. viii. 32. Jer. xxxi. 31—33. 2 Cor. iii. 2, 3. Heb. viii. 6—10. x. 16.

<sup>f</sup> See on vi. 3. xxvi. 9.—1 ev. xx. 24. Num. xiii. 27. xiv. 8. Josh. v. 6. Jer. xi. 5. xxxii. 22.

<sup>g</sup> xi. 29, 30.

<sup>h</sup> Ex. xxiv. 4. Josh. viii. 30, 31. 1 Kings xviii. 31, 32.

<sup>i</sup> Ex. xx. 25. <sup>k</sup> See on Lev. i.—Eph. v. 2.

<sup>j</sup> See on Lev. iii. vii. 11—17.—Acts x. 36. Rom. v. 1. 10. Eph. i. 16, 17. Col. i. 20. Heb. xiii. 20, 21.

<sup>m</sup> See on xii. 7. 12. xvi. 11. 14. xxvi. 11.—2 Chr. xxx. 23—27. Neh. viii. 10. Ps. c. 1, 2. Is. xii. 3. lxi. 8. 10. Hab. iii. 18. Phil. iii. 3. iv. 4.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Whatever God at any time has promised, will assuredly in due season be fulfilled, notwithstanding obstacles, improbabilities, and delays: and in all our comforts we should observe his faithfulness as well as his goodness.—It is advantageous to meditate frequently on the Lord's dealings with us, and to consider from how low an estate, and through what impediments, he hath brought us to our present comforts and prospects: and it is so edifying to others, on proper occasions, to speak on these humiliating and enlivening subjects, that whatever leads us to them is well worthy of regard.—It is surely most reasonable, both by word and deed, to ascribe unto God the glory due unto his name. We should honour him with our first and best in every thing, to the denial of our own appetites and passions. On some occasions it is honourable to God, and edifying to the church, when it is done *publicly*: it is always a source of rejoicing to ourselves when it is done *properly*.—At the day of judgment we must render an account of every thing committed to our stewardship; it is therefore our wisdom to be frequently calling ourselves to a previous account, how we employ our time, possessions, or endowments.—We must be watchful, not only to avoid dishonesty; but that “our conversation may be without covetousness,” that pious and charitable uses have their portion, and that temperance and beneficence be duly regarded by us, in obedience to the commandments of our God. Thus shall we evince that, according to the covenant of grace in Jesus Christ, the Lord is our God, and we are his people; and that we are waiting, in his appointed way, for the performance of his gracious and glorious promises.—It may at some times consist with humility, and tend to edification, openly to protest our integrity; and the consciousness of it is always matter of rejoicing, and of confidence at the throne of grace: and in all our applications we should remember to plead for peculiar blessings on our fellow Christians, and for the

extending of those blessings to our fellow sinners, even to the ends of the earth.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXVII. V. 1. In the foregoing chapter, Moses closed his repetition and explanation of the law, with such additions as were requisite; and here, in conjunction with the seventy elders, he proceeded to enjoin two solemn observances to be attended to, after the entrance of Israel into Canaan: the former was done to assist their memories, the latter to affect their hearts.

V. 2. This command was given by Moses, in his lifetime: but it must be obeyed, when, after his death, Israel had entered Canaan. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3, 4. Some expositors think, that the whole book of Deuteronomy was written on these plaistered stones; and that they were twelve in number, according to the tribes of Israel. Others restrict the writing to the preceptive part of it; others to the ten commandments only; while many are of opinion that the latter part of this chapter alone was meant. Indeed, as the stones were placed upon mount Ebal, whence the *curses* were denounced, it is probable that these were added: but we may conclude, that at least the ten commandments, and the great outlines of the whole law, were likewise inscribed in the most legible manner (8).

V. 5—7. In ordinary cases no altar might be used, except the brazen one at the door of the tabernacle: but on this occasion, the Lord directed an altar of rough stones to be formed, in order to a renewed confirmation of the covenant, similar to that used when it was first ratified at mount Sinai. (*Notes, Ex. xx. 21—25. xxiv. 3—8.*) This altar built upon mount Ebal, and the sacrifices of burnt-offerings on this occasion offered, aptly taught the people that the curse of the law could be removed by him alone, who gave himself an atoning sacrifice for sinners: and the peace-offerings with the sacred feast implied, that joyful communion with a reconciled God may be maintained

n See n. 6

o Hab. ii. 2. John xvi. 25. 2 Cor. iii. 12

8 And thou shalt write upon the stones all the words of this law <sup>o</sup>very plainly.

9 And Moses, and the priests the Levites, spake unto all Israel, saying, Take heed, and hearken, O Israel;

p See on xxvi. 16, 17.—Rom. vi. 17, 18. 22. 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. Eph. v. 8, 9. 1 Pet. ii. 10, 11.

10 Thou <sup>q</sup>shalt therefore obey the voice of the LORD thy God, and do his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day.

q See on x. 12, 13. xi. 1, 7, 8.—Lev. xix. 2. Mic. iv. 5. vi. 8. Matt. v. 48. Eph. iv. 17.—24. 1 Pet. i. 14.—16. iv. 1—3.

11 ¶ And Moses charged the people the same day, saying,

r xi. 26—29. Josh. vi. 33, 34. Judg. ix. 7.

12 These shall stand upon <sup>r</sup>mount Gerizim to bless the people, when ye are come over Jordan; <sup>s</sup>Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin.

s Gen. xxix. 33—35. Numb. 18. 24 xxxv. 18.

t See on 4.

13 And these shall stand upon <sup>t</sup>mount Ebal <sup>u</sup>to curse; <sup>v</sup>Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.

u Heb. for a cursing.  
v Gen. xxix. 32. xxx. 6—13. 20 xlix. 3, 4

through Jesus Christ, notwithstanding the most tremendous curses of the law.

V. 8—10. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. 1 Thes. iv. 1—5.*

V 12, 13. Mount Gerizim and mount Ebal lay near together with a valley between; and what was spoken in a loud voice on the one might be heard on the other. (*Note, Judg. ix. 7.*) No doubt the blessings, as well as the curses, were audibly pronounced and ratified in a general manner, by the tribes appointed for that purpose: so that by this solemnity all Israel deliberately consented to the national covenant; declared that they expected the blessings stipulated to them, only in a way of obedience; and confessed that, individually and nationally, they should merit, and might expect, to be accursed of God, if they were disobedient to his commandments. But some priests and Levites were chosen to pronounce from mount Ebal the subsequent particular curses (14); though the tribe of Levi stood on mount Gerizim. No mention is made of any special acts of obedience, on account of which blessings were pronounced; as the blessings do not belong to those who obey some and neglect others of God's commandments; "for he that keepeth the whole law, and offendeth in one point, is guilty of all." (*Notes, Matt. xix. 16—22. Jam. ii. 8—13.*) No man therefore can claim the recompence of his obedience as a debt; but all must receive it as an unmerited favour: and the silence of the Scriptures is to be considered, in such cases, as conveying important instruction.—It is observable, that all the tribes appointed to bless were descended from Leah and Rachel the free-women: and Reuben who had been disgraced for his misconduct, with Zebulun the youngest of Leah's sons, were added to the four tribes descended from the bond-women, to complete the number of tribes, which stood on mount Ebal to ratify the curses. (*Note, Josh. viii. 30—35.*)

14 And <sup>x</sup>the Levites shall speak, and say unto all the men of Israel with a loud voice,

x xxxiii. 9, 10. Josh. viii. 33. Neh. viii. 7, 8. Mal. ii. 7—9.

15 <sup>y</sup>Cursed be the man that <sup>z</sup>maketh any graven or molten image, <sup>a</sup>an abomination unto the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, <sup>b</sup>and putteth it in a secret place: <sup>c</sup>and all the people shall answer, and say, Amen.

y xxviii. 16—19. Gen. ix. 25. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19. Jer. xi. 3.

16 Cursed be <sup>d</sup>he that setteth light by his father or his mother: and all the people shall say, Amen.

z See on iv. 16—23. v. 8. Ex. xv. 4. 23.—xxxiii. 1—4. xxxiv. 17. Lev. xix. 4. xxvi. 1. Is. xlv. 9, 10. 17.

17 Cursed <sup>e</sup>be he that removeth his neighbour's land-mark: and all the people shall say, Amen.

a xxxix. 17. 1 Kings xi. 5—7. 2 Kings xxiii. 13. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 2. Is. xlv. 19. Ez. vii. 20. Dan. xi. 31. Matt. xxiv. 15. Rev. xvii. 4, 5.

18 Cursed be <sup>f</sup>he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way: and all the people shall say, Amen.

b Gen. xxxd. 19. 34. Ps. xlv. 12. 21. Ez. viii. 7—12. xiv. 4.

19 Cursed be he that <sup>g</sup>perverteth the judgment of the stranger, fatherless, and widow: and all the people shall say, Amen.

c See on Num. v. 22.—Jer. xi. 5. xxviii. 6. Matt. vi. 13. 1 Cor. xiv. 16.

Rev. ii. 14. g See on x. 18. xxiv. 17.—Ex. xxii. 21—24. xxxiii. 2, 8, 9. Ps. lxxii. 2—4. Prov. xvii. 23. xxxi. 5. Mic. iii. 9. Mal. iii. 5.

d xxi. 18—21. Ex. xx. 12. xxi. 17. Lev. xix. 3. Prov. xxx. 11—17. Ez. xlv. 7. Matt. xv. 4—6.

Rev. ii. 14. g See on x. 18. xxiv. 17.—Ex. xxii. 21—24. xxxiii. 2, 8, 9. Ps. lxxii. 2—4. Prov. xvii. 23. xxxi. 5. Mic. iii. 9. Mal. iii. 5.

e xix. 14. Prov. xxii. 28. xxxii. 10, 11.

V. 15. The curses here denounced were specially intended in every case, as a restraint from *secret* wickedness. Several of the crimes specified, if *proved* against any one, exposed him to capital punishment; as idolatry, incest, murder, and others. But in many cases the criminal might elude detection, and punishment by the magistrate: yet let him not hope to escape with impunity; for the dreadful curse of God would rest upon him; and at length vengeance would certainly overtake him, if he continued impenitent (24).—The word *Amen*, which the people were required to add, after each of these curses, implied their express assent to it, or confirmation of it: not as *desiring* that they or their brethren should be accursed; but as declaring their conviction that the guilty would be accursed; that they deserved to be so; and that they expected to be themselves accursed, if they committed the crimes thus openly protested against. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Num. v. 22. 1 Kings i. 36, 37. Jer. xxviii. 6, 7.*)—The objection often made to the solemnity prescribed by the church of England on Ash-Wednesday, that *people go to church to curse their neighbours*, is very frivolous: for the *Amen*, now spoken by Christians, means neither more nor less, than that which God commanded the Israelites to annex to the same curses; and under every dispensation, they who live in the practice of gross wickedness are accursed, and should be reminded of it.

V. 16. *Marg. Ref.—Note, Ex. xxi. 15—17.*

V. 17. *Marg. Ref.—Note, xix. 14.*

V. 18. *Maketh the blind to wander.*] By parity of reason, it is at least equally criminal wittingly to give pernicious counsel to the ignorant, or to injure those who cannot take care of themselves. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Lev. xix. 14.*)

V. 19—25. *Marg. Ref.*

20 Cursed *be* <sup>h</sup> he that lieth with his father's wife; because he uncovereth his father's skirt: and all the people shall say, Amen.

21 Cursed *be* <sup>i</sup> he that lieth with any manner of beast; and all the people shall say, Amen.

22 Cursed *be* <sup>k</sup> he that lieth with his sister, the daughter of his father, or the daughter of his mother: and all the people shall say, Amen.

23 Cursed *be* <sup>l</sup> he that lieth with his mother-in-law: and all the people shall say, Amen.

24 Cursed *be* <sup>m</sup> he that smiteth his neighbour secretly: and all the people shall say, Amen.

25 Cursed *be* he that <sup>n</sup> taketh reward to slay an innocent person: and all the people shall say, Amen.

26 <sup>o</sup> Cursed *be* he that <sup>p</sup> confirmeth not *all* the words of this law to do them: and all the people shall say, Amen.

### CHAP. XXVIII.

Blessings promised to Israel, while obedient, 1—14; and awful curses, of every kind imaginable, denounced if they were disobedient, 15—68.

AND it shall come to pass, <sup>a</sup> if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe *and* <sup>b</sup> to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD

capacities. Yet, unless the Holy Spirit efficaciously prosper their labours, men will not, even by these means, be "made wise unto salvation:" we should therefore continually and earnestly beseech the Lord to bestow this blessing upon us. But without the interposition of the atoning blood of Christ, we sinners can neither have communion with a holy God, nor perform any acceptable obedience to him: for his righteous law peremptorily requires an uninterrupted, spiritual, and persevering obedience to every precept; and condemns all without exception, who at any time, or in any instance, transgress it. Under its awful curse we transgressors remain, till the redemption of Christ be applied to our hearts: and under that curse every unbeliever will perish for ever, and be constrained to acknowledge the justice of his condemnation. Happy they, who now, "submit to the righteousness of God," and, being self-condemned, seek salvation from his mercy through Jesus Christ, according to that new covenant, of which he is Surety: for them "there is no condemnation," their "salvation is for ever, and their righteousness shall not be abolished;" and every blessing is ensured to them by promise, by covenant, and by oath. But none, who live in the habitual practice of known sin, are partakers of these privileges; and, however they may conceal their wickedness from the cognizance of the magistrates, or the censures of ministers and the church, the curse of God will fall upon them, with weight proportioned to their abused privileges and hypocritical profession.—Wherever "the grace of God bringeth salvation," it teaches the believer to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world;" confirming all the words of the divine law, and delighting in them, after the inward man, though he cannot render it a perfect and unfailing obedience. In this evangelical dependence and conscientious walk, true peace and solid joy are to be found. Thus God may be glorified and man benefited; and magistrates, ministers, and persons of every rank, should unitedly employ all their authority, influence, and example, to promote this our holy religion.

### NOTES

CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1, 2. This chapter greatly resem-

V. 26. This is rendered by St. Paul "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law, to do them," nearly according to the Septuagint; and so as evidently to include the whole law. The word *all* is here in Italicks; and probably deference to St. Paul's quotation of the verse, Gal. iii. 10, induced the venerable translators to insert it; yet it would have been, at least in my view, better to render the verse literally, if it had been merely to prevent cavils and objections; such as modern Jews make against both them and the apostle. (See *Answer to Rabbi Crooll, by the Author*, pp. 227, 228.) The cavil indeed is ignorant; for the word *all* was inserted by the Greek translators, called the LXX, long before even St. Paul's days; who took it for substance as he found it. The meaning is exactly the same with it or without it, (xxviii. 1.) Hence we learn, that *continual obedience* is the *confirmation* here spoken of; and are likewise taught, that these curses were intended not only to deter the Israelites from sin, but to shew them their need of mercy, and to establish the distinction between "the righteousness of faith," and "the righteousness of works." This especially must be the meaning of the last verse, by which all the Israelites were evidently called on to condemn themselves, as deserving of the curse denounced: and this truth, properly perceived, forms the grand preparation of heart for understanding and valuing the salvation of the gospel.—All these curses were denounced against transgressors not of the *ritual* law, but of the *moral*; each of the special instances being referable to one or other of the ten commandments. (Notes, Gal. iii. 6—14.)

### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As our fallen nature is entirely indisposed to retain suitable impressions of heavenly things; we ought to use every proper means of assisting our memories, awakening our consciences, and affecting our hearts with them. But, blessed be God, the numerous copies of the Scriptures among us, if properly studied, and thus familiarized to our minds, may supersede the necessity of such methods as were prescribed to Israel: and the end of the gospel-ministry is, and the aim of all preachers ought to be, to make the word of God as plain as possible to the meanest

**f** Judg. vi. 4. Job 1. 14, 15. **31** Thine <sup>1</sup>ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof: thine ass shall be violently taken away from before thy face, and shall not <sup>2</sup>be restored to thee: thy sheep shall be given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to rescue them.

**g** 184.—Num. xxi. 29. 2 Chr. xxix. 9. Neh. v. 2—5. Jer. xv. 7—9. xvi. 2—4. Ez. xxiv. 25. Joel iii. 6. Am. v. 27. Mic. iv. 10. **32** Thy <sup>3</sup>sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look and <sup>4</sup>fail with longing for them all the day long: and there shall be no might in thine hand.

**h** 65. Job xi. 20. xlii. 5. Ps. lxxix. 3. cxix. 82, 123. Is. xxxviii. 14. Lam. ii. 11. iv. 17. v. 17. See on 30.—Is. i. 7. Jer. v. 17. viii. 16. **33** The <sup>5</sup>fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and <sup>6</sup>thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway;

**k** See on 28.—Is. xxxiii. 14. Jer. xxv. 15, 16. Rev. xvi. 10, 11. **34** So that thou shalt be <sup>7</sup>mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.

**l** See on 27.—Job ii. 6, 7. Is. i. 6. iii. 17, 24. **35** The LORD shall smite thee in the knees, and in the legs with <sup>8</sup>a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head.

**m** 2 Kings xvii. 4—6. xxiv. 12—15. xxv. 6, 7. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. xxxvi. 6, 20. Is. xxxix. 7. Jer. xlii. 11, 12, 24—27. xxiv. 8—10. xxxix. 5—7. lxx. 8—11. Lam. iv. 20. Ez. xii. 12, 13. **36** The LORD shall <sup>9</sup>bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and <sup>10</sup>there

shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone.

**37** And thou shalt <sup>11</sup>become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word, among all nations whither the LORD shall lead thee.

**38** Thou <sup>12</sup>shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shalt gather but little in: <sup>13</sup>for the locust shall consume it.

**39** Thou shalt plant vineyards and dress them; but shalt neither drink of the wine, nor gather the grapes: <sup>14</sup>for the worms shall eat them.

**40** Thou shalt have olive-trees throughout all thy coasts, but thou shalt not <sup>15</sup>anoint thyself with the oil: for thine olive shall cast his fruit.

**41** Thou shalt beget sons and daughters, but <sup>16</sup>thou shalt not enjoy them: for they shall go into captivity.

**42** All <sup>17</sup>thy trees and fruit of thy land shall the locust <sup>18</sup>consume.

**43** The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high: and thou shalt come down very low.

**44** He shall <sup>19</sup>lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail.

See on 28.—xxix. 22—24.—1 Kings ix. 7, 8. 2 Chr. vii. 20. Ps. xlii. 13, 14. Jer. xxv. 9, xxvi. 9. Joel ii. 17. marg. Zech. viii. 13. p Is. v. 10. Mic. vi. 15. Hag. i. 6.

Ex. x. 14, 15. Joel ii. 3, 25. Am. iv. 9. vii. 1, 2.

Joel i. 4—7, ii. 3.—Jon. iv. 7.

Ps. xxiii. 5. civ. 15. Mic. vi. 15.

† Heb. they shall not be thine. See on 32.—Lam. i. 5. u See on 38, 39.—Am. vii. 1, 2. ‡ Or, possess.

x Judg. ii. 3, 14. 15. iv. 2, 3. x. 7.—10. xiv. 4. xv. 11, 12. 1 Sam. xiii. 3—7. 19—23. 2 Kings xvii. 20, 23. xxiv. 14.—16. John xviii. 31. xix. 15. y See on 12, 13.—Lam. i. 5.

**V. 32.** *Marg. Ref.*—(Note, Job ii. 7, 8.)

**V. 36.** (*Marg. Ref.*) The former clause of this verse was especially accomplished, when Zedekiah and his people were carried captives to Babylon. Without doubt the Israelites in general, who were carried captives by the Assyrians, and many of the Jews in Chaldea, were finally incorporated with the nations among whom they lived, and were given up to their idolatry. But some think, that the violence frequently done the Jews in popish countries, through which they are compelled by severe persecutions to conceal their religion, and to worship the images of saints and angels, was also predicted. (Note, 63.)

**V. 37.** The name of Jew has, long been a proverbial mark of detestation and contempt, among all the nations whither they have been driven; and is so to this day: so that Christians, Mohammedans, and Pagans, join in it. 'You use me like a Jew... None but a Jew would have done this... I would not have done so to a Jew.' *Bp. Patrick.*—This is fact; but doubtless it is wicked, thus to reproach those who are under the divine rebuke, and who are living, though reluctant, witnesses of the truth of our holy religion, and of the Lord's indignation against those who reject or oppose it: and they, who thus reproach them, are generally too closely copying this part of their example. (*Marg. Ref.* o.—Note, Is. lxx. 13—15.)

**V. 38—41.** *Marg. Ref.*—Notes, Is. v. 8—10. Hag. i. 5—11. ii. 15—19. Mal. iii. 7—12.

**V. 43, 44.** These verses had an early accomplishment

**V. 32.** *No might.*] Neither power to resist the violence done them, nor money to redeem their enslaved offspring.—'In several countries, in Spain and Portugal particularly, their children' [those of the Jews] 'have been taken from them, by order of the government, to be educated in the popish religion... The fourth council of Toledo ordered, that all their children should be taken from them for fear they should partake of their errors, and that they should be shut up in monasteries, to be instructed in the Christian truths... And when they were banished from Portugal, 'the king,' says Mariana, 'ordered all their children under fourteen years of age, to be taken from them, and baptized: a practice not at all justifiable,' adds the historian—'because none ought to be forced to become Christians, nor children to be taken from their parents.' *Bp. Newton.*

**V. 34.** (*Marg. Ref.*—Note, 28.) 'After the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, some of the worst of the Jews took refuge in the Castle of Masada; where, being closely besieged by the Romans, they, at the persuasion of Eleazar their leader, first murdered their wives and children; then ten men were chosen by lot to slay the rest; this being done, one of the ten was chosen in like manner to kill the other nine; which having executed, he set fire to the place, and then stabbed himself. There were nine hundred and sixty who perished in this miserable manner: and only two women and five boys escaped, by hiding themselves in the aqueducts under ground.' *Bp. Newton.*

<sup>x</sup> See on 5.—  
xxix. 20, 21. Lev  
xxvi. 28. Prov  
xiii. 21. Is. i. 20.  
lxx. 14, 15. Jer.  
xxiv. 9, 10. Lam.  
ii. 15—17. Ez.  
vii. 15. xiv. 21.  
<sup>a</sup> See on xi. 27, 28.  
—Ps. cxix. 21.  
Jer. vii. 22—25.  
<sup>b</sup> 27, 59. xxix. 20.  
28. Is. viii. 18.  
Jer. xix. 8. xcv.  
.8. Ez. xiv. 8.  
xxiii. 32, 33.  
xxxvi. 20.  
<sup>c</sup> See on xii. 7—12.  
xvi. 11.—xxxii.  
13—15. Neh. ix.  
35. 1 Tim. vi. 17  
—19.  
<sup>d</sup> 2 Chr. xii. 8.  
Neh. ix. 35—37.  
Jer. v. 19. xvii.  
4.  
<sup>e</sup> Jer. xlv. 17, 18.  
22, 27. Lam. v.  
2—6. Ez. iv. 16,  
17.  
<sup>f</sup> Is. xlvii. 6. Jer.  
xxvii. 12, 13.  
xxviii. 13, 14.  
Matt. xi. 29.  
<sup>g</sup> Num. xxiv. 24.  
Is. v. 28—30.  
Jer. v. 15—17.  
Dan. ix. 26. Hab.  
i. 6, 7. Luke xix.  
43, 44.  
<sup>h</sup> Jer. iv. 13. xlviii.  
40. xlix. 22. Lam.  
iv. 19. Ez. xvii.  
3, 12. Hos. viii.  
1. Matt. xxiv.  
28.  
<sup>i</sup> Jer. v. 15. Ez. iii.  
6. 1 Cor. xiv. 21.  
<sup>j</sup> Heb. *hear*.  
<sup>k</sup> Heb. *strong of*  
*face*—Prov. viii.  
13. Ec. viii. 1.  
*marginal*.  
<sup>l</sup> Dan. vii. 7. viii.  
23.  
<sup>k</sup> 2 Chr. xxxvi. 17.  
Is. xlv. 6. Hos.  
xiii. 16. Luke  
xix. 44. xxi. 23,  
24.  
<sup>l</sup> See on 28.—Is. i.  
7. xii. 8.  
<sup>m</sup> Lev. xxvii. 26.  
Jer. xvi. 13. xvii.  
3. Ez. xii. 19.  
Hab. iii. 16, 17.  
<sup>n</sup> Lev. xxvii. 26.  
2 Kings xvii. 5.  
6. xviii. 13. xxiv.  
10, 11. xxv. 1—  
4. Jer. xxi. 4—7.  
xxxvi. 8. xxxix.  
1—3. iii. 4—7.  
Ez. iv. 1—8.  
Dan. ix. 26.  
Zech. xi. 2.  
xiv. 2. Matt.  
xxii. 7. xxiv.  
15, 16. Luke xix. 43, 44. xxi. 20—24.

45 Moreover <sup>a</sup> all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; <sup>a</sup> because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee.

46 And they shall be upon thee for <sup>b</sup> a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever.

47 Because thou <sup>c</sup> servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things;

48 Therefore shalt thou <sup>d</sup> serve thine enemies, which the LORD shall send against thee, <sup>e</sup> in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put <sup>f</sup> a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.

49 ¶ The LORD shall bring <sup>g</sup> a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, <sup>h</sup> as swift <sup>h</sup> as the eagle flieth; <sup>i</sup> a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand;

50 A nation <sup>j</sup> of <sup>j</sup> fierce countenance, which <sup>k</sup> shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young:

51 And he shall eat <sup>l</sup> the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed: <sup>m</sup> which <sup>also</sup> shall not leave thee <sup>either</sup> corn, wine, or oil, <sup>or</sup> the increase of thy kine or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee.

52 And he shall <sup>n</sup> besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced

walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, throughout all thy land which the LORD thy God hath given thee.

53 And thou shalt eat <sup>o</sup> the fruit of thine own <sup>a</sup> body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege; and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee:

54 So that the man <sup>that</sup> is tender among you, and very delicate, <sup>p</sup> his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward <sup>q</sup> the wife of his bosom, and towards the remnant of <sup>r</sup> his children which he shall leave:

55 So that he will not give to any of them the flesh of his children, whom he shall eat; because he hath nothing left him in the <sup>s</sup> siege and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates.

56 The tender and <sup>t</sup> delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground, for delicateness and tenderness, <sup>u</sup> her eye shall be evil towards the husband of her bosom, and towards her son, and towards her daughter.

57 And towards her <sup>v</sup> young one <sup>that</sup> cometh out from between her feet, and towards her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things, secretly, in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates.

18. 55. 57. Lev. xxvi. 29. 2 Kings vi. 28, 29. Jer. xix. 9. Lam. ii. 20. iv. 10. Ez. v. 10. Matt. xxiv. 19. Heb. belly.

<sup>p</sup> See on xv. 9—Prov. xxiii. 6. xxviii. 22. Matt. xx. 15.

<sup>q</sup> xlii. 6. 2 Sam. xii. 3. Mic. vii. 5.

<sup>r</sup> Ps. ciii. 13. Is. xlix. 15. Matt. vii. 9—11. Luke xi. 11—13.

<sup>s</sup> Jer. v. 10. xxxiv. 2. iii. 6.

<sup>t</sup> Is. iiii. 16. Lam. iv. 2—6.

<sup>u</sup> See on 54.

<sup>v</sup> Heb. *after-birth*.

<sup>x</sup> Gen. xlix. 10.

in the time of the Judges, as well as in later ages. (Note, 13.) The remains of the conquered nations were permitted to rise up against the Israelites, to gain the ascendancy over them, and cruelly to oppress them, whenever their sins had provoked the Lord.

V. 45. *Marg. Ref.*—Note, 15.

V. 46. The miseries and persecutions; which the Jews have endured, and which in some measure they still endure, without apparent prospect of redress, are unparalleled in the history of mankind, both for their weight, their number, and their duration: yet after all their oppressions and massacres with which they have been wasted, and the long-continued dispersion by which they have been scattered, they still remain a distinct and very numerous people! (Notes, Num. xxiii. 9. Jer. xxx. 10, 11.) These events, compared with the favour of God in ancient times manifested towards them, and with the predictions concerning them, should not only excite our astonishment,

but turn unto us for a testimony; and should serve, instead of successive miracles, to assure us of the truth of the Scriptures. And when the predictions likewise, concerning their conversion to Christ, shall be accomplished, the whole taken together will indeed be a *sign* and a *wonder* to all the nations of the earth, and become the forerunner of a general success of true Christianity. (Note, Rom. xi. 11—15.)

V. 47, 48. *Marg. Ref.*—Notes, Jer. xxvii. 2, 3. xxviii. 13, 14.

V. 49—57. Though the Chaldeans are often described under the similitude of an eagle, yet it is generally agreed, that these verses especially predict the desolations brought on the Jews by the Romans, the last and most terrible enemies of that nation; who came from a country far more distant than Chaldea; whose standard was an *eagle*; who spake a language to which the Jews were then entire strangers, being wholly unlike the Hebrew, of which the

<sup>y</sup> See on 15. Lev. xxi. 14, 15.—Jer. vii. 9, 10. 26—28.

58 'If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law *that are written in this book*, that thou mayest <sup>a</sup> fear this glorious and fearful name, **THE LORD THY GOD;**

<sup>a</sup> vi. 13. Ex. iii. 14, 15. vi. 3. xxxiv. 5—7. Ps. lxxxiii. 18. Is. xlii. 8. Jer. v. 12. Matt. x. 28. Heb. x. 30, 31. xii. 28, 29.

59 Then the LORD will make <sup>a</sup> thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, *even great plagues and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.*

<sup>a</sup> 46. xxix. 20—28. xxxi. 17, 18. xxxii. 22, 26. 1 Kings ix. 7—9. xvi. 3, 4. Lam. i. 9. 12. iv. 12. Dan. ix. 12. Hos. ii. 4. Mark xiii. 19.

60 Moreover, he will bring upon thee <sup>b</sup> all the diseases of Egypt, which thou wast afraid of, and they shall cleave unto thee:

<sup>b</sup> See on vii. 15. Ex. xv. 26.

61 Also every sickness, and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law, them will the LORD <sup>c</sup> bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed.

<sup>c</sup> Heb. cause to ascend.

Chaldee was merely a dialect; whose victories were rapid; whose appearance was terrible; whose yoke was an iron yoke, and the havock which they made of the nation was most tremendous. By their armies Jerusalem was at length besieged, sacked, and utterly desolated: and during this siege, the famine was so extreme, that even rich and delicate persons, both men and women ate their own children, and concealed the horrible repast lest others should tear it from them. 'Women snatched the food out of the very mouths of their husbands, and sons of their fathers, and (what is most miserable) mothers of their infants.' *Josephus. Wars of the Jews. Book v. Ch. x. Sect. 3.*—'In every house, if there appeared any semblance of food, a battle ensued, and the dearest friends and relations fought with one another; snatching away the miserable provisions of life.' *Book vi. Ch. iii. Sect. 3.*—'A woman distinguished by birth and wealth, after she had been plundered by the tyrants, (or soldiers,) of all her other possessions, . . . boiling her own sucking child, ate half of him, and concealing the other half, reserved it for another time.' *Book vi. Ch. iii. Sect. 4.*—Perhaps the histories of all other nations on earth together, do not contain so many well authenticated instances of this most horrid effect of desperate hunger, as are found in that of the Jews, according to this most extraordinary ancient prediction of their celebrated lawgiver. (*Marg. Ref. on 53—57. Notes, Lev. xxvi. 29. 2 Kings vi. 28, 29. Lam. iv. 10.*)—After Jerusalem had been utterly desolated by the Romans, they were continually so provoked by the insurrections and daring crimes of the Jews, that they persecuted them even almost to extirpation: so that when the numbers destroyed in the siege, (not less than 1,100,000,) and the tens of thousands which were afterwards slaughtered year after year in every country, are considered, it appears wonderful that there were any remains of them left.

*Young one. (57) Marg.*

V. 58. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*Written.*] Moses here, as a preacher, appeals to the law, as at this time written in a book.

V. 59. The plagues of the Jews have been indeed made

62 And ye shall be left <sup>c</sup> few in number whereas ye were <sup>d</sup> as the stars of heaven for multitude: because thou wouldst not obey the voice of the LORD thy God.

63 And it shall come to pass, *that* as the LORD <sup>e</sup> rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the LORD will <sup>f</sup> rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought: and ye shall be <sup>g</sup> plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it.

64 And the LORD shall <sup>h</sup> scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and <sup>i</sup> there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, *even wood and stone.*

wonderful; and the Babylonish captivity, the punishment of their complicated idolatries, was so inconsiderable, either for the *misery* or *continuance* of it, compared with their sufferings since they rejected and crucified their Messiah; that the superior malignity of that crime, above all which went before it, is legibly written in the punishment. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Gen. xlix. 10.*)

V. 61. After this tremendous catalogue of curses, lest there should be any possible temporal misery, which had not been mentioned, the whole is comprised in one general denunciation; that every species and every degree of misery should come upon them, if they still continued disobedient.

V. 63. The miseries of his creatures are not in themselves pleasing to the Lord: but he is pleased with that display of his justice, truth, wisdom, and power, which become him as the Judge of all the earth. (*Note, Jer. xxxii. 39—41.*)—'Adrian, . . . after a strange desolation before mentioned, prohibited by a publick decree, ratified with the Senate's consent, any Jew to come within sight of Judea.' *Bp. Patrick.* Thus the Jews were totally expelled from the land of promise; and every attempt to settle them again in it has hitherto been ineffectual: so that to this day fewer of them are found in that country, than almost in any other.

V. 64. A Jewish writer, quoted by Bp. Patrick, has these words: 'In the Roman captivity, the Jews were dispersed and dissipated through all the regions of the east and of the west. For every nation of which the Roman army consisted, when they returned to their own countries, carried some of them along with them, into Greece, Germany, Italy, Spain, France, and all other countries, which either Christians or Mohammedans now possess.' Indeed it is certain they have been ever since scattered abroad throughout the earth: so that, as to their *national existence*, the judgments of God have pursued them even to their destruction.—'It is too common for the Jews, in popish countries to comply with the idolatrous worship, . . . and to bow down to stocks and stones, rather than their effects should be confiscated.' *Bp. Newton.*—'The

65 And among these nations <sup>j</sup>thalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy <sup>k</sup>foot have rest; but <sup>l</sup>the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and <sup>m</sup>failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind.

66 And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee: <sup>n</sup>and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life.

67 In <sup>o</sup>the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even

thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.

68 And the LORD shall <sup>p</sup>bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again; and <sup>q</sup>there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bond-men and bond-women, and no man shall buy you.

'Spanish and Portugal inquisitions reduce them to the dilemma of being either hypocrites, or burnt.—The number of these dissemblers is very considerable...They are so much the more dangerous, for not only being very numerous, but confounded with the ecclesiasticks, and entering into all ecclesiastical dignities...The most surprising thing is, that this religion spreads from generation to generation, and still subsists in the persons of dissemblers in a remote posterity. In vain the great lords of Spain make alliances, change their names, and take ancient scutcheons; they are still known to be of Jewish race, and Jews themselves. The convents of monks and nuns are full of them...Orobio, who relates the fact, knew these dissemblers: he was one of them, and bent the knee before the sacrament.—Moreover he brings proofs of his assertion, in maintaining, that there are in the synagogue of Amsterdam, brothers and sisters, and near relations, to good families in Spain and Portugal; and even Franciscan monks, and Dominicans, and Jesuits who come to do penance, and make amends for the crime they have committed in dissembling.' *Basnage's History of the Jews*.—As the latter part of this prophecy evidently relates to the present state of the Jews; (and this even their own writers allow;) the prediction, that in their dispersed state "they should serve other gods, which neither they nor their fathers had known, even wood and stone," seems so evidently to mark out this hypocritical compliance with the new idolatry of the anti-christians, in the worship of the images of saints and angels, as even to add to the credibility of the extraordinary facts here stated by their historian.

V. 65—67. The dispersed Jews would find no alleviation or respite from misery. Accordingly they have hitherto found no country, in which they are treated as denizens: all suspect them as enemies, and behave to them as aliens; if they do not harass, oppress, and persecute them. It may be useful to state a fact or two, out of very many, in illustration of these verses.—A dreadful massacre was made of the Jews at Lisbon, in the year 1506, for three days together; 'where men were not suffered to die of their deadly wounds, but were dragged by their mangled limbs into the market-place, where the bodies of the living and the slain, with others half alive and half dead, were burnt together in heaps. The spectacle was so horrible, that it quite astonished the rest of this wretched people, two thousand of which perished in this barbarous manner. Parents durst not mourn for their children, nor children sigh for their parents;...so that their hearts no doubt

'were ready to break with grief.'... 'A decree was made...' (in Spain 1493,) 'that all the Jews should either change their religion, or quit the country in three months...' 'Three hundred thousand, old and young, men and women, went away on foot in one day, not knowing whither to go. Some went into Portugal, others into Navarre, where they conflicted with many calamities: for some became a prey, or perished by famine and pestilence. And therefore others committed themselves to the sea:...but there they met with new disasters: for many were sold for slaves when they came on any coast, many were drowned, many burnt in the ships that were set on fire.—After this a plague...swept away the rest of the miserable wretches, who were hated by all mankind: so that all that vast number perished... except a very few.' *Bp. Patrick*.—Nothing seems more suited to confirm a sensible but hesitating enquirer concerning the truth of revelation, than a careful comparison of this chapter, and of the prophecies of the New Testament respecting the Jews, with their actual history to the present day: this appears to be capable of effecting every thing, which any external evidence imaginable can effect; and the demonstration thence deduced, and which may be continually re-examined at leisure, and with deliberation, seems more convincing than miracles: for these are *transient acts*, and can only be reviewed in the testimony with which they are authenticated. 'What stronger proofs can we desire of the divine legation of Moses?—How these instances may affect others I know not, but for myself I must acknowledge, they not only convince, but amaze and astonish me beyond expression.' *Bp. Newton*.

V. 68. Many of the Jews rebelliously went into Egypt after the Babylonish captivity, and there miserably perished. (*Notes, Jer. xli—xliv.*) Multitudes went thither, and settled under the successors of Alexander. But this verse seems especially to point out an event, which took place subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and the desolation made by Adrian. Numbers of the captives were sent by sea into Egypt, (as well as into other countries,) and sold for slaves at a vile price, and for the meanest offices; and many thousands were left to perish from want: for the multitude was so great, that purchasers could not be found for them all at any price. God had brought the nation out of Egypt triumphantly, and had forbidden them to return; and had not their sin incurred the severest vengeance, he would never have permitted them to be forced thither: but, by their iniquities, they provoked him to reduce them to as abject a condition,

## CHAP. XXIX.

Moses reminds Israel of the Lord's wonderful works, in order to their again ratifying the covenant, 1—9. He addresses all who were required to do this, 10—17. He tremendously denounces the doom

as that from which he had redeemed them; nay more abject and wretched.—Mr. Henry closes his comment upon this most awful chapter, with mentioning a wicked man, who was so enraged at the threatenings contained in it, that he tore the leaf out of his Bible. 'But,' says this pious author, 'to what purpose is it to deface a copy, whilst the original stands upon record, in the divine counsels, by which it is unalterably determined, that "the wages of sin is death," whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear?'

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In vain doth human language exhaust its powers, in attempting to express the whole meaning of these important terms, **THE BLESSING**, and **THE CURSE**, of **ALMIGHTY GOD**. All events are absolutely at his disposal, all creatures are his servants, and he can make us as happy, or as miserable, as he pleases. If he determine to bless us, he can command a confluence of health, riches, and reputation; and will give fruitful fields, flourishing families, and peaceful habitations, in case these be good for us. He can advance men above their neighbours, and cause them to triumph over their enemies: he can communicate every temporal good, along with the ordinances of his courts, and the graces of his Spirit. He can even connect great honour with deep humility; and give success in every undertaking, comfort in every connexion, and abundance of all things, with a thankful, liberal, and spiritual mind: yet all this is very little, compared with that future, everlasting, and complete felicity, in the contemplation of which our thoughts and our language are absolutely swallowed up.—On the other hand, if the Lord purpose to inflict vengeance, what miseries can his curse inflict even in this present world! An assemblage of direful diseases, racking pains, pinching poverty, and dreary famine, with armies of victorious enemies, exercising every cruelty enhanced by galling insult, are ready to obey his mandate. At his word too, remorse seizes the conscience, and anguish and despair possess the heart; yea, maddening rage, envy, and impotent revenge, join with disappointed ambition, avarice, and lust, to render the whole soul one wild tumult of conflicting passions, to obliterate every tender feeling, and to infatuate the devoted wretch, by depriving him of all power to extricate himself, and plunging him still deeper into utter ruin. His own wretchedness will be also aggravated by witnessing the distress of friends, relatives, and children, rendered miserable through his crimes: and all this, and far more than words can describe, may with accumulating weight press upon him, for wearisome weeks, and months, and years, without prospect of relief but from death, the thought of which appals the soul with still deeper horrors. But this is only "the beginning of sorrows" to those, who are under the curse of God: what will then be their unabating and everlasting misery in that world, where "their worm never dieth, and the fire is not quenched?" Yet to such wretchedness is every one ex-

posed, who lives in disobedience to God's commandments; and his wrath is revealed from heaven expressly for our warning, "that we may fear this glorious and fearful name, **THE LORD OUR GOD**." None will suffer any misery above his deserts: but indeed we are all exposed to this awful curse for breaking the law of God. Yet, blessed be his name, we are under so gracious a dispensation, that nothing but obstinate impenitence can expose us to the more tremendous part of it. "Christ hath redeemed us

**THESE** are \*the words of the covenant, which the **LORD** commanded

a 12. 21. 25. Lev.  
xxvi. 44. 48.  
2 Kings xxiii. 3.  
Jer. xl. 2. 6.  
xxxiv. 18. Acts  
iii. 25.

from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us," and having borne, in his own person, the substance of all that agony and anguish, which our sins had merited, and which we must otherwise have endured for ever. To those who believe in him, "there is no condemnation:" all temporal calamities are converted into salutary chastisements; whatever be their proportion of temporal blessings, every thing is given or withheld, as most conduces to their final and eternal felicity; and even in this present world, their comfort and happiness is far superior to that of the most prosperous sinner. To this Refuge and Salvation let sinners flee; in these privileges let believers rejoice, and serve their reconciled God with gladness of heart, for the "abundance" of all spiritual blessings with which he has blessed them; while gratitude to the Saviour, meditation on his sufferings, and a consciousness of their own deserts, reconcile them to every cross and self-denial. But let none call these blessings their own, who do not endeavour to observe and do all the commandments of God, with uprightness of heart: for even the believer can enjoy the present comfort of them, no further than he "exercises" himself to have a conscience void of offence towards God "and man."—As "all things work together for good to them who love God;" so all things concur in ruining his enemies, and in enslaving to the vilest of masters those that refuse to obey him, whose "service is perfect freedom." Even prosperity increases their pride and insolence, their table becomes a snare, the curse of God embitters their blessings; and it will pursue them, until it overtake and sink them into final destruction.—As these predictions concerning the Israelites, compared with their accomplishment, demonstrate the divine inspiration of the Scriptures; how should the example of that people warn all who see and hear these things, not to provoke the Lord to anger, by disobeying his commands, and despising his gospel!—But let all who love the truth and word of God, remember to pity and pray for the conversion of the benighted Jews: and likewise to beseech the Lord in behalf of our much favoured, but much offending land; that reformation, and the revival of true religion, may preserve us from being bereaved of our distinguished mercies, and feeling those miseries, from which we have hitherto been graciously exempted.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXIX. V. 1. The covenant ratified with this new generation, (like the law given them,) was substau-

Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, <sup>b</sup> beside the covenant which he made with them in Horeb.

2 And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, <sup>c</sup> Ye have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt, unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land;

3 The great <sup>d</sup> temptations which thine eyes have seen, the signs, and those great miracles:

4 Yet the LORD hath not <sup>e</sup> given you

an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.

5 And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: <sup>f</sup> 'your clothes are not waxen old upon you, <sup>g</sup> and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot.

6 Ye have not <sup>h</sup> eaten bread, <sup>i</sup> neither have ye drunk wine or strong drink; that ye might know that I am the LORD your God.

7 And when ye came unto this place, <sup>j</sup> Sihon the king of Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, came out against us unto battle, and we smote them.

tially the same, as that before ratified with their fathers at mount Sinai.—In this chapter the covenant is proposed, and the consequences of violating it are declared: but a more explicit ratification of it was afterwards made, from mount Gerizim and mount Ebal. (Notes, xxvii. Josh. viii. 30—35.)

V. 2, 3. Numbers of the persons addressed had, in their youth, been eye-witnesses of the miracles referred to, and could attest the reality of them to their children and juniors. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 4. Fallen man never makes a proper use of his senses and faculties, and of religious instruction and outward advantages, without the special preventing grace of God. An entire indisposedness to that which is *spiritually* good, and a strong propensity to evil, the effects of our fall in Adam, are the sources of all actual wickedness, and render us the objects of the Lord's holy abhorrence, and righteous displeasure. No doubt Omnipotence *could* overcome these hindrances in every man: but the exercise of the power of God is directed by infinite wisdom, and regulated as most conducive to his glory. No sinner can *deserve* so valuable a benefit from his offended Creator; but every man might *righteously* have been left to the effects of his corrupt propensities, which are never in the holy scriptures admitted as an excuse for sinful actions. Indeed men in general perceive no occasion for renewing grace; they have no desire after it, and will use no means to obtain it. But on the contrary, by their voluntary wickedness, they do violence to natural conscience and the common sense of mankind, and thus often provoke God *judicially* to leave them to themselves. (Note, 2 Thes. ii. 8—12.) He has, however, appointed certain methods to be employed, to convince sinners that the change is absolutely necessary: and they are commanded and encouraged to seek it. Thus the path of duty and safety is made plain; and they who attend to these instructions, "receive the blessing from the God of salvation," the Giver of "every good and perfect gift;" (Notes, Jam. i. 13—18;) who at last will convince all his enemies that they alone were to blame for their sins.—The faithful minister will be thankful when any receive "hearts to perceive and eyes to see:" (Note, Matt. xiii. 16, 17:) but while so many remain blinded to their own character, interest and duty, he must wait, with earnest expectation

and prayer, for a more extensive blessing, and will seem to think nothing done, as long as so much remains undone. This appears to have been precisely the feeling of Moses at this time. There were doubtless many exceptions; yet the bulk of the people still remained insensible to the real design and tendency of all that the Lord had spoken and done among them; and multitudes had provoked him to give them up to their own hearts' lusts. This grieved the pious and affectionate spirit of Moses, who used this language, not only to reprove their hardness of heart, but also to warn, instruct, and excite them: for if "God had not given them a heart to perceive, and eyes to see," it was undeniable that they had wilfully hardened their hearts, and stupified their consciences against every thing which they had seen and heard.—Maimonides rightly and judiciously explains these words, when he saith, 'They had not disposed themselves to receive this grace from God.' Bp. Patrick. It may, however, be worth the reader's while to compare this statement with the words of the apostle: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do, of his good pleasure." And also with the language of our Liturgy, and articles; 'Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.'—'We have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us that we may have a good will, and working in us when we have that good will.' Article x.

V. 5, 6. (Notes, viii. 2, 3.) By the special blessing of God on the manna, which the people despised as light bread, that immense multitude had been preserved as healthy and fit for their various exercises, as any other people on the productions of the corn-field and vine-yard.—Moses here reports the very words of God, as if he had himself addressed the people.

Clothes, &c. (5) Note, viii. 4.—As by far the greatest part of the clothing of all ranks and ages in Israel, were made of *linen*, for which they had no resources in their own possessions, and exceedingly little opportunity of obtaining supplies from others; the reality and greatness of the miraculous interposition in this behalf, were the more extraordinary.

V. 7—9. ii. 32—37. iii. 1—11. Notes, Num. xxi. 21—34. xxxii.

8 And we took their land, and gave it for an inheritance unto the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to the half-tribe of Manasseh.

9 <sup>h</sup> Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do.

10 ¶ Ye <sup>i</sup> stand this day all of you before the LORD your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, *with* all the men of Israel,

11 Your little ones, your wives, and thy <sup>m</sup> stranger that *is* in thy camp, from <sup>n</sup> the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water:

12 That <sup>o</sup> thou shouldest <sup>\*</sup> enter into covenant with the LORD thy God, and <sup>p</sup> into his oath, which the LORD thy God maketh with thee this day:

13 That he may <sup>q</sup> establish thee to-day for a people unto himself, and *that* <sup>r</sup> he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath

sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

14 Neither with you only <sup>s</sup> do I make this covenant and this oath;

15 But with *him* that standeth here with us this day before the LORD our God, and <sup>t</sup> also with *him* that *is* not here with us this day:

16 (For ye know how we have dwelt in the land of Egypt, and how we came <sup>u</sup> through the nations which ye passed by;

17 And ye have seen their abominations, and their <sup>v</sup> idols, wood and stone, silver and gold, which *were* among them:)

18 Lest there <sup>w</sup> should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God, to go *and* serve the gods of these nations, <sup>x</sup> lest there should be among you a root that beareth <sup>y</sup> gall and wormwood:

<sup>h</sup> See on 1. iv. 6.

<sup>i</sup> Josh. i. 7.

<sup>j</sup> 1 Kings ii. 3. Ps.

<sup>k</sup> xxv. 10. ciii. 17.

<sup>l</sup> 18. 1a. lvi. 1, 2.

<sup>m</sup> 4-7. Jer. i. 5.

<sup>n</sup> Luke xi. 28.

<sup>o</sup> Heb. xiii. 20, 21.

<sup>p</sup> iv. 10. xxxi. 12.

<sup>q</sup> 18. 2 Chr. xxiii.

<sup>r</sup> 16. xxxiv. 29.

<sup>s</sup> 32. Neh. viii. 2.

<sup>t</sup> ix. 1, 2. 38. x.

<sup>u</sup> 28. Joel ii. 16.

<sup>v</sup> 17. Rev. vi. 18.

<sup>w</sup> xx. 12.

<sup>x</sup> v. 14. Ex. xii.

<sup>y</sup> 28. 48. 49. Num.

<sup>z</sup> x. 4.

<sup>aa</sup> 1. 2. 3. Ex. xix.

<sup>ab</sup> 5, 6. Josh. xxiv.

<sup>ac</sup> 25. 2 Kings xi.

<sup>ad</sup> 17. 2 Chr. xv. 12.

<sup>ae</sup> —18.

<sup>af</sup> Heb. pass.

<sup>ag</sup> 14. 2 Chr. xv.

<sup>ah</sup> 12-15. Neh. x.

<sup>ai</sup> 28. 29.

<sup>aj</sup> See on vii. 6.

<sup>ak</sup> xxvi. 18, 19.

<sup>al</sup> xxviii. 9.

<sup>am</sup> See on Gen. xvii.

<sup>an</sup> 7. Ex. vi. 7.

<sup>ao</sup> Jer. xxxi. 33.

<sup>ap</sup> xxxii. 38. Heb.

<sup>aq</sup> xi. 16.

<sup>s</sup> Jer. xxxi. 31-34. Heb. vii. 7-12.

<sup>t</sup> See on v. 3.—Jer. xxxii. 39. 1. 5. Acts ii. 39. 1 Cor. vii. 14.

<sup>u</sup> ii. 4. 9. 19. 24. iii. 1, 2.

<sup>v</sup> Heb. dungy gods.

<sup>x</sup> xi. 16, 17. xii. 1-15. xvi. 2-7. Heb. iii. 12.

<sup>y</sup> Jer. ix. 15. Hos. x. 4. Amos vi. 12. Acts viii. 23. Heb. xii. 15. Or, a poisonous herb. Heb. rosh.

V. 10—12. The national covenant, made with Israel, was in some things a shadow of the covenant of grace; as it also represented the outward dispensation of the gospel. (*Note, Ex. xix. 5.*) This covenant is confirmed with true believers "for the good of them and of their children after them:" and in their families, the profession of Christianity is principally continued. (*Notes, Jer. xxxii. 39—41. Acts ii. 37—40. Rom. xi. 16—21.*) Thus they enjoy permanent religious advantages, which are seldom withdrawn, unless they renounce the religion of their forefathers, or evince a total disregard of it. As others likewise embrace the gospel, their families also become a part of the visible church, which thus spreads from nation to nation, and descends from one generation to another. The infant-offspring, therefore, of such persons as are favoured with the gospel, are greatly interested in the conduct of their parents: and they who value the blessings of the new covenant as their own portion, and desire them as the portion of their beloved children, and intend to bring them up accordingly, seem equally authorized and required to bring them under the external obligations, and to seek for them the external pledges of it, as these Israelitish parents were.—This transaction might, in many ways, at the time and afterwards, benefit both the parents and their offspring; as it had a direct tendency to stir up the parents to pray for their children, and to instruct them as they grew up: and if when they came to years of understanding, they were reminded how solemnly they, as well as their parents, had entered into covenant with God, it would tend to restrain their passions, awaken their consciences, and excite them personally to seek the covenant blessings, which could only be forfeited by their own wilful sins. (*Note, Mark x. 13—16.*) It therefore pleased God to order the covenant to be ratified, not only by the principal persons

in Israel, or by the adults; but by the women and children, nay, by the strangers and meanest slaves; that is, by the whole company.

V. 13—15. The oath, which the Lord swore unto Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is here adduced as confirming the covenant made with the nation of Israel; yet St. Paul refers to it as the security of all who "have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them" in the gospel: for by it temporal blessings, and the means of grace, were ensured to the posterity of the patriarchs according to the flesh; and likewise the special blessings, which Abraham was personally interested in by the righteousness of faith, to all his spiritual seed of believers, who are sealed with the true circumcision of the heart. (*Notes, Gen. xvii. 1—12. Rom. iv. 9—12. Gal. iii. 6—22. Heb. vi. 13—20.*)—Even such as were absent, and the unborn children of the whole company, to the latest posterity, were included in the covenant: since nothing but apostasy, idolatry, or rejection of the promised Saviour, could cut off the entail of the national advantages; and nothing but personal unbelief and disobedience could prevent individuals from sharing in the spiritual blessings.

V. 16, 17. (*Marg. Ref.*) "They had opportunity in Egypt of seeing too much of their vile idolatries. And so they had, as they passed by the country of Moab and Midian, when some had been seduced to the worship of Baal-peor." *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 18. This and the following verses referred to the curses of the preceding chapters, and taught the people to dread the infliction of them upon individuals, and families, as well as on the nation at large, if they violated the covenant now proposed to them, especially by idolatry, however secret. This crime, in an Israelite, must be preceded by wilful apostasy from God, and contemptuous defiance

7 See on 12—Gen. ii. 17.

a xvii. 2 Num.

xv. 30. Ps. x. 4—

6. 11. xlix. 18

xxiv. 6. 7. Prov.

xxix. 1. Jer. v.

12. 13. vii. 3—

11. xxviii. 15—

17. xlv. 16. 17.

27. Ez. xiii. 16

22. Eph. v. 6.

b Num. xv. 30.

Ec. xi. 9. Rom.

i. 21. 2 Cor. x.

5. Eph. iv. 17.

c Or, stubbornness.

Jer. iii. 17. vii.

24. Margins.

d Job xv. 16. xxxiv.

7. Is. xxx. 9. 1.

vi. 12. Eph. iv.

19.

† Heb. the drunken

to the thirsty.

d Ps. lxxviii. 50.

Prov. vi. 34. Is.

xxvii. 11. Jer.

xiii. 14. Ez. v.

11. vii. 4. 9. viii.

18. ix. 10. xlv.

14. Rom. viii.

32. xi. 21. 2 Pet.

ii. 4. 5.

e Ex. xxx. 5. xxxiv.

14. Ps. lxxviii.

58. lxxix. 6.

Can. vii. 6. Ez.

viii. 3. 5. xlviii.

20. xxvi. 8.

Nah. i. 2. Zeph.

i. 18. J. Cor. x.

22. f Ps. xviii. 8. lxxix. 1.

h See on ix. 14. xxv. 19.

Ex. xxxii. 32. 33.—Ps. lxxix. 28.

Ez. xiii. 9. Mal. iii. 18.

Matt. xxiv. 51. xxv. 32. 41. 46.

19 And it come to pass, when he heareth the words of <sup>a</sup>this curse, <sup>a</sup>that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, <sup>b</sup>though I walk in the <sup>c</sup>imagination of mine heart <sup>c</sup>to add <sup>d</sup>drunkenness to thirst.

20 The LORD <sup>e</sup>will not spare him, but then the anger of the LORD and <sup>e</sup>his jealousy shall <sup>f</sup>smoke against that man, and <sup>e</sup>all the curses <sup>g</sup>that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall <sup>b</sup>blot out his name from under heaven.

21 And the LORD shall <sup>i</sup>separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the covenant <sup>h</sup>that <sup>i</sup>are written in this book of the law:

22 So that the generation to come of your children, that shall rise up

after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues of that land, and the sicknesses <sup>j</sup>which the LORD hath laid upon it;

23 And that the whole land thereof is <sup>k</sup>brimstone, and <sup>l</sup>salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, <sup>m</sup>like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath:

24 Even all nations shall say, <sup>n</sup>Wherefore hath the LORD done thus unto this land? what <sup>o</sup>meaneth the heat of this great anger?

25 Then men shall say, <sup>p</sup>Because <sup>q</sup>they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt.

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† Heb. wherewith the LORD hath made it sick.

k Job xviii. 15. Is. xxxiv. 9. Luke xvii. 29. Rev xix. 20. Judg. ix. 45. Ps. cvii. 34. Jer. xvii. 6. Ez. xlvii. 11 Zeph. ii. 9. Luke xiv. 34. 35. m Gen. xiv. 2. xix. 24. 25. Jer. xx. 16. Hos. xi. 8. 9. Am. iv. 11.

n 1 Kings ix. 8, 9. 2 Chr. vii. 21. 22. Jer. xxii. 8 Lam. ii. 15—17. iv. 12. Ez. xiv. 23. Rom. ii. 5.

o Is. xlvii. 6. Jer. xl. 2. 3. 1. 7.

p 1 Kings xix. 10 —14. Is. xxiv. 1 —6. Jer. xxii. 9. xxxi. 32. Heb. viii. 9.

of him: it was an explicit renunciation of the covenant, and an act of direct rebellion.—There is something similar in the case of those who have been baptized, and brought up under the dispensation of the gospel, if they become infidels or live wicked lives: they more explicitly renounce God and refuse the blessings of his covenant, than any other persons can do.—The word, translated *gall*, may mean *hemlock*, or some other poisonous plant. The enmity of man's heart against God is a root which bears the poisonous and bitter fruits of idolatry, impiety, hypocrisy, and every kind of wickedness. (Note, Acts viii. 18—24.) A person of corrupt principles and bad character, is likewise a root which produces an increase of these pestiferous plants, by his persuasions, influence, and example: and the attempts of idolatrous Israelites to entice others to the same practices, till they became general, seems to have been especially meant. (Notes, 2 Tim. ii. 14—18. v. 17, 18. Heb. xii. 15—17.)

V. 19, 20. Unbelief and false principles cherish presumptuous hopes of impunity; and in this way men embolden themselves and one another in wickedness, and expect to be happy, notwithstanding the awful threatenings of the sacred Scriptures. (Note, Ec. viii. 11—13.) Thus “they walk in the imagination of their heart to add drunkenness to thirst.” This seems to be a metaphorical expression, denoting the eager gratification of depraved inclinations; while men greedily drink down iniquity, as the drunkard does his liquor, without regard to consequences. (Note, Job xv. 14—16.)—The arrangement of the words in the original has led some to render them, “to add thirst to drunkenness;” and then they imply the insatiableness of men's sinful passions, which hanker for more and more indulgence after the greatest excesses. But some think that the expression relates to the zeal, with which sinners try to corrupt others; as if the land which was overflowed, should pour out its waters to deluge that which still con-

tinued capable of cultivation. Perhaps it may also refer to the sensual excesses, which were employed as incentives to the worship of idols, and which tended greatly to promote idolatry.—More terrible words can scarcely be conceived than those which follow: and as they respected the people of Israel, their accomplishment has been equally remarkable. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 21—25. The tremendous destruction of individual transgressors is here considered, as connected with the ruin of the nation, through the fatal effects of corrupt influence and bad examples. The warning then becomes prophetic, and coincides with the predictions already considered. (Notes, iv. 25—28. xxviii. 15—67.) The entire desolations during the Babylonish captivity, and the waste and sterile condition of that once fruitful land, from the taking of Jerusalem by the Romans to this day, are foretold in emphatical language. But the most striking circumstance is this; the Jews themselves (along with strangers and enemies,) are introduced, ascribing all these calamities to the wrath of God against them for their sins, especially their idolatry. (Marg. Ref. n—p. Note, Jer. xl. 2, 3.) In numberless instances this has been verified, in the judgment formed of them by others; and the Jews in general at present concur in the decision.—The barrenness of the land of Canaan at present, contrasted with the description of its fertility contained in the Scriptures, has led infidels to bring forward many specious arguments, or subtle insinuations, against the divine authority, and indeed the veracity, of the sacred writers: for present appearances lead them to conclude that it never could have been so fruitful as it is represented in Scripture. But they seem not at all aware, that in the pains which they take to shew the present sterility of those regions, they authenticate the very Book which they intend to oppose, and illustrate the fulfilment of the prophecies delivered by Moses, whose credit as an historian, and as an inspired writer, they

q Judg. ii. 12, 13.  
r, s 2 Kings xvii.  
— 18. 2 Chr.  
xxvii. 12—17  
Jer. xix. 2—13.  
cliv. 2—6.  
c xxviii. 64.  
\* r, who had not  
given to them  
any portion.  
† Heb. divided.  
s 20, 21. xxvii. 15,  
&c. xxviii. 15,  
&c. Lev. xxvi.  
14, &c. Dan. ix.  
11—14.  
t xxviii. 25, 34, 64.  
1 Kings xiv. 15.  
2 Kings xvii. 18.  
23. 2 Chr. vii. 20. Ps. lii. 5. Prov. ii. 22. Jer. xlii. 10. Luke xxi. 23, 24.

26 For <sup>q</sup> they went and served other gods and worshipped them, <sup>r</sup> gods whom they knew not, and <sup>s</sup> whom he had not <sup>t</sup> given unto them:

27 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against this land, to bring upon it <sup>u</sup> all the curses that are written in this book:

28 And the LORD <sup>v</sup> rooted them out

of their land in anger, and in wrath, <sup>w</sup> and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, <sup>x</sup> as it is this day.

29 The <sup>y</sup> secret things belong unto the LORD our God; but those things which are <sup>z</sup> revealed belong unto us, <sup>aa</sup> and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

u vi. 24. viii. 18.  
Ezra ix. 7. Dan  
ix. 7.  
x Job xi. 6, 7.  
xxviii. 28. Ps.  
xxv. 14. Prov.  
iii. 32. Jer. xxiii.  
18. Dan. ii. 18.  
19. 27—30. iv. 9.  
Am. iii. 7. Matt.  
xiii. 35. John xv.  
15. xxi. 22. Acts  
i. 7. Rom. xi. 32,  
34. xvi. 25, 26.  
1 Cor. ii. 15.  
Ph. lxxviii. 2—  
7. Is. viii. 20.  
Matt. xi. 27—  
30. xiii. 11. John  
s See on vi. 7. xxx. 2

aim to undermine. For who can deny, that these ancient records predict the singular barrenness of the promised land in subsequent ages, as the just punishment of Israel's apostasy and wickedness; as well as describe its extraordinary fruitfulness, when God put Israel in possession of it? Who can say, even on rational grounds, that the Almighty God cannot effect such a change? or object to the declaration, "A fruitful land maketh he barren, for <sup>aa</sup> the wickedness of them who dwell therein?" (Ps. cvii. 34.) And, whatever second causes have concurred, undoubtedly "thus it was written," and thus it is; "and <sup>ab</sup> this God hath wrought, and it is marvellous in our eyes." (Marg. Ref.)

V. 26. The Lord, not only did not command the idolatry of Israel, but he did every thing which was proper to keep them from so degrading an abomination.—The clause rendered, "which he had not given them," may however mean, that the false gods never conferred any benefits on them. (Marg.)

V. 28. *As it is this day.* Probably the clause was added by Ezra, or by some scribe, who had witnessed the desolations of the Babylonish captivity. But the emphasis of it, as acknowledging the accomplishment of this ancient prophecy, supposing the words, "as it is this day," to be spoken by a modern Jew, after the long continued dispersion of the nation, is inconceivably enhanced.

V. 29. It is here intimated, that many things, in the divine counsels and conduct, might appear very dark to the Israelites. They would be ready to propose questions about those future events, which were foretold in general terms; and to raise objections against the Lord's dealings with them. The awful curses might appear needlessly severe, and they would enquire into the reasons of them, with irreverent curiosity, and a disposition to justify themselves and the nation. Of this disposition Satan might avail himself, and tempt them to unbelief; to entertain hard thoughts of God, and his law and service; to excuse their disobedience; or to indulge vain speculations, instead of attending to their duty. They were therefore cautioned against these delusions, by an important distinction of easy and universal application. Man ought not to intrude into those things, which it has pleased God to conceal from him: for who can penetrate into the secrets of his wisdom; or discover his decrees and counsels, the reasons of his conduct, and the mysteries of his nature, further than he reveals them? (Notes, Is. xl. 12—17. xlv. 9, 10. Rom. xi. 33—36.) "Secret things belong to the LORD;" and all enquiries into them are arrogant and presumptuous. But he has revealed every thing that can be really beneficial; and our attention in this respect should reach to the whole of these discoveries, and terminate with them. "Those

"things which are revealed belong to us:" not to increase our stock of barren notions, but to encourage and regulate our obedience, "that we may do all the words of this law." They belong also to our children, and to them we should communicate the instruction which God has afforded us.—Almost all the heresies and controversies, which have corrupted the purity or disturbed the peace of the church in every age, have originated from disregard to this distinction; from vain attempts, by human reasonings and authority, to fill up supposed chasms in revelation, and to make it more apparently consistent and systematical, than it has pleased God to make it; from deducing disputable consequences from revelation; or from tracing back its sacred mysteries to some *unrevealed* antecedent causes. But the *silence* is as instructive as the *language* of Scripture: its truths must be apprehended by humble faith; and they disdain to be comprehended or modelled by our proud reason. They are intended to subserve practice; not to gratify curiosity, or foment angry controversies. Yet there is danger on the other side: and a disposition to speak of many things, concerning which a great deal is revealed in Scripture, as *immaterial*, or not to be understood; and to *sink* (so to speak), as far as men are able, a large portion of the "whole counsel of God;" as if it had better never have been written; not only tends to obscure divine truth, but to countenance the too prevailing opinion that the language of the sacred oracles is obscure, and conveys no clear and distinct or even safe meaning, without some note, or comment, or safeguard.—Such writers, if God had consulted them, would have advised the omission of many parts of revealed truth, especially in the epistles of St. Paul.—But *all* the revealed things belong to us. To know the perfections of God, and our obligations to love and serve him; our relations to him and to the eternal world; our state and character as sinners, and our duty as under a dispensation of mercy: to know the way of acceptance, and the source of grace and comfort in Jesus Christ: to understand our duty as redeemed sinners, with respect to our several stations and relations in life; our talents and the way of improving them, with the motives and assistances and encouragements which revelation proposes: and to be aware of the enemies and dangers to which we are exposed, and the means of escape, and the consequences of our conduct:—this is the substance of useful knowledge, and, when reduced to practice, constitutes heavenly wisdom. This the Scriptures plainly reveal: by this light we may live and die comfortably, and be happy eternally; after having on earth glorified God, served our generation, and left our dying exhortations and blessings as a bequest to posterity. But all which man attempts to add to revealed truth, or

## CHAP. XXX.

Prophecies and promises of mercy to Israel in after

ages, 1—10. The nearness and plainness of the things enjoined, 11—14. Life and death solemnly set before the people, 15—20.

substitute in its place, is merely an *ignis fatuus*, which bewilders the benighted traveller; and, while it amuses him with its glimmering, misleads him into the pit of destruction, and leaves him to sink in it. (*Notes, Is. viii. 20. Matt. vi. 22, 23.*)

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

## V. 1—17.

They who have consented to the new covenant of mercy and grace in Jesus Christ, and have given up themselves to be his people, should embrace every opportunity of renewing the open profession of their hopes, obligations, and grateful love; and of avowing, to the world and to the church, that they desire to “walk worthy of God, who has called them to his kingdom and glory.” It is delightful to behold numbers of the rising generation come forward to consent to the same covenant, and acknowledge their obligations and purposes, by divine grace, “of walking by the same rule, and minding the same things.” In order to this, the nature and blessings of the covenant ought to be proposed to men in general, who should be exhorted and invited with all earnestness to lay hold on it: the encouragements of the gospel should be stated, and the awful consequences of neglecting so great salvation declared, with the greatest solemnity, the most urgent expostulations, and the most affectionate warnings. In these things all are alike concerned; kings and princes, captains and senators, rich and poor, bond and free: and blessed be God, the strangers of the Gentiles, nay the most abandoned sinners, are invited, and should be even “compelled to come in,” and to participate the gracious feast, as far as energetick arguments and earnest persuasions can prevail. Even infants, though yet unconscious of their wants, duties, and privileges, are concerned; and they should be devoted to God, and brought up for him, as the children of the covenant, and the seed of the church.—But though means should be used by every man with his neighbour; (*Notes, Is. ii. 2—5. Mic. iv. 1—4. Zech. iii. 9, 10;*) yet God alone can give men “a heart to perceive, eyes to see, and ears to hear,” for good and saving purposes. We must therefore seek the blessing from him; and give him the praise when it is vouchsafed.—While the true Christian, or the zealous minister, mourns that so few believe and obey the gospel, in comparison of the multitudes who are “blinded by the god of this world;” the consideration should add fervency to his prayers for others, and to his grateful praises on his own account.—Every mercy, which we enjoy, should bind us more strictly to cheerful obedience; and every divine truth, if properly received, will have a practical and holy effect upon us: nor can we expect to prosper, in the best sense, “unless we keep and do the words of his covenant.”

## V. 18—29.

That covenant which is ratified by the promise and oath of God, to all who believe in the name of the divine Mediator, is established on better promises than the covenant made with the nation of Israel; and secures to them all things pertaining to eternal salvation. (*Notes, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Is. lv. 1—3. Heb. viii. 3—6.*) Yet, alas! many,

who only deceive themselves, suppose that they are interested in these blessings, and thence take encouragement to continue in sin. The lusts of their heart were never mortified by converting grace; and therefore when occasion offers, they spring up into practices as poisonous and as bitter as hemlock and wormwood. Thus many are defiled, or hardened in prejudice, unbelief, and ungodliness; or buoyed up in vain confidence: and the dire evil eats as a canker, pervades great multitudes, and corrupts whole churches; while the tempters themselves “draw back unto perdition,” or perhaps propagate pestilential heresies.—But, however the curses denounced in Scripture may be disbelieved and despised, their tremendous effects will assuredly convince the most daring sinners, without distinction of rank or sex, and without regard to multitudes, “that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” And though the heart of man now rages in enmity against them; the period is approaching, when not only spectators, but the criminals themselves, whilst enduring their direful accomplishment, will be constrained to admit the justice of their own condemnation.—But it is the grand design of Satan to embolden men in sin by the hopes of impunity: and as they are prone to flatter themselves, they love to be flattered by others; and find many ready to assure them, that “they shall have peace, though they walk after the imagination of their hearts,” and gratify their favourite passions. They persuade themselves, and find others concur with them, that they need not be so strict, and that God will not be so severe, as vulgar readers of the Bible imagine: and so, by some ingenious interpretation, they evaporate the force of these awful declarations, till they fall fast asleep in the jaws of destruction! And should some faithful minister, out of love to their souls, address them in scriptural language, concerning “the curse of God” and “the wrath to come;” he would be liberally repaid with reproaches, and branded as a bigot, an uncharitable wretch, a man of a vulgar and narrow mind, an enthusiast, or a madman. But the Lord will not spare such presumptuous transgressors, who treat his truth as a lie, blaspheme his justice as cruelty, and set his vengeance at defiance: against such persons “his anger and jealousy will smoke, and all the curses that are written in this book will rest upon them;” “their names shall be blotted out from under heaven,” and they shall be “separated unto evil” afar off from the company of the redeemed; where full conviction shall be attended with “weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth,” in anguish and despair.—But these things are not written, nor are these observations made, God is witness, in order that this misery should be endured by those, who are thus addressed: but that all that hear and read, may take “warning and flee from the wrath to come;” that they may profit by the divine judgments upon others; that they may flee for refuge to the hope of the gospel; that they may fear coming short of the grace of God; that they may deny their sinful inclinations every indulgence, and watch against the beginnings of evil and the inroads of negligence; and, above all, that they may shudder at the thought of venturing upon sin, by abusing the grace of the gospel.—

**AND** <sup>a</sup> it shall come to pass when all these things are come upon thee, <sup>b</sup> the blessing and the curse which I have set before thee, and <sup>c</sup> thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations <sup>d</sup> whither the LORD thy God hath driven thee:

<sup>e</sup> 2 And shalt <sup>f</sup> return unto the LORD thy God, and shalt obey his voice, according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, <sup>g</sup> with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;

<sup>h</sup> 3 That <sup>i</sup> then the LORD thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations whither the LORD thy God hath scattered thee.

<sup>j</sup> 4 If <sup>k</sup> any of thine be driven out <sup>l</sup> unto the utmost parts of heaven, from thence will the LORD thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee:

<sup>m</sup> 5 And the LORD thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.

<sup>n</sup> 6 And the LORD thy God <sup>o</sup> will cir-

cumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, <sup>p</sup> to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.

<sup>q</sup> 7 And the LORD thy God will <sup>r</sup> put all these curses upon thine enemies and on them that hate thee, which persecuted thee.

<sup>s</sup> 8 And <sup>t</sup> thou shalt return and obey the voice of the LORD, and do all his commandments, which I command thee this day.

<sup>u</sup> 9 And the LORD thy God will <sup>v</sup> make thee plenteous in every work of thine hand, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, for good: for the LORD will again <sup>w</sup> rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers:

<sup>x</sup> 10 If thou shalt <sup>y</sup> hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law, and if thou <sup>z</sup> turn unto the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul.

<sup>aa</sup> 11 ¶ For this commandment which I command thee this day, <sup>ab</sup> it is not hid-

vi. 5. Ex. xx. 6. Matt. xvii. 27. Rom. vii. 24. 1 Cor. viii. 3. Jam. i. 12. ii. 5. 1 John iv. 7. 16. —19. v. 3, 4. Num. xxiv. 14. Ps. cxxxvii. 7—9. Isa. x. 12. xiv. 1. 2. Jer. xxv. 12—16. 29. i. 33. 34. ii. 24—26. 34—37. Lam. iii. 43—46. iv. 21. 22. Ez. xxv. 3. 6. 8. 12. 15. Am. i. 3. 6. 9. 11. 13. Zech. xii. 8. m See on 2.—Prov. xvi. 1. Jer. i. 26. 26. Jer. xxxi. 33. xxxv. 39. 40. Ez. x. 19. 26. xxxvi. 27. xxxvii. 24. Rom. xi. 26. 27. Eph. ii. 16. Phil. ii. 13. n See on xxxviii. 4. 11—14. 1. Lev. xxvii. 4—6. 9, 10.

c xxxviii. 63. 1a lxvi. 5. lxx. 19. Jer. xxxii. 41. xxxiii. 9. Zeph. iii. 17. Luke xv. 6—10. 32. John xv. 11. p See on 2. 8.

q Neh. i. 9. Ez. xviii. 21. xxxiii. 11. 14. 19. Acts iii. 19. xxvi. 20.

r Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20. Is. xlv. 19. Rom. xvi. 25, 26. Col. i. 26, 27.

Many, who themselves are ungodly, can readily enough perceive the steps by which others descend to destruction, and acknowledge the justice of *their* punishment; though they are blind to the sentence of condemnation which hangs over them also. But let every one of us look to his own case: let us avoid sloth and dissipation, and deeply reflect on these infinitely important subjects; let us be careful not to repress our convictions, nor indulge in empty speculations, bold conjectures, and impious objections to the truths and ways of God; and let us not curiously pry into unrevealed things. On the contrary, may we use revelation “as the lantern of our paths,” by which to see the safe and happy road through this dark and dangerous world, that we may walk in it ourselves, and point it out to our children also.—In that world *above*, whither this light will guide the humble and obedient believer, even things which are now secret will be discovered; all darkness and difficulties will vanish; perfect light will shine upon all the counsels and judgments of God; and the whole will terminate in universal and everlasting approbation, admiration, gratitude, praise, and felicity.

# NOTES.

CHAP. XXX. V. 1—10. This passage evidently refers to the prophetic denunciations of the two preceding chapters, which, as it has been shewn, had their main accomplishment in the destruction of Jerusalem by the

Romans, and in the subsequent dispersion of the Jews to the present day: little doubt therefore can remain that these prophetic promises are yet unaccomplished; and that the relicks of the nation shall, in some future and not very distant period, be converted to Christ; and probably be gathered together and reinstated in Canaan. (Notes, iv. 29—31. Lev. xxvi. 40—45. 1 Kings viii. 46—53.) The language here used is in a great measure *absolute*; not containing merely a *conditional encouragement*, but *predicting an event* which would assuredly take place: for the Lord himself engaged to “circumcise the hearts” of the people; and when this has taken place, and divine love has supplanted the love of sin, they certainly will consider and repent, and return to God and obey him. (Notes, x. 16. Gen. xvii. 9—12. Rom. ii. 25—29.) And then he will rejoice over them to do them good, and prosper them in all things; and at the same time he will terribly punish their enemies, who have cruelly insulted and oppressed them. (Notes, xxviii. 37. Jer. xxxi. 31—40. xxxii. 39—41. Ez. xxxvi. 25—38. xxxvii. 20—28. xxxviii. xxxix. 23—29. Zech. xii. 9—14. Rom. xi. 16—32.)

V. 11—14. What Moses here spake of the commandment, St. Paul applied to the *method of a sinner's justification, by faith in Jesus Christ*. (Note, Rom. x. 5—11.) For the covenant, proposed to Israel in the *form of commandments*, did not consist of the *moral law alone*, obedience to which especially constitutes “the righteousness of works;”

<sup>a</sup> Prov. xxx. 4  
John iii. 13.  
Rom. x. 6, 7. 12 It is 'not in heaven, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

<sup>t</sup> Acts v. 22. 33.  
xvi. 9. Rom. x.  
14, 15. 13 Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldst say, 'Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it?

<sup>u</sup> Prov. ii. 1-5.  
iii. 13-18. viii.  
Jl. xvi. 16 Matt.  
xii. 42. John vi.  
27. Acts viii. 27,  
&c. 14 But the word is 'very nigh unto thee, 'in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

<sup>x</sup> Ex. ii. 5. xxxiii.  
33. Luke x. 11,  
J<sup>2</sup>. John v. 46.  
Acts xiii. 26. 38  
—41. xxviii. 23  
—38. Heb. ii. 1  
—3. 15 ¶ See, 'I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil;

<sup>y</sup> Jer. xii. 2. Ez.  
xxiii. 31. Matt.  
vii. 12. Rom. x.  
8-10. 16 In that I command thee this day 'to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply; and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it.

but of the ceremonial law also, in which Christ was typified, "as the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth:" and though a large proportion of the Israelites mistook the nature of these instructions, (as multitudes of professed Christians utterly misunderstand the sacraments of the New Testament,) yet in the legal ordinances, *their* dispensation of the gospel was principally contained. There never was, since the fall of man, more than one way to heaven; which is marked out in both Testaments, though not with equal clearness and precision. Moses therefore assuredly meant to include that way of acceptance, which the apostle more explicitly described; and St. Paul's words implied the same conscientious obedience, of which Moses more fully treated.—Under both testaments, the word of God brings the good and right way near to us: so that we need not travel for instruction, as ancient philosophers did; nor seek information from men, at immense labour and expense; nor need we anxiously or curiously desire to be wise above what is written. For the sacred Scriptures will suffice for every useful purpose, if we make ourselves acquainted with them; if we believe and love them, and treasure them up in our hearts in order to reduce them to practice. (Notes, Col. ii. 8-10. 2 *Thn.* iii. 14-17.) The expression "in thy mouth and in thy heart," seems to refer to the time, when "the LORD shall circumcise the hearts" of the Jews (6).

V. 15-20. (*Marg. Ref.*—Notes, xi. 29, 30. xxviii. xxviii.) The exhortations of these verses, as addressed to the nation of Israel, are indeed enforced chiefly by temporal sanctions: but the use which the apostle makes of the preceding verses, fully warrants our application of them to the hearts and consciences of individuals, by the more powerful motives of eternal recompence.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

"The holy Scriptures are able to make us wise unto  
VOL. I.

17 But 'if thine 'heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away and worship other gods, and serve them, <sup>b</sup> See on xxxix. 12  
—28.—1 Sam.  
xii. 25. John iii.  
19-21.

18 I 'denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong *your* days upon the land whither thou passest over Jordan, to go to possess it. <sup>c</sup> xvii. 17. 1 Kings  
xi. 2. Prov. i. 32.  
xiv. 14. 2 *Thn.*  
iv. 4. Heb. iii.  
12. xii. 25.  
d viii. 19, 20. xxxv.  
29. Josh. xxiii.  
15, 16. Is. lxiii.  
17, 18.

19 'I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, 'that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore 'choose life, <sup>e</sup> See on lv. 26.—  
xxxii. 28 xxxii.  
1. Is. i. 2. Jer.  
xxii. 29, 30.  
1 Tim. v. 21.  
f See on lv. xi. 26.  
g Josh. xxiv. 15—  
22. Ps. cxix. 30—  
111. 173. Prov.  
i. 29. viii. 56. Is.  
lvi. 4. Luke x.  
42.  
h Jer. xxxii. 39  
Acts ii. 39.

20 That thou mayest 'love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest 'cleave unto him; (for he is 'thy Life, and the Length of thy days;) that 'thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them. <sup>i</sup> See on 6. 16.—x.  
12. xi. 22.  
k See on iv. 4.—x.  
20. Josh. xxiii.  
6. Acts xi. 23  
Rom. xii. 9.  
l Ps. xxvii. 1. xxxvi.  
9. lxxvi. 9. John  
xi. 25. 26. xiv. 6.  
xvi. 3. Acts xviii.  
25. Gal. ii. 20.  
Col. iii. 3, 4.  
Rev. xxi. 6. xxii.  
1. 17.  
m See on iv. 40 v.  
16. xi. 9. xii. 10.

"salvation, by faith in Jesus Christ;" and "thoroughly to furnish us for every good work." And the instruction which they convey, forces itself upon our attention, judgments, consciences, and affections, by every argument, warning, and encouragement, which can render it impressive and efficacious. But in vain does a kind Providence bring these advantages near; in vain do ministers endeavour to convey divine truths to the conscience, in the most convincing manner; if men will thrust them away in unbelief and love of sin: nor will hearing, understanding, or disputing about them, avail us, if they do not sink into our hearts and influence our conduct. When eternal salvation is thus proposed unto us, and the acceptance or refusal of it fairly referred to our choice; nothing can prevent our felicity, but our own folly and wickedness: and they who refuse the offered grace, eventually choose and love death and perdition, and are cruel to their own souls. The ministers of Christ ought therefore plainly to declare, that, except sinners repent, they will surely perish; as well as to set before them, in the most solemn and affecting manner, "life and death, blessing and cursing;" that if they cannot prevent their destruction, they may deliver their own souls. And in this case, not only will they at last become witnesses against them: but heaven and earth will bear record, that they deserve their doom, and have none to blame but themselves.—But are we sensible of the reality and importance of the eternal state? Do we "choose that good part which shall never be taken from us?" Let us beg of God to "circumcise our hearts," to subdue our lusts, and to implant his love: then shall we be prepared for serious reflection, for godly sorrow, and true repentance: then shall we value his salvation, and hope in his mercy: then shall we return to him as our Rest and Portion, worship and obey him as the Lord our God, and cleave unto him as our Father and our Friend. Then will every ordinance, and every act of obedience, be pleasant;

## CHAP. XXXI.

Moses encourages the people and Joshua, 1—8. He delivers the law to the priests, and orders it to be publicly read every seventh year, 9—13. The Lord informs Moses and Joshua of the future apostasy and calamities of Israel; and orders a song to be made to testify against them, 14—22. Moses gives Joshua a charge, finishes the book of the law, directs the Levites concerning it, and convenes the elders to hear the song, 23—30.

**AND** Moses went and spake these words unto all Israel.

2 And he said unto them, <sup>a</sup> *I am an hundred and twenty years old this day; I can no more go out and come in: also the LORD hath said unto me, 'Thou shalt not go over this Jordan.*

3 The LORD <sup>a</sup>thy God, he will go over before thee, *and he will destroy these nations from before thee, and thou shalt possess them: and Joshua, he shall go over before thee, as the LORD hath said.*

4 And <sup>a</sup>the LORD shall do unto them as he did to Sihon and to Og, kings of the Amorites, and unto the land of them whom he destroyed.

5 And the LORD shall give them up before your face, that ye may do unto them <sup>a</sup>according unto all the commandments which I have commanded you.

a xxxiv. 7. Ex. vii. 7. Josh. xiv. 10. 11. Ps. xc. 10. Acts vii. 23.  
b See on xxxiv. 7. Num. xxvii. 17. —2Sam. xxi. 17. 1 Kings iii. 7.  
c iii. 26, 27. iv. 21. 22. xxxiii. 48. 52. Num. xx. 12. xxvii. 13, 14. Acts xx. 25. 2 Pet. i. 13, 14.  
d See on ix. 3.—Gen. xlviii. 21. Ps. cxlvi. 3—6.  
e 7, 8. 14. 23. iii. 28. xxxiv. 9. Num. xxvii. 21. Josh. i. 2. iii. 7. iv. 14. Acts vii. 46. Heb. iv. 8. Jesus.  
f ii. 33. iii. 8—11. 21. vii. 2. 16. Ex. xxiii. 28—31.—See on Num. xxi. 24—35.

g vii. 23—25. xx. 16, 17. Ex. xxiii. 32, 33. xxxiv. 12—16. Num. xxxiii. 52—56.

love and gratitude will enlarge our hearts; and justice, temperance, truth, and kindness will mark our paths. Every good gift will be communicated from a reconciled God; every enemy will by degrees be subdued, and at length destroyed; and a blessing will be reserved for our posterity, when we are gone to glory. And should the only wise God see good to withhold temporal benefits, and command afflictions as our lot, he will support and comfort us, and all will have a salutary and a happy event. In the mean time, tender compassion and expanded benevolence will dictate fervent prayers for our fellow sinners, near and far off, and excite assiduous endeavours to communicate the same blessings to them: and the twofold hope of the triumphs of true religion upon earth over all opposition, and of the complete and speedy deliverance of our own souls from sin and all its consequences, will gild our most gloomy prospects, and cheer our darkest hours.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXXI. V. 2. Moses had not experienced any decay of nature: (Note, xxxiv. 7 :) but his time of life, as well as the express declaration of the Lord, made it evident, that he could no longer perform the duties of his important situation. Yet, after the copious warnings and

6 <sup>b</sup> Be strong, and of a good courage, <sup>b</sup> fear not, nor be afraid of them; for the LORD thy God, he *it is* that doth go with thee; <sup>k</sup> he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

7 And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, <sup>l</sup> Be strong, and of a good courage: <sup>m</sup> for thou must go with this people unto the land which the LORD hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it.

8 And the LORD, <sup>n</sup> he *it is* that doth go before thee: <sup>o</sup> he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.

9 ¶ And <sup>p</sup> Moses wrote this law, and <sup>q</sup> delivered it unto <sup>r</sup> the priests the sons of Levi, <sup>s</sup> which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and unto all the elders of Israel.

10 And Moses commanded them, saying, <sup>t</sup> At the end of *every* seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles,

11 When all Israel is come <sup>u</sup> to appear before the LORD thy God, <sup>v</sup> in the place which he shall choose, <sup>w</sup> thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing.

12 <sup>x</sup> Gather the people together, <sup>y</sup> men,

h 7. 28. Josh. i. 6. 7. 9. x. 25. 1 Chr. xxii. 13. xxviii. 10. 20. 2 Chr. xxxii. 7. Ps. xxvii. 14. Hag. ii. 4. Zech. viii. 13. 1 Cor. xvi. 13. Eph. vi. 10. 2 Tim. ii. 1.  
i xx. i. 3. Num. xiv. 9. Ps. xxvii. 1. 1s. xli. 10. ii. 12. Luke xii. 32. Rev. xxi. 8.  
k iv. 31. Josh. i. 5. 1 Chr. xxviii. 20. 1s. xli. 13—17. Heb. xiii. 5.  
l See on 6.—Dan. x. 19.  
m See on e. 3.—1s. 38. iii. 28. John i. 17.  
n ix. 3. Ex. xiii. 21, 22. xxxiii. 14.  
o See on 6.—Josh. i. 5. 9. 1s. viii. 9. 10. xliii. 1, 2. Rom. viii. 31.  
p 22—24. Num. xxxiii. 2. Dan. ix. 13. Mal. iv. 4. Mark x. 4, 5. xii. 19. Luke xx. 28. John i. 17. 45. v. 46.  
q 24—26. xvii. 18. Hos. iv. 6. Mal. i. 7.  
r Num. iii. 15. Josh. iii. 14—17. vi. 12. 1 Kings viii. 3. 1 Chr. xv. 2. 12—15.  
s xv. 1, 2.—See on Lev. xxiii. 34—43.  
t xvi. 16, 17. Ex. xxiii. 16, 17. xxxiv. 24. Ps. lxxxiv. 7.  
u See on xii. 5.  
v Josh. viii. 34. 35. 2 Kings xxiii. 2. Neh. viii. 1—8. 18. ix. 8. Luke iv. 16, 17. Acts xiii. 15. xv. 21.  
y See on iv. 10.  
z vi. 6, 7. Ezra x. 1. Ps. xix. 7—11. John v. 39. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17.

exhortations of the preceding chapters, he had still other methods to use, in order to impress the minds of the people more forcibly and durably.

V. 3—8. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*He will not fail, &c.* (6) 'This promise, which here is general, in the next verse 'but one is particularly made to Joshua. ... And it is applied 'by the apostle to all faithful Christians, to encourage their 'hope of being conducted through all difficulties and dangers, unto their heavenly inheritance.' *Bp. Patrick.* (Josh. i. 5. Note, Heb. xiii. 5, 6.)

V. 9. Some understand this of the book of Deuteronomy alone: but 'it is far more reasonable to conclude, that the whole law was delivered to the priests and elders, a copy perhaps to the principal person in each tribe; besides one to be deposited by the side of the ark. It may be supposed, that afterwards many more copies would be taken; though they would not be greatly multiplied in that infancy, as it were, of writing.—The ordinary Levites of the family of Kohath generally carried the ark, when the priests had covered it: but on great occasions, the priests, who were of the family of Kohath, performed this service. (*Marg. Ref. s.*)

V. 10—13. The people had before been commanded, by every means in their power, to become acquainted them-

<sup>a</sup> xxix. 29. Ps. xxxiv. 11—14.

and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, <sup>a</sup>that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the LORD your God, and observe to do all the words of this law;

<sup>b</sup> 13 And *that* <sup>b</sup>their children, which have not known *any thing*, may hear, and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.

<sup>c</sup> 14 ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, thy days approach <sup>c</sup>that thou must die: call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tabernacle of the congregation, that <sup>d</sup>I may give him a charge. And Moses and Joshua went,

selves, and to make their children acquainted, with the truths and precepts delivered to them: (Notes, vi. 7—9. xi. 18—21;) but in these verses, a method is enjoined, of rendering them known to the nation in general, which the rulers must superintend and carry into effect.—Every seventh year, the law was to be publicly read, and the people must be summoned to assemble that they might hear it. Doubtless this was not merely confined to one person or place; but numbers were engaged in different situations, so that every one might have an opportunity of hearing: and the Jews have a tradition that the king, judge, or high priest, was the chief reader, in the court of the tabernacle or temple; and they add several particulars concerning the manner in which the service was performed, which only contain their opinion how it ought to have been done.—The sabbatical year, and the feast of tabernacles, were selected for this ordinance; (Notes, Lev. xxiii. 34—36. 39—43. xxv. 1—7;) when the people, being more exempt than usual from employment and care, might be supposed to assemble at the sanctuary in greater numbers than at other times: and though the men alone were obliged to attend at the festivals, it might be supposed that many of the women, children, and servants, would come on this occasion.—A few instances of the observation of this command are recorded; (Notes, 2 Kings xxiii. 2. Neh. viii. 1—9. 14—18. ix. 3. xiii. 1—3;) but the neglect of it seems to have been one main cause why the nation was so soon carried away into idolatry and iniquity. “The people perished for lack of knowledge,” through the ignorance or remissness of the rulers and priests.—The plenty and cheapness of Bibles, indeed, place the inhabitants of this favoured land in a very different situation from that of the Israelites; so that we can hardly form a due conception of their disadvantages in this respect. Indeed the case was the same to a considerable degree, not only till the coming of Christ, but even till the art of printing was invented: for copies of the Scriptures never became so plentiful and cheap, as to enable poor people in general to procure them, till this invaluable, though much perverted discovery was made: and yet exact investigation, excited by means of the excellent British and Foreign Bible Society, indisputably proves, that hitherto an immense number of families among no-

and <sup>e</sup>presented themselves in the tabernacle of the congregation.

15 And the LORD <sup>f</sup>appeared in the tabernacle in the pillar of a cloud: and the pillar of the cloud stood over the door of the tabernacle.

16 And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, <sup>g</sup>thou shalt <sup>h</sup>sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, <sup>i</sup>and go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land whither they go <sup>j</sup>to be among them, and will <sup>k</sup>for-sake me, and <sup>l</sup>break my covenant which I have made with them.

17 Then <sup>m</sup>my anger shall be kindled

xxxi. 32. 1 See on xxix. 20.—xxxii. 21, 22. Judg. ii. 14, 15.

Ex. xxxiv. 2. Josh. xxiv. 1. 1 Sam. x. 19. Job i. 6. ii. 1. Rom. xii. 1. Jude 24. f See on Ex. xxxiii. 9, 10. xi. 38.—Ps. xcix. 7. g Gen. xxv. 8. 2 Sam. vii. 12. Is. lvii. 2. Acts xiii. 36. h Heb. lie down. Job xx. 11. i Ex. xxxii. 6. xxxiv. 15. Lev. xx. 3—6. Judg. ii. 17. Ps. lxxiii. 27. cvi. 39. Is. lvii. 3—8. Jer. iii. 1—3. Ez. xvi. 25.—36. xxiii. 5—8. &c. Hos. ii. 2—5. Rev. xvii. 2—5. xix. 2. j xxxii. 15. Judg. ii. 12. x. 6. 13. Jer. ii. 11—13. k Lev. xxvi. 15. Judg. ii. 20. Jer. Pa. ii. 12. xc. 11.

minal Christians, have been destitute of the Sacred Scriptures. But a hope is, by the same measures, excited, that ere long no family will remain unsupplied with the sacred volume; no individual left incapable of reading it.—And whoever has read, in the history of the reformation in England, the pains and devices, which numbers employed, to get even scraps of the English translation of the sacred books, when whole copies could neither be procured, nor safely possessed; and with what avidity they flocked to read the Scriptures, and hear them read, when placed in the parish churches: and the extensive usefulness of these means, which many now think of little importance; will be the better able to realize the state of the Israelites, and to judge of the wisdom and goodness of this divine appointment, for the instruction of the people at large, in the knowledge and fear of God.—In after ages, the law and prophets were read every sabbath-day, *at least*, in the synagogues all over the land; which had a vast effect in preventing idolatry after the Babylonish captivity.—The public reading of the Scriptures is indeed an honour, which should in all places be shewn them: it is likewise equivalent to the minister's producing his commission and instructions, the touchstone and warrant of his doctrine; and an important means of bringing men in general acquainted with *other parts* of them, besides those short texts, which it is become customary to select as the subject of our sermons: and there is every reason to believe, that the reading of the Scriptures in all the parish-churches in this kingdom, proves the means of salvation to many souls, who are in great measure left destitute of other means of instruction. It were however to be wished, that the several clergymen, employed in this service, were mindful to read the appointed portions audibly, distinctly, and deliberately; as this would give probable ground to expect far more extensively beneficial effects, to result from so laudable an institution.

V. 14, 15. Joshua, not being a priest, never went within the tabernacle: and the context leads us to conclude, that Moses and he stood *before* the door of it at this time.—“The pillar of the cloud” generally rested on the top of the tabernacle; but, on particular occasions, it removed to the entrance, and the glory of the LORD appeared in it. (Note, 23.)

V. 16, 17. Marg. Ref.—Note, Judg. vi. 13.

against them in that day, and <sup>m</sup> I will forsake them, and I will <sup>n</sup> hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall <sup>a</sup> befall them; so that they will say in that day, <sup>o</sup> Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us? 18 And <sup>p</sup> I will surely hide my face in that day, for all the evils which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods.

19 Now therefore write ye <sup>r</sup> this song for you, <sup>s</sup> and teach it the children of Israel: <sup>t</sup> put it in their mouths, that this song may be <sup>u</sup> a witness for me against the children of Israel.

20 For <sup>x</sup> when I shall have brought them into the land which I swear unto their fathers, <sup>y</sup> that floweth with milk and honey; and they shall <sup>z</sup> have eaten and filled themselves, and <sup>a</sup> waxen fat; <sup>b</sup> then will they turn unto other gods, and serve them, and provoke me, and break my covenant.

21 And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that <sup>c</sup> this song shall testify

<sup>d</sup> against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed: for <sup>e</sup> I know their imagination which they <sup>f</sup> go about even now, before I have brought them into the land which I swear.

22 Moses <sup>g</sup> therefore wrote this song the same day, and taught it the children of Israel.

23 And <sup>h</sup> he gave Joshua the son of Nun a charge, and said, Be strong, and of a good courage: for <sup>i</sup> thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I swear unto them; and I will be with thee.

24 ¶ And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of <sup>j</sup> writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished,

25 That Moses commanded the Levites, which <sup>k</sup> bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying,

26 Take this book of the law, and put it <sup>l</sup> in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for <sup>m</sup> a witness against thee.

V. 18. When God withholds his gracious influences, man's evil inclinations invariably lead him into sin; and when he withdraws his protection and blessing, (which is implied by the figurative expression of "hiding his face,") man necessarily sinks into misery. Our dependence on God is in every respect absolute: and it is proper we should know it; that we may fear to provoke him, and seek to please him; that we may wholly trust in him, and give him all the praise of our knowledge, holiness, and felicity; but that we may abhor the blasphemy of charging our sin or folly to his account, from whose unchangeable perfection good and only good can flow. (Notes, xxix. 4. Jam. i. 13—18.)

V. 19. Poetry, when well composed, and upon an interesting subject, is exceedingly attractive, as well as easily fixed and retained in the memory: and in almost every nation in the earlier stages of civilization and literature, men delight in poetical compositions, which are learned, recited, or sung with a sort of enthusiastick eagerness. (Note, Ex. xv. 1.) To this propensity of the human mind the Lord was pleased to adapt his instructions. A sacred song, containing the substance of the preceding addresses, was appointed to be composed by Moses, doubtless under divine inspiration; with whom Joshua, as his co-adjutor and successor, was joined: and on him it would devolve, to see that the subsequent command was obeyed. For the people were required to learn it, and to teach it to their children, from generation to generation. Thus they would have it frequently in their memories and mouths, when the other parts of the law were generally neglected:

and indeed God himself engaged that it should not be forgotten (21).—This song, (which was also a prophecy,) in after ages, when the predictions contained in it had received their accomplishment, would vouch the divine inspiration of Moses; shew the cause of the people's miseries; bear witness to the justice of God and against their wickedness; and form a powerful call to them to repent and return to him, as the only method in which they could obtain deliverance. (Notes, xxxii.)

V. 20, 21. Marg. Ref.—Notes, xxxii. 15. Prov. xxx. 7—9.—I know, &c. (21) The Lord knows what is in man, and whither his inclinations will lead him if left to himself: and nothing can be more *undeniable*, or more *incomprehensible*, than his foresight of the innumerable volitions of rational agents, to the remotest futurity, and his method of over-ruling them all to accomplish his wise and righteous purposes, without in the least interfering with their free agency. Thus neither his fore-knowledge, nor his deep decrees, cause or excuse man's wickedness, or diminish the punishment which sinners will *justly* suffer. (Note, Ez. xxxviii. 10.)

V. 23. (Note, Num. xxvii. 19.) 'The LORD, who had hitherto spoken by Moses, now spake to Joshua himself, and gave him this charge.' Bp. Patrick. The language must imply this; or else Moses repeated to him the very words of God, and in his name. (14.—Notes, Josh. i. 1—8.)

V. 26. In the side of the ark.] In a coffer, or box, without the ark. (Marg. Ref. k.)—This appears to have been a correct and authentick copy of the five books of

m xxxii. 29.

n See on ix. 6.—  
Ex. xxxii. 9.  
2 Chr. xxx. 8.  
Ps. lxxviii. 8. Is.  
xlviii. 4. Acts  
vii. 51.

o See on ix. 24.

p See on 12.—  
xxx. 10. Ex.  
xxviii. 25. Num.  
xi. 16, 17.

q iv. 26.—See on  
xxx. 19.—xxxii.  
1. Is. i. 2. Luke  
xix. 40.

27 For <sup>a</sup> I know thy rebellion, and thy <sup>b</sup> stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, <sup>c</sup> ye have been rebellious against the LORD; and how much more after my death?

28 <sup>d</sup> Gather unto me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears, and <sup>e</sup> call heaven and earth to record against them.

29 For I know that after my death

ye will utterly <sup>f</sup> corrupt *yourselves*, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you: <sup>g</sup> and evil will befall you in <sup>h</sup> the latter days, because ye will do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger through the work of your hands.

30 And Moses <sup>i</sup> spake in the ears of all the congregation of Israel the words of this song, until they were ended.

r xxxii. 5. Judg.  
ii. 19. Is. i. 4.  
Hos. ix. 9. Acts  
xx. 30. 2 Tim.  
iii. 1—6. 2 Pet.  
i. 14, 15. ii. 1, 2.  
xxviii. 15. &c.  
xxxix. 13—28.  
Ler. xxvi. 14.  
&c. Luke xix.  
42—44. xxi. 24.  
t iv. 30. Gen. xlix.  
1. Job xix. 25.  
Ez. xxxviii. 8.  
1 Tim. iv. 1.  
2 Tim. iii. 1.  
Heb. i. 2. 2 Pet.  
iii. 3.  
u See on iv. 5.—  
John xii. 49.  
Acts xx. 27.  
Heb. iii. 2. 5.

Moses, probably written with his own hand; which would be reserved, that, in case of errors or disputes, or defect of other copies, it might be referred to, and would be a witness against the sins of Israel, whenever it was examined.—This is an express declaration, that Moses himself was the writer of the whole law, in that very form, in which it was kept by the priests in the sanctuary. (*Note*, 2 Kings xxii. 8—14.)

V. 29. These repeated declarations were in fact prophecies, which have been accomplishing ever since. (*Marg. Ref.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—13.

It is very profitable for us to consider how life passes; and how much of our day is spent, in proportion to the progress made in the work allotted us; that we may be the more earnest in preparing for our final account, and in rendering our remaining services to the church and to the world.—Even when old age is healthy and vigorous, we should remember, that the limits of human life are fixed, by him who hath denounced the sentence of death against us. Nor need we, if believers, desire to live in this world; for we must feel pain, experience conflict and temptation, and witness iniquity, while we continue here: and when our journey is ended, and our victory completed, God will raise up other instruments by which to carry on his great designs; and be himself the ever-living Guardian of those, about whom we are most affectionately anxious. We have only to do our work, and if able, to be doubly active when the shadows of the evening approach; and, with all our influence and zeal, endeavour to impress divine truths upon our survivors, confirming our living profession with our dying testimony.—Satan constantly aims to embolden men in sin, and intimidate them from duty: we should therefore animate ourselves and each other to obedience, and awe our minds from sin, by meditating on the promises and denunciations of God's word.—But the human heart is so insensible, that every method should be tried, to keep up a due attention to the truths, precepts, and worship of God among men: and all opportunities should be embraced, and every avenue to the heart seized, to excite some useful conviction, and to stir up the remembrance of some forgotten doctrine or neglected duty. (*Note*, 2 Pet. i. 12—15.)

##### V. 14—29.

Not only the bulk of mankind, but even the best of men need repeated encouragements and charges, to engage them

steadily in the work of God, especially in arduous and perilous services in this evil world.—But the Lord will never fail nor forsake such as trust in him: they may therefore be strong and of a good courage, however numerous, malicious, or powerful their enemies are; for in such a cause, and with such a Helper, they shall certainly triumph over all opposition, till every promise in the book of God has been accomplished. Every former mercy, to the church or to themselves, warrants the assurance of future successes, and they are “encompassed with a cloud of witnesses” who unitedly testify the achievements of faith.—To the priests, the Lord's ministers, is the written word of God especially committed, to be by them preserved and delivered uncorrupted unto the people; and men, women, children, and strangers should be diligently instructed from it, that they may learn to fear and serve God in the obedience of faith. Every ordinance, every copy of the Scriptures, every faithful sermon, every pious book, every psalm or hymn, which is printed, read, or sung, nay the very words of men's own mouths, will rise up in judgment and bear witness for God against those, who, notwithstanding all, forsake him and commit iniquity. And to his holy abhorrence of sin we must ascribe all the miseries which are endured on earth, as well as the torments which are reserved for the wicked in hell.—Alas! that the liberality of the Lord should occasion increasing ungodliness; and that prosperity should generate ingratitude! Hence it becomes necessary for the Lord to correct those most, whom he loves best; and hence we have all need to fear prosperity more than the severest affliction, and to be doubly watchful and instant in prayer under the smiles of Providence. (*P. O. vi. latter part. P. O. viii. ibid.*)—The more accurately wise and holy men have studied, and the longer they have observed human nature, comparing it with the word of God, the more they have perceived and lamented its proneness to rebellion: and when the most powerful restraints fail to deter men from sin, with what impetuosity will they rush into it when left to follow their own inclinations! But if we grieve to see the present prevalence of wickedness, and entertain gloomy apprehensions of yet increasing ungodliness; let us remember that thus it was with Moses, with the apostles, and with most of those who have served God, and their generation: and having used our influence, and poured out our prayers, to prevent it as much as we can; let us leave the matter with him who will maintain his own cause, and who is “able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.”

## CHAP. XXXII.

The song of Moses, contrasting the perfections of God, and his special goodness to Israel, with Israel's ingratitude and apostasy, 1—18: and predicting terrible judgments on them for their sins, which would yet end in mercy, 19—43. Moses exhorts the people to set their hearts on the words which he had spoken, 44—47. The Lord orders him to go up to mount Nebo, to view the promised land, and die, 48—52.

**GIVE** <sup>a</sup>ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.

**2** My doctrine shall <sup>b</sup>drop as the

rain, my speech shall distil as the dew; as the small rain upon the tender herb, and <sup>c</sup>as the showers upon the grass:

**3** Because <sup>d</sup>I will publish the name of the LORD: <sup>e</sup>ascribe ye greatness unto our God.

**4** He is <sup>f</sup>the Rock, <sup>g</sup>his work is perfect; for <sup>h</sup>all his ways are judgment: <sup>i</sup>a God of truth, and <sup>k</sup>without iniquity, just and right is he.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXXII. V. 1. This bold and poetical invocation of the heavens and the earth, or the whole creation, to attend to what was about to be spoken, and to judge between the Lord and his worshippers, was adapted, and intended, to convey a strong idea of the vast importance of the subject, and to awaken the seriousness and attention of all who should hear or read it. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. As the rain and dew, gently distilling, soften the earth and produce a beautiful verdure and fertility; so this song tended, and the inspired writer aimed, to soften the Israelites into repentance, and gently to insinuate into their minds those good instructions, which, by the divine blessing, might render them fruitful in good works, and prosperous in the LORD's favour: and such would be the effect as to many. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Some interpret the former clause of the judgments of God which like torrents of impetuous rain sweep down all before them; and observe that the effect of this song was to hasten and aggravate the miseries of obstinate sinners, by rendering their conduct more inexcusable.

V. 3. To "publish the name of the LORD," is to delineate the glorious perfections and character of JEHOVAH, even of that God whom the Israelites forsook for their worthless idols. (*Notes, Ex. xxxiv. 5—7. Matt. xi. 25—27. xxviii. 19, 20. John i. 18. xvii. 25, 26.*)—To "ascribe greatness unto our God," is to acknowledge his self-existence, eternity, omnipresence, omniscience, almighty power, and universal absolute authority. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1 Chr. xxix. 10—19. Dan. iv. 1—3. 34—37. Matt. vi. 13. Rom. xi. 33—36.*)

V. 4. "He is the Rock." This is the first time God is called a Rock in Scripture: and the expression seems to denote, that his unchangeable power, faithfulness, and love, as revealed in the promised Saviour, form an immoveable foundation, on which we may build our hopes of felicity; and that under his protection we may find refuge from all our enemies, and in all our troubles: as the rocks in those countries frequently sheltered the inhabitants from the heat of the sun, from impetuous tempests, and from hostile invasions. (*Notes, 30, 31. 1 Sam. ii. 1, 2. 2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3. Ps. lxi. 1, 2. Is. xxxii. 1, 2. Matt. xvi. 18.*)—"His work is perfect." Absolute perfection is in God alone: relative perfection is all that belongs to creatures; and it belongs to them all, as he at first made them;

to a worm as much as to an archangel. Every work of God is the result of perfect goodness, the contrivance of perfect wisdom, and the effect of perfect power; and is complete, in its kind and for its use, and to fill its appointed station in the grand scale of existence. Every providential dispensation is perfectly expressive of his divine justice, truth, goodness, and wisdom. His law is perfectly holy, just, and good; and is exactly suited to answer the ends which he proposed in giving it: his gospel is perfect also, and suited to answer still nobler and more important ends. The Mosaick dispensation was perfectly adapted to its purpose for the appointed period. The New Testament dispensation has a higher and more enlarged kind of perfection. Every part of the universal plan is perfectly fitted to the station which it occupies, and the whole is a perfect plan, and will at length be perfectly executed; as will every work which God has begun: nor could any alteration be made in any of his works, without proportionably deducting from their excellency. All real defect arises from another quarter, from apostasy and rebellion, and their consequences. Much imagined defect is real excellence; and the objections made to it are the offspring of pride and ignorance. If that which suits its place, and answers the intention of its Maker, were advanced to a higher rank of beauty and dignity, its relative excellence would be destroyed. So long as the distinction between the infinite and absolute perfection of the Creator, and the finite capacities of the creature, remains, there can be no end of such vain attempts of increasing created perfection by advancing it to superior dignity: and the idea leads to the supposition of a perfect kingdom, where all are rulers and none subjects. These things should not be overlooked by those on the one hand, who are continually discovering supposed defects in the works of God, without knowing the intention of the great Contriver; nor on the other hand by those, who speak of reason and of the law of God, when distinguishing them from revelation and from the gospel, in such degrading language, as seems to imply, either that God is not the Giver of them, or that things opposite to each other may proceed from the same immutable Fountain of light, truth, and holiness. These were intended, and are calculated, for distinct purposes; and man's perversion of them is alone to be found fault with.—"All his ways are judgment." All the dealings of God with his rational creatures are regulated by infallible wisdom and perfect justice. "He is a God of truth," of

\* Heb. *He hath corrupted to himself.* 5 \*They have corrupted themselves; <sup>†</sup> their spot is not *the spot* of his children: *they are* <sup>m</sup> a perverse and crooked generation.

6 Do ye thus <sup>a</sup> requite the LORD, <sup>o</sup> O foolish people and unwise? is not he <sup>p</sup> thy Father *that* <sup>q</sup> hath bought thee? hath he not <sup>r</sup> made thee, and established thee?

7 \*Remember the days of old, consider the years of <sup>s</sup> many generations: <sup>t</sup> ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.

8 When the <sup>u</sup> Most High <sup>v</sup> divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, <sup>w</sup> he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel.

9 For <sup>x</sup> the LORD's portion is his people; Jacob is the <sup>y</sup> lot of his inheritance.

10 He <sup>z</sup> found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness: he <sup>aa</sup> led him about, <sup>ab</sup> he instructed him, <sup>ac</sup> he kept him as the apple of his eye.

<sup>ad</sup> Or, compassed him about. <sup>ae</sup> Heb. generation and generation. <sup>af</sup> Ps. x. 6. <sup>ag</sup> xxvii. 8. <sup>ah</sup> marg.

entire veracity, sincerity, and fidelity:—"and without iniquity;" never using his power or authority to oppress or injure any; never requiring more than his due; never punishing any of his innumerable subjects who have not deserved it, or above their deserts. And "just and right is he:" none therefore can have any cause to revolt against him, as the world in general, and as Israel in particular, had done. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ps. xxv. 8, 9. Is. xlv. 20—25. Mic. vii. 18—20.*)

V. 5. "The work of God is perfect:" so that sin and its effects cannot originate from him. The rebellious Israelites therefore "corrupted themselves," and must bear the blame of their perverse ingratitude. (*Notes, Jam. i. 13—18.*)—The worshippers of God are in general called his children. But the wickedness of Israel, notwithstanding the many judgments and mercies, and the warnings and encouragements, which concurred to deter them from sin and bring them to repentance, frequently manifested that they were indeed the children of another father, whose hateful image they bore.—The marginal reading implies, that it was their blot, or disgrace, that they were not the children of God; these indeed have their spots and blemishes, but habitual unrepented sin is not one of them. The words of John the Baptist, of Christ, and of his apostles, to the Jews who rejected the gospel, form an instructive comment on this verse. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Matt. iii. 7—10. xxiii. 13—33. John viii. 37—47. Acts vii. 51—53. xiii. 38—41.*)

V. 6. God had acted as a Father to Israel, though they had renounced the relationship of children to him by their apostasy and idolatry, and were "not worthy to be called "his sons." (*Notes, Is. lxiii. 7—10. 15—19. lxiv. 6—8.*) He had created them men; he had ransomed them from Egypt by desolating that country; and he had formed them into a church and nation incorporated with special privileges: so that the folly of their rebellions was equal to the ingratitude of them; for they could not injure the Lord, but would inevitably ruin themselves.

V. 7. This song would be in the mouth of great numbers who were unacquainted with the books of Moses, or had not access to them: they were therefore called upon in it to enquire of their fathers and elders, concerning their original many ages before; who would inform them of the distinguishing kindness which God had shewn to their pro-

genitors, and to the children for their sakes. This might both stir them up to the study of the Scriptures, as far as they had opportunity; and discover to them, in general, their obligations, both of gratitude and interest, to adhere to the worship and service of JEHOVAH. (*Note, xxxi. 19.*)

V. 8. When, according to the purpose of "the Most High," the earth was divided in the days of Peleg among the descendants of Adam and Noah; (*Note, Gen. xi. 1, 2;*) JEHOVAH so over-ruled it, according to his secret designs of love to Israel, that the posterity of accursed Canaan should have that land, which he had selected as the suitable and sufficient portion of the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: foreseeing that, by the time these would multiply into a nation, the Canaanites would fill up the measure of their iniquities, and merit utter extirpation. Thus Israel received their portion in a high state of cultivation, and replenished with cities, towns, and villages, prepared for their reception.

V. 9. That part of the human race which the Lord peculiarly values and cultivates, as a man does his own estate, and from which he receives his whole revenue of spiritual worship and willing obedience, was typified by Israel, and was under that dispensation chiefly found among that people.—(*Marg. Ref. Jer. x. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10.*)

V. 10. Israel was first formed into a nation, in a desolate wilderness, where nothing was heard before but the howling of the beasts of prey. Here the Lord chose that people, covenanted with them, and became their King; and under his government, guidance, and protection, they were preserved and provided for: and though he led them about in the desert during forty years, the time was not lost; for there he instructed and trained them for the conquest and possession of the promised land. And when the Amalekites, Arad, Balak, and others, attempted to injure them, his power inclosed them about and kept them safe; even as the apple, or pupil, of the eye is preserved, both by the wise contrivance of the Creator, and by the jealous care of the possessor, from external violence. (*Marg. Ref.*)—It is remarkable that in the original of this sublime specimen of ancient poetry, the future and past tenses are so interchanged, that the reader is sometimes led back to the times of the patriarchs, and views the deliverance of Israel and the transactions that followed as

<sup>d</sup> Ex. xix. 4. Is. xxi. 8. xl. 31. Rev. xii. 14. 11 As <sup>a</sup>an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings;

<sup>e</sup> i. 31 Neh. ix. 12. Ps. xxvii. 11. lxxviii. 14. 52. 53. lxxx. 1. cxxxvi. 16. Is. xli. 4. lxi. 9—13. 12 So <sup>a</sup>the Lord alone did lead him, and there was <sup>a</sup>no strange god with him.

<sup>f</sup> Is. xlii. 11, 12. xlv. 7, 8. <sup>g</sup> xxxvii. 28. 29. Is. lviii. 14. Ez. xxxvii. 2. <sup>h</sup> Ex. iii. 8. Job xiii. 6. Ps. lxxxii. 16. Is. xlviii. 21. Ps. xxvii. 17. <sup>i</sup> Gen. xvi. 8. Judg. v. 25. 2 Sam. xvii. 29. Job xx. 17. Is. vi. 15, 22. <sup>k</sup> Ps. xxi. 12. Ez. xxxix. 18. Am. iv. 1. Mic. vi. 14. <sup>l</sup> Ps. cxlvii. 14. 13 He made him <sup>a</sup>ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields, and he made him to suck <sup>b</sup>honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock;

14 <sup>a</sup>Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed <sup>a</sup>of Bashan, and goats, with <sup>a</sup>the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou

didst drink the pure <sup>a</sup>blood of the grape.

15 ¶ But <sup>a</sup>Jeshurun waxed fat, and <sup>a</sup>kicked: thou art <sup>b</sup>waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness: <sup>a</sup>then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed <sup>a</sup>the Rock of his salvation.

16 They <sup>a</sup>provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with <sup>a</sup>abominations provoked they him to anger.

17 They <sup>a</sup>sacrificed unto devils, <sup>a</sup>not to God; to <sup>a</sup>gods whom they knew not, <sup>a</sup>to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.

<sup>a</sup> Or, which were not God. 21. <sup>b</sup> Judg. v. 8.

future:—"He shall find, &c." At others, he is suddenly carried forward to distant ages, and witnesses the predictions as already accomplished. Thus he is made as it were a spectator of all the events which are spoken of, and a witness of the divine glory, and of Israel's perverseness, in every part of them.

V. 11, 12. The eagle is remarkable for her tender care of her young, and for the pains that she uses, and the methods which she employs, in teaching them to fly; stirring them up out of the nest, fluttering in the air over them to shew them how to use their wings, and even carrying them upon her own wings: so that in order to destroy the young eagles, the body of the old one must on some occasions first be pierced. Thus the Lord, by the message of Moses and Aaron, excited and encouraged the enslaved Israelites to leave Egypt, and effectually assisted and protected them in so doing. And by the gospel, and the influence of the Holy Spirit, he excites sinners to leave Satan's bondage, and instructs, defends, and effectually assists them. The last circumstance of the eagle's tender care of her young is beautifully emblematical of his love, who interposed between divine justice and our guilty souls, and "bare our sins in his own body on the tree." In both Testaments, young birds, taken care of by the old one, are emblems of the church's safety under the Redeemer's protection: but in the Old Testament the eagle is selected as descriptive of his power; in the New, the hen is substituted, as most expressive of his condescension and grace. (Notes, Ex. xix. 4. Matt. xxiii. 37—39.) None of the gods of the nations had the least share in those wonderful works of love, which JEHOVAH wrought for Israel: how absurd and base then was it to join them with him, or prefer them to him, as the objects of their worship!

V. 13. The Lord caused Israel, as a triumphant conqueror riding in grand procession, to possess the fortified cities and inaccessible mountains, which the Canaanites thought secure from their assaults. In this fertile land, the rocky parts which were the least valued, and which in other countries are generally unproductive, by the peculiar blessing of God afforded them great quantities of the finest honey and oil. (Marg. Ref.)—The preceding verses referred to previous events: but here prediction evidently

begins; being written in the past tense by way of anticipation, but expressly for the use of future ages.

V. 14. The language of this song, according to the genius of poetry, especially the Eastern poetry, abounds with bold metaphors which sometimes obscure the meaning: but this verse may serve as a specimen, according to which others less perspicuous must be interpreted. A grain of wheat, being shaped somewhat like the kidney, which is surrounded in cattle with the choicest fat, and the wheat of Canaan being remarkably fine, the sacred writer calls it "the fat of kidneys of wheat:" and the production of the red or purple grape, resembling the colour of blood, is called "the pure blood of the grape."

Butter, &c.] "The use of butter was very ancient among the Hebrews; though but lately known to the Greeks." Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref. i.)

V. 15. The word "Jeshurun" seems to mean, *The upright one*; and Israel was such by profession, and comparatively so in reality, for some time: but when greatly prospered, the people degenerated, and grew untractable and rebellious; like the cattle that kick against the goad, instead of being excited by it to labour. (Note, 1 Sam. ii. 29.) They used their abundance intemperately, and grew proud and luxurious. This rendered them forgetful of God and ungrateful to him, and indisposed them for his spiritual worship and holy service: (Note, Is. vi. 9, 10:) in proportion, they became attached to the sensual worship of filthy idols, to which they apostatized, forsaking and lightly esteeming their great and gracious Benefactor: and when they were reprov'd by the prophets, or corrected by the Lord, they were fired with indignation and revolted more and more. (Note, Is. i. 5, 6.)

V. 17. The word, rendered devils, means *destroyers*: and such the false gods proved to their worshippers, instead of benefactors. Thus Satan is called by the apostle *Abaddon* and *Apollyon*, the one of which in Hebrew, and the other in Greek, signifies a *destroyer*: (Note, Rev. ix. 11:) and our Lord says "he was a murderer from the beginning." (John viii. 44.) Apostate spirits therefore are evidently meant: and indeed the whole system of idolatry, and of every species of false religion, ultimately centres in the worship and service of Satan; who, as the proud

y See on 4. 15

z vi. 12. viii. 11.

14. 19. Ps. ix. 17

xiv. 20—22. cvi.

21. Is. xxii. 10.

11. Jer. ii. 32. iii.

21. Hos. viii. 14.

a Lev. xxvi. 11.

30. Judg. ii. 14.

Ps. v. 4. 5. x. 8.

lxxviii. 59. cvi.

40. Am. iii. 2. 3.

Zech. xi. 8. Rev.

iii. 16.

b Or, despised.

Lam. ii. 6.

c See on xxxi. 17.

18.—Job xiii. 24.

xxxiv. 29. Ps. civ.

29. Is. lxiv. 7.

Jer. xvii. 17.

Hos. ix. 12.

d See on 5.—Is. lxxv. 2—5.

Matt. xi. 16. 17.

Luke vii. 31. 32.

e 2 Chr. xx. 20.

Is. vii. 9. xxx. 9.

Matt. xvii. 17.

Mark ix. 19.

Luke xviii. 8.

2 Thes. iii. 2.

Heb. xi. 6.

18 Of 'the Rock *that* begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast 'forgot-ten God that formed thee.

19 And 'when the LORD saw *it*, he 'abhorred *them*, because of the pro-vo-king 'b of his sons and of his daugh-ters.

20 And he said, 'I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end *shall be*: for they are 'a very fro-ward generation, 'children in whom is no faith.

21 They have 'moved me to jealousy with *that which* is not God; they have provoked me to anger 'with their vani-ties: and 'I will move them to jealousy with *those which* are not a people, I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

22 For 'a fire is kindled in mine anger, and 'shall burn unto 'the lowest hell, and 'shall 'consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire 'the founda-tions of the mountains.

f See on 16.—Pa

lxviii. 58.

g 1 Sam. xii. 31.

1 Kings xvi. 13.

26. Ps. xxxi. 6.

Jer. viii. 19. x.

8. xiv. 22. Jon. ii.

8. Acts xiv. 16.

h Hos. i. 10. Rom.

ix. 25. x. 19. xi.

11—14. 1 Pet. ii.

9. 10.

f xxix. 20. Num.

xvi. 35. Ps. xxi.

9. lxxviii. 14.

xxvii. 3. Is. lxxv.

16. 16. Jer. iv. 4.

xx. 14. xvii. 4.

Lam. ii. 3. iv. 11.

Ez. xxxvi. 5. Nah.

i. 6. Mal. iv. 1. 2.

Mark ix. 43—48.

2 Thes. i. 8. Heb.

xii. 29. Jude 7.

† Or, hath burned.

g Pa. lxxviii. 13.

Is. xxx. 83.

Zeph. iii. 8.

Matt. x. 28. xviii. 9.

xxiii. 33.

h xxix. 23. Is. xxiv. 6.

19. 20.

i Job ix. 5. 6.

Pa. xli. 2.

xxiv. 5.

Is. lv. 10.

Mic. i. 4.

Nah. i. 5.

Hab. iii. 10.

rival of God, ambitiously aspires to be the god and king of this world. Not only were the evil genii of the heathens in reality *devils*; but their good genii also, and all their demons or gods, as far as they had any *distinct* existence. Whether a mere phantom, or some peculiar demon under the name of Baal or Jupiter, or some deceased hero, or the virtues and vices, were worshipped under these images; the things which were sacrificed unto them, "were sacri-ficed unto devils:" and it is reasonable to suppose, that the same word should in an idolater's vocabulary be used in a good sense, as signifying a deity, which in the word of God, and in the language of his worshippers, signifies a demon, or devil. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, 1 Cor. x. 18—22.*) In this *system of Satan*, old gods, or "new gods that newly "came up," (what a monstrous absurdity!) the deification of living as well as of deceased men, the change from one idolatry to another in ceaseless variety, equally suited his purpose. This explains the secret of that *intercommunity* of gods and religions, which the *liberal and candid* Hea-thens (as many now affect to call them,) universally allowed of, but which the *bigotted* Jews would not conform to; who were therefore hated and despised for their *uncharit-able* singularity, by which they condemned all their neigh-bours. The Jews were indeed faulty in despising and hating the Gentiles, and were really chargeable with bigotry in some respects: yet the worshippers of JEHOVAH could not possibly have any intercommunity with the worshippers of the devil; Satan himself would have aimed at no more, and the whole law of God forbid it. For the same reason, different modes of irreligion, or false religion, may admit of this *candid* intercommunity; but true Christianity cannot thus be warped: and therefore many, who pride them-selves upon their candour and liberality of sentiment, can scarcely find words sufficiently to express their contempt of those *bigots*, who explicitly declare that there is but one way of a sinner's acceptance and sanctification; and that no man, who is not interested in the merits and atoning sacrifice of the divine Saviour, and a partaker of his re-generating Spirit, can possibly obtain heaven, or escape condemnation, whatever be his moral character among men. Yet all Christians should maintain this scriptural ground: and then by shewing others all civil respect and tender kindness; by manifesting continually a disposition to sympathize with them, and a readiness to relieve them, with modesty and courteousness; they should endeavour to convince them that, not proud bigotry and uncharitable

severity, but regard to the truth of God's word, and a re-luctance to do any thing to buoy up the groundless hopes of those who neglect the great salvation of the gospel, influence them in making this profession. (*Notes, 2 Cor. vi. 14—18. 2 John 7—11.*)

V. 18. 'God the author of thy being; who "formed "thee" into a kingdom of priests.' *Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 4. 30, 31.)*

V. 19, 20. The Israelites are called "the sons and "daughters" of JEHOVAH in respect to *privilege*; while, because of their *character*, that relation is disowned (5).—Having received their natural and national existence, and all their peculiar advantages, from the Lord, they so pro-vo-ved him by multiplied idolatries, that he *abhorred*, or *disdained* them, and as it were turned them out of his house; and declared that he would withdraw his protec-tion and withhold his wonted interposition in their favour: and even afterwards, whilst they groaned under their mis-e-ries, that he would look on as an unconcerned spectator, until they were brought to the utmost extremities; because they were a froward and perverse generation, destitute alike of *faith* and *faithfulness*. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Lev. xxvi. 30. Is. lxiii. 10. Zech. xi. 7—9.*)

V. 21. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xx. 5. xxxiv. 11—17.*) Many of the judgments inflicted on the offending Israel-ites, by the Canaanites, Philistines, Midianites, Chaldeans, and others, might form a partial accomplishment of this prediction: but the apostle applies it, no doubt most justly, to the calling of the Gentiles into the church. (*Rom. x. 19.*)—The Jews, proud of their abused privileges, had not only treated the heathen as foolish and vile, which, as given up to base idolatries, they doubtless were; but even as dogs compared with themselves, to whom as chil-dren they supposed that all spiritual blessings exclusively and unalterably belonged: (*Note, Matt. xv. 25—28:*) and it therefore provoked the jealousy of the Jews to a degree of indignant rage, to see them enter into the church, and admitted to equal privileges with themselves. This event-ually tended to their own entire exclusion; and has even to this very day exceedingly exasperated them against Christianity. (*Note, 1 Thes. ii. 13—16.*)

V. 22. The tremendous effects of the wrath of God are here represented under the metaphor of a fire, which, kindled upon the surface of the earth, should burn even to its centre; and, according to a very general notion of the ancients, quite through to the place of miserable departed

† xxviii. 5, &c. Lev. xxvi. 18, 24. 28. Is. xxiv. 17, 18. Jer. xv. 2, 6. Ez. xiv. 21. Matt. xxiv. 7, 8.

23 I will <sup>a</sup> heap mischiefs upon them; I will <sup>b</sup> spend mine arrows upon them.

24 They shall be <sup>a</sup> burnt with hunger, and devoured with <sup>a</sup> burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send <sup>a</sup> the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of <sup>a</sup> serpents of the dust.

25 The <sup>a</sup> sword without, and terror <sup>a</sup> within, shall <sup>a</sup> destroy both <sup>a</sup> the young man and the virgin, the suckling *also*, with the man of grey hairs.

26 I said, 'I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men;

27 Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, 'lest their adversaries should behave themselves

strangely, and lest <sup>a</sup> they should say, 'Our hand *is* high, and the LORD hath not done all this.

28 For they *are* <sup>a</sup> a nation void of counsel, neither *is there any* understanding in them.

29 Oh, <sup>a</sup> that they were wise, *that* they understood this, *that* they would consider their latter end!

30 How should <sup>a</sup> one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had <sup>a</sup> sold them, and the LORD had <sup>a</sup> shut them up?

31 For <sup>a</sup> their rock *is* not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves *being* judges.

32 For their vine *is* <sup>a</sup> of the vine of

spirits. The word here used, (ἄνεψ, ἀδής, Sept.) signifying 'the unseen state,' seems to intimate that the wrath of God would pursue its objects, after death, to that place <sup>a</sup> where their worm never dieth, and the fire is not <sup>a</sup> "quenched." (Note, Ps. xvi. 8—11.)

Lowest hell.] Note, Ps. lxxxvi. 12, 13.

V. 24. *Serpents of the dust.*] Or, 'serpents which <sup>a</sup> crawl upon and lick the dust.'—(The word (סִנְיָו), rendered "serpents," is used by Micah in a similar sense. Mic. vii. 17. Heb.)—The marginal references best explain the highly poetical language of these prophetic denunciations.

V. 25. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 26, 27. The idolatry and rebellions of Israel *deserved*, and the justice of God seemed to *demand*, that they should be banished to the remotest corners of the earth, where they might never more be heard of, or even that they should be entirely extirpated: but he knew that his enemies would misunderstand this event, and would in consequence be elated with insufferable insolence, and emboldened to utter blasphemies, and to deny all that was recorded of his wonderful works in Egypt and at the Red Sea. (Notes, Ex. xxxii. 11—14. Num. xiv. 13—19. Ez. xx. 7—9.) He therefore determined to spare the nation: and he still, for similar purposes, continues the Jews as living witnesses of the truth of the Scriptures. For no doubt, the triumphs of modern infidels would have been more insolent, and their blasphemies more abundant, had there been no traces of such a people as Israel any where discoverable upon earth.—By a bold figure, the sacred poet ascribes to the Almighty, language taken from the conduct of men, who are deterred from such things, as they have a strong inclination to, through fear of disagreeable consequences. As God abhorred idolatry, pride, and blasphemy, and was determined not to give this occasion for them, he *is* said "to fear the wrath of the enemy;" because he acted as men do when thus afraid. (Notes, Gen. vi. 6, 7. 2 Kings xviii. 28—35.)

V. 29. The Israelites, had they been wise, would have

attended to these warnings and instructions, and reflected on the consequences of their conduct; and so avoided all such things as led to personal or national ruin, and observed all such as conducted to prosperity and felicity: thus they would have <sup>a</sup> "considered their latter end."—For, notwithstanding all the predictions which had been delivered, they would certainly have prospered had they been obedient: and notwithstanding the divine decrees, it is equally certain that none will come short of eternal life, but the impenitent and unbelieving.—It is so agreeable to the divine holiness and love that his rational creatures should be obedient and happy, and that sinners should repent, believe, and be saved, that he is represented as desiring and even wishing for it. This must be understood in the same manner as his "fearing the wrath of the enemy;" with reference to the conduct which he approves in us, and not with respect to his own government of the world, which is in all respects perfectly wise, righteous, faithful, and good, though often too deep for our investigation. (Notes, v. 28, 29. Ps. lxxxvi. 13. Ez. xxxiii. 11. Matt. xxiii. 37—39. Luke xix. 42—44.)

V. 30, 31. Unless the Israelites had provoked God by their crimes to sell them as slaves, and to deliver them, as malefactors shut up in prison, into the hands of their enemies, no power could possibly have prevailed against them. For he would have continued to be their omnipotent Protector and Helper; and, in that case, they would have been uniformly victorious over all assailants, according to the examples recorded in Scripture. (Marg. Ref. z, a, b.) How amazingly different from this has their condition been during above 1700 years!—The idols of the gentiles, on which they professed to depend, had never equalled the wondrous works of JEHOVAH, even by their own confession; and therefore they could never have prevailed against Israel, had not *their* Rock and Defender been turned from them, yea, turned against them. (Marg. Ref. c.)

V. 32, 33. The nation of Israel, though planted a generous vine, of an excellent stock, in a rich soil, and with

d xxix. 18. Is. v. 4. Heb. xii. 18. e Job xx. 14-16. Ps. lviii. 4. cxi. 3. Jer. viii. 14. Marg. Rom. iii. 18.

Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: <sup>a</sup>their grapes *are* grapes of gall, their clusters *are* bitter:

33 Their wine *is* <sup>a</sup>the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.

34 *Is* not this <sup>a</sup>'laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures?

35 <sup>a</sup>'To me *belongeth* vengeance and recompence: <sup>b</sup>their foot shall slide in *due* time: for the day of their calamity *is* at hand, and <sup>c</sup>'the things that shall come upon them make haste.

36 For <sup>k</sup>the LORD shall judge his people, and <sup>l</sup>repent himself for his servants: when he seeth that *their* <sup>m</sup>power is gone, and *there is* <sup>n</sup>none shut up, or left.

37 And he shall say, <sup>a</sup>'Where *are* <sup>n</sup>their gods, *their* rock in whom they trusted:

38 Which did <sup>a</sup>'eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink-offerings? let them rise up and help you, and be <sup>a</sup>'your protection.

39 See now that <sup>a</sup>'I, *even* I, *am* he, and *there is* no god with me: <sup>a</sup>'I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: <sup>a</sup>'neither *is there any* that can deliver out of my hand.

40 For <sup>a</sup>'I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever.

41 If I <sup>a</sup>'whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; <sup>a</sup>'I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward <sup>a</sup>'them that hate me.

every advantage of culture, did not bring forth the good fruits of righteousness: (Notes, Is. v. 2-7. Jer. ii. 20, 21:) nay, it even rivaled Sodom and Gomorrah in wickedness: and as this conduct in them was more dishonourable to God, and more poisonous to the minds of others, by prejudicing them against God and religion, it would therefore be eventually more bitter to themselves.—Thus Josephus describes the Jews before their ruin by the Romans:—'They were a more atheistical generation than the inhabitants of Sodom.'—'There was no act of wickedness that was not committed: nor can one imagine any thing so bad that they did not do; endeavouring, publicly as well as privately, to excel one another, both in impiety towards God and injustice to their neighbours.'—'Had not the Romans destroyed them, the earth would have opened and swallowed them, or fire from heaven would have consumed them.' (Marg. Ref.—Note, Ez. xvi. 48-51.)

V. 34, 35. All the wickedness of Israel was noticed and registered, as in a book, by the Lord, until the appointed time of vengeance: and it would then appear that it had been reserved in store, to be produced against them, to manifest his justice in their punishment; even as a man seals up his treasures, and deposits them in a secure place till he wants to use them.—For it belongeth to God, the Judge of all, to execute vengeance on the wicked; it is his peculiar office and prerogative; so that none are authorized to take vengeance, except as commissioned by him. (Note, Num. xxxi. 2.) But in perfect wisdom he waits the most proper season; and though his judgments seem to linger, they in reality make haste and are at hand. For when sinners deem themselves most secure, and suppose that their foot stands firm, he causes it to slide in due time, and they suddenly fall into destruction. (Marg. Ref.—Note, Heb. x. 28-31.)

V. 36. The Lord pleaded the cause of the pious remnant of Israel in every age; he rescued the Jews from the Babylonish captivity; the Messiah appeared in the appointed season; and the nation has from time to time re-

ceived many gracious deliverances: but, as this sacred poem relates to the same events, which have already been considered in the preceding chapters; this part also certainly refers to mercies still reserved for them, even their future conversion and restoration.—When the appointed period shall arrive, the Lord will plead their cause, and avenge them on all their oppressors; he will change his conduct towards them, as a man does when he repents: but not till he has brought them into utter distress, so that none shall be any where *shut up*, and exempted from hostile depredations; or *left*, who shall not be carried captive, and at the mercy of their conquerors: and he will continue their punishment, till they are brought to renounce all dependence on human help. (Notes, Is. lxiii. 15-19. lxiv. Ez. xxxvi. 25-32. Hos. ii. 14-17. iii. 4, 5. xiv. 1-8. Zech. xii. 9-14. Rom. xi. 25-32.)—This evidently predicts the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, the consequent desolations of their land, and the long continued dispersion which has ensued.

V. 37-39. It is most obvious to understand this, not as a reproach cast on the Jews by their enemies, but as the rebuke of God in his providence; exposing Israel's folly in sacrificing to worthless idols, and as it were feasting them on their abundance. Let the idolaters, in their distress, apply for help to the objects of their abominable worship, and not expect it from JEHOVAH whom they had so basely forsaken. (Notes, Judg. x. 13, 14. Hos. ii. 8, 9.) But the rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah may be considered as a continuation of these idolatries, and the completion of their national guilt: and of all this complicated wickedness he will make the Jews deeply sensible, before he appears to deliver them from their present miseries. Then they will learn, that there is no God but JEHOVAH; that he alone is able to save and to destroy, to afflict and prosper, and that none can deliver men out of his hand. (Marg. Ref.—Note, 1 Sam. ii. 4-8.)

V. 40-42. "Lifting up the hand" was at that time customary in taking solemn oaths: (Marg. Ref. s:) and when JEHOVAH sware by his own self-existence and eter-

<sup>a</sup> See on 23.—Ps. lxxviii. 23. Is. xxxiv. 6—8. Jer. xlii. 10. Ez. xxxv. 6—8. xxxviii. 21, 22.

42 I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain, and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy.

\* Or, Praise his people, ye nations; or, Sing ye.

<sup>b</sup> Gen. xii. 8. 1 Kings viii. 43. Ps. xxii. 27. Is. xi. 10. xix. 23. 25. Luke ii. 10. 11. 32. Acts xiii. 47. 48. Rom. xv. 9—13. Rev. v. 9, 10.

43 \* Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people; for he will <sup>a</sup>avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and <sup>a</sup>will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.

<sup>a</sup> See on 35.—Job xiii. 24. Jer. xlii. 14. Lam. ii. 3. Luke xix. 27. 43, 44. xxi. 22—24. Rom. xii. 19. Rev. vi. 10. xv. 2. 4. xviii. 2. 20. xix. 2.

44 ¶ And Moses came and <sup>b</sup>spake all the words of this song in the ears of the people, he, and <sup>c</sup>Hoshea the son of Nun.

<sup>a</sup> Ps. lxxxv. 1. <sup>b</sup> See on xxxi. 22. 30.

45 And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel.

<sup>c</sup> See on vi. 6, 7. xi. 18.—1 Chr. xxii. 19. Ez. xl. 4. Luke ix. 44. Heb. ii. 1. <sup>d</sup> xxx. 19. Lev. xviii. 5. Prov. iii. 1, 2. 18. 22. iv. 22. Is. xiv. 19. Matt. vi. 33. Rom. x. 5, 6. 1 Tim. iv. 8. vi. 6—8. 1 Pet. iii. 10—12. 2 Pet. i. 8, 16. Rev. xxii. 14.

46 And he said unto them, \*Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day; which ye shall command your children to observe, to do all the words of this law.

47 For it is <sup>d</sup>not a vain thing for you, because it is your life: and through

this thing ye shall prolong *your* days in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.

48 And <sup>e</sup>the Lord spake unto Moses that self-same day, saying,

49 Get thee up into this <sup>f</sup>mountain Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; <sup>g</sup>and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession;

50 And die in the mount whither thou goest up, and <sup>h</sup>be gathered unto thy people; <sup>i</sup>as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people:

51 Because <sup>k</sup>ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel, at the waters of <sup>l</sup>Meribah-kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; <sup>l</sup>because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel.

52 Yet <sup>m</sup>thou shalt see the land before thee; but thou shalt not go thither, unto the land which I gave the children of Israel.

nity, the sentence, whether of mercy or of judgment, became irrevocable and irreversible. And therefore, if the Lord prepared for vengeance, as a man for battle, and put his hand to the dreadful work of executing judgment on the wicked, he would do it effectually; nor should any of those, who had provoked his indignation, be able either to resist or escape. Especially he will revenge himself upon all those, who at any time have injured his people. (Notes, Is. xxxiv. lxiii. 1—6. Rev. xix. 11—21.)—The words rendered, “from the beginning of revenges on the enemy;” are obscure, and may mean, ‘from the highest to the lowest of the enemy.’—This conclusion seems to relate to the final deliverance of Israel, and the destruction of all who oppose that deliverance, and of every enemy of God and his people: and future events may hereafter illustrate this part of the prophecy, as history has explained the foregoing parts of it.

V. 43. When the Gentiles were called into the church, and the Jews who opposed it were severely punished, this prophecy began to be accomplished: but when, upon their future conversion, the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in, and all opposers be destroyed, it will be completely fulfilled. The restoration of the Jews to their own land, and its subsequent fertility, seem also predicted. (Notes, Rom. xi. 11—15. xv. 8—13.)

V. 45—52. Moses, having delivered the preceding prophetic song to Israel, with earnest attestations and exhortations, continuing the “labour of love” to his latest breath, received the summons from God to take a view of the promised land, and then close his eyes in death. (Notes, iii. 23—28. xxxiv. 1—6. Num. xx. 10—13. 22—

28. xxvii. 15—17.)—The expression, “gathered unto thy people,” must here relate to the soul, not to the body; for none of Moses’s people were buried in mount Abarim: yet the words are not used exclusively of the righteous. (Note, Gen. xxv. 7, 8.)—‘The Israelites should have learnt, that as Moses left them short of the promised land, and could not bring them into possession of it, so his law did not contain a perfect revelation of God’s will, but they were to expect something beyond it.’ Bp. Patrick.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—14.

Divine truths, if proposed with solemnity and affection, and accompanied by fervent prayers, resemble the gentle dews and rains which refresh and fructify the earth: and while numbers, alas! turn away from instruction with neglect and dislike, many in every age welcome the blessing, and shew the beneficial tendency of it in their holy and useful lives. (Note, Ps. lxxii. 4—7.)—When the glorious perfections of God, and his dealings with mankind in general, and with every individual, and their real character and conduct towards him, shall be completely made known to the whole world, either his mercy in their salvation, or his justice in their condemnation, will be universally acknowledged by all. In every controversy between the great Creator and his rational creatures, the heavens and the earth, and every part of the world, will be witnesses for him “to declare his righteousness,” and to convict and silence all who have rebelled against him: for the benefits which he has already conferred, lay them under so strong obligations entirely to love and serve him, that their ingra-

## CHAP. XXXIII.

Moses records the displays of the Lord's majesty,

titude and disobedience admit of no excuse. (*Note, Rom. i. 18—20.*) Yea every advantage, by which any of them are distinguished from others, increases their obligation and aggravates the guilt of transgression.—In our own case we should recollect that our favoured land, not less desirable in many respects than Canaan itself; the place of our abode, if peculiarly pleasant or suitable; our temporal provision, and the abundance which many possess, with a variety of other advantages national and personal; are as much the special gift and appointment of God to us, as the land of promise was to Israel, and as really demand our gratitude and cheerful obedience.—We too, as well as they, are singularly favoured with the light of revelation and the ordinances of true religion, and are professedly the Lord's people. We hear continually of a redemption far more precious than that of Israel out of Egyptian bondage, and are invited to partake its inestimable blessings: but unless we are "redeemed from all iniquity, and purified to the Redeemer as a peculiar people, zealous of good works," all our privileges will only increase our condemnation.—And, alas! the dark and deep stains of every atrocious wickedness, which mark our national character, are not "the spots of God's children," but demonstrate that in general we are Christians only in name: and, comparing our mercies with our conduct, it may well be said to us, "Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he thy Father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?"—Indeed he found us all dead in sin, and slaves to Satan, and basely in love with our chains: and even when "warned to flee from the wrath to come," and invited to liberty and felicity, we were disposed to cleave to the world, and shrink from the difficulties and perils of a godly life. But his Spirit quickened our souls, stirred us up from the dust, sweetly and powerfully shewed us our danger and our refuge, gave us effectual assistance, and led us in paths which we had not before known. Thus we became the redeemed servants of God, "his portion and the lot of his inheritance," yea, his beloved children and heirs of eternal glory; and were favoured with holy consolations and earnestness of heavenly felicity. Yet, alas! how often have we all merited the reproach of ingratitude and folly! How frequently have we "grieved his Holy Spirit," even if we have been kept from dishonouring his name! How often have we moved him to jealousy by our inordinate attachment to earthly objects! How many times have we provoked him to hide his face from us, and to chasten us for our sins, "that we might not be condemned with the world!" In short how much reason do we find on the retrospect, to humble ourselves before God, and to plead with him for his mercy's sake, to pardon our sins, to renew our souls, and "to establish our goings in his ways that our foot-steps slip not!"

V. 15—35.

It is a striking proof of human depravity, that prosperity almost always increases pride and ungodliness, as well as luxury and sensuality. Our national riches and successes have manifestly produced this hateful effect: like

and his love to Israel, 1—5. He pronounces a prophetic blessing on each of the tribes, 6—25: and shews in general their felicity as the people of God, 26—29.

"Jeshurun, we have grown fat and kicked:" and the most daring infidelity, impiety, and profligacy, which abound on every side, prove that we have forsaken God, and provoked him to jealousy, even as the Israelites did by their multiplied idolatries and enormous crimes. Indeed it is an observation, which every reflecting man has had occasion to make, that many who in adversity or low circumstances behaved well, and seemed favourable to religion, when become prosperous and wealthy grow insolent, and profane, and seem to say unto God, "We are lords: we will come no more unto thee." Of this class of apostates, most faithful ministers in large cities have to lament over many affecting instances; nay, of those who still wish to be thought Christians, and so deem themselves branches of the true Vine, what numbers are there of whom it must be said, "Their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and their wine the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps."—Thus men "treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every one according to his deeds." "For a fire is kindled in his anger, and shall burn to the lowest hell;" as well as "consume the earth with its increase." It is awful to think of the unnumbered multitudes, who thus live and die, and perish in their sins: while at the same time they add continually to the load of our national guilt, which more and more loudly calls for divine vengeance on the land, and to which we should ascribe all our calamities and pressures. Indeed, sooner or later iniquity must be our ruin, unless prevented by a general revival and enlarged success of pure Christianity among us: and not only our commerce and other temporal advantages will be given to others, but even our religious privileges will be transferred to some of those nations, whom we now despise as rude and ignorant savages. For, as we have provoked the LORD to jealousy by our crimes and lying vanities, he may probably provoke us to jealousy and indignation by the very people whom we most disdain. And should he no more regard us than we have done him, it may easily be seen what our end must be. To him "belongeth vengeance and recompence, and the feet of his enemies will slide in due time; for the day of their calamity is at hand." But "to the LORD our God" likewise "belong mercies and forgivenesses;" he is slow to anger and ready to forgive; he "works for his own name's sake, that it should not be polluted among the heathen;" he spares us when we deserve wrath; and he bears long with his professed worshippers, lest he should embolden the blasphemies of his open enemies; he "waits to be gracious," and "in wrath remembers mercy." Hence it is, that our guilty land has hitherto been preserved from desolating judgments and dire extremities. Hence it is that individually we are spared, and are not now in the depths of hell. "Oh, that men were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!"—But alas! viewed in this light, after all our improvements in science and political sagacity, it may not only be said of us, "They are children in whom is no faith;" but even, "They are a nation void of counsel, neither is there understanding in them." For if the

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xxvii. 4. <sup>27-29.</sup> xlix. 1. <sup>28.</sup> Luke xxiv. <sup>50, 51.</sup> John xiv. <sup>27.</sup> xvi. 33. xvii. <sup>xiii. 1. 6.</sup> Ps. xc. title. <sup>1 Tim. vi. 11.</sup> <sup>b</sup> Josh. xiv. 6. <sup>Judg. xiii. 6.</sup> <sup>1 Sam. ii. 27.</sup> ix. 6, 7. <sup>1 Kings</sup> <sup>2 Tim. iii. 17.</sup> <sup>2 Pet. i. 21.</sup>

AND this is the blessing, where-  
with Moses the man of God blessed

Lord indeed favoured us, nay, if he were not provoked to sell us and shut us up in the hand of our enemies, we should have nothing to fear from them. Yet how few think of using any proper means of ensuring his protection! what eagerness is shewn in engaging the assistance of an arm of flesh! In men's private conduct too, how little earnestness is manifested in the infinitely important concerns of eternity, compared with their activity about the perishing trifles of this dying world! But surely man's wisdom consists not in sagacity about things of momentary duration, but in "considering his latter end," and in preparing for his final account; in seeking deliverance from eternal punishment, and a title to eternal felicity. Nay, even in this present world, the hope of heaven, and the joys which God communicates to his faithful servants, unspeakably exceed all the pleasures which the possession of the whole earth could confer: and neither the sensual, the ambitious, nor the covetous; nor yet the devotees of superstition, nor the worshippers of saints and angels; can so much as imagine that "their rock is as our Rock," or their portion comparable to the Christian's eternal inheritance.—Oh, that men would then be persuaded to build their hopes on Christ the sure Foundation, and to seek the waters of life which he gives to all who thirst for them!—For so merciful is our God, and so well are all things ordered in the new Covenant, that none are excluded from these blessings, except such as "lightly esteem the Rock of salvation;" because they cleave to other confidences, or prefer the service of sin and Satan.

#### V. 36—52.

Not only are all the blessings of a kind Providence abused in the service of sin by ungodly men, but even the means of grace, and the doctrines of Christianity, are perverted to the basest purposes, through the pride and lusts of the human heart. "The salvation of the righteous is" therefore entirely "from the LORD;" and his special grace renders the invitations of his word effectual to their conversion. And whether nations, or churches, or individuals depart from him, their recovery must originate from the same source. But when the Lord has purposes of mercy, he frequently leaves transgressors to endure very grievous sufferings, in consequence of their crimes; and follows them with one stroke after another, each more heavy than the preceding: and at the same time he lets them feel that they can procure deliverance from no other hand than his, and that it is vain to seek it from their sins and worldly idols, for which they have forsaken him, and to which they have devoted their time and talents. Thus he seems to say to them, "See now, that I, even I, am He; and there is no god with me. I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal, neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." (*Notes*, Hos. v. 15. vi. 1—3.) Then, "coming to themselves," and dreading lest he should irrevocably swear in his wrath that they shall have their portion with his enemies, they are led to cry for mercy, and to humble themselves before him, conscious that their power is gone, their danger urgent, and their crimes inexcusable. And

the children of Israel before his death.

2 And he said, The LORD came

<sup>c</sup> Ex. xix. 18—20  
<sup>Judg. v. 4, 5</sup>  
<sup>Hab. iii. 2.</sup>

when this takes place, he will judge them as his people, "and repent concerning his servants;" he will deliver them from their enemies, and terminate their miseries; he "will rejoice over them to do them good," and all his friends and servants will rejoice, yea, the broken hearts of the penitents likewise shall be filled with joy and consolation. Thus he made the nations to rejoice with his people in the primitive times; and many of us sinners of the Gentiles share the same joy: and thus he will at length restore the Jews to their long forfeited privileges; and while he avenges them of their enemies, he will be merciful to his people and to his land.—Indeed there has been a long conflict on earth between the cause of truth and holiness, and that of error and ungodliness; but this likewise shall terminate in the final and universal triumph of true religion, and in the ruin of all its opponents; which will be the prelude to the eternal separation between the friends and enemies of God in the unseen world.—Ere long this change will take place with each of us; and we shall soon be required to "put off this our tabernacle." Happy they, who are called to meet death from being faithfully employed in the work of the Lord! and who die with the promised inheritance full in view, and with a clear assurance of eternal life.—Yet let the redeemed of the Lord walk circumspectly, lest some false step which they have taken should be remembered against them upon a death-bed, and render that closing scene less comfortable. Let us all be contented in obscurity and poverty, if allotted to us, as most favourable to godliness: let the rich and prosperous rejoice with trembling, lest they should have their portion in this world; and let them watch and pray, lest they should be lifted up to their hurt. Let us all recommend religion to our children, and to those around us, as "no vain thing," but our eternal life: and let us intreat the Lord without ceasing, that the blessings of it may be extended to the remotest nations of the earth.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIII. V. 1. To all the preceding precepts, exhortations, warnings, and prophecies, in prose and in poetry, Moses added, before his final parting, a solemn benediction. This may be considered, as the expression of his cordial good-will to the people, and his fervent prayers for them, notwithstanding the severe rebukes and awful curses which he had uttered; or rather, as a prophecy which related to the situation and circumstances of the several tribes. It exceedingly resembled the blessings, which Jacob pronounced upon his sons; and intimated that, notwithstanding the rebellions of Israel, and the foregoing alarming predictions, the Lord had blessings in reserve for them. (*Notes*, Gen. xlix. 1, 2. 28.)—It is probable, that the heads of the several tribes gathered around Moses, after he had received the summons recorded in the close of the former chapter, and just before he ascended the mount where he ended his life: and that he delivered to them, both by word of mouth, and in writing, these his last dying words. Doubtless this parting interview was very pathetick; and as the people could no longer question

d Ps. lxxviii. 7, 8.  
17. Dan. vii. 9.  
10. Acts vii. 53.  
Gal. iii. 19. 2 Thes.  
i. 7. Heb. ii. 2.  
Jude 14. Rev. v.  
11.  
• Heb. a fire of  
law. v. 22. 2 Cor.  
iii. 7. 9. Gal. iii.  
10. Heb. xii. 20.  
• vii. 7, 8. Ex. xix.  
5, 6. Ps. xlvii. 4.  
cxlviii. 19, 20.  
Jer. xxxi. 3.  
Hos. xi. 1. Mal.  
i. 2. Rom. ix. 11  
—13. Eph. ii. 4,  
5.  
f vii. 6. 1 Sam. ii.  
9. Ps. i. 5. Jer.  
xxxii. 40. John x. 23, 29. Rom. viii. 35—39. Col. iii. 3, 4. 1 Pet. i. 5.  
ii. 46. viii. 35. x. 33. Acts xxii. 3. h Prov. ii. 1. 1 Thes. i. 6. iv. 1. g Luke  
i. 17. vii. 19.

from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with <sup>4</sup>ten thousands of saints: from his right hand *went* <sup>5</sup>a fiery law for them.

3 Yea, <sup>6</sup>he loved the people: <sup>7</sup>all his saints *are* in thy hand: and <sup>8</sup>they sat down at thy feet; *every* <sup>9</sup>one shall receive of thy words.

4 <sup>1</sup>Moses commanded us a law, *even*

<sup>2</sup>the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.

5 And he was <sup>1</sup>king in <sup>2</sup>Jeshurun, when the heads of the people *and* the tribes of Israel were gathered together.

6 ¶ Let <sup>1</sup>Reuben live, and not die; and let *not* his men be few.

7 ¶ And this *is the blessing* of Judah: and he said, Hear, LORD, the voice of Judah, <sup>2</sup>and bring him unto his people: <sup>3</sup>let his hands be sufficient

k ix. 28—29. Ps.  
cxix. 72. 111.  
l Gen. xxxvi. 21.  
Ex. xviii. 19.  
Num. xvi. 15—  
15. Judg. viii.  
22, 23. ix. 2.  
xvii. 6.  
m See on xxxii. 15.  
n Gen. xlix. 3, 4.  
Num. xxxii. 31,  
32. Josh. xxiii. 1  
—9.  
o Gen. xlix. 8—12.  
Judg. i. 1, &c.  
Ps. lxxviii. 68.  
70. Mic. v. 2, 3.  
Mal. iii. 1. Heb.  
vii. 14.  
p 2 Sam. iii. 1. v.  
i. 19. 24. 1 Chr.  
xii. 22. 2 Chr.  
xvii. 12—19. Is.  
ix. 7. Rev. xix. 13—16.

his disinterested faithful affection to them, it was likely to make a deep and durable impression.—The whole transaction reminds us of the “Prophet like unto Moses,” who discoursed with his disciples the night before his crucifixion for their consolation, concluding with a most affectionate prayer for them; (John xiv—xvii;) and blessed them just when he parted from them to ascend into heaven. (Note, Luke xxiv. 50—53.)—The phrase, “the man of God,” here first used, implies a man that is wholly devoted to God; and it is generally spoken of prophets, or extraordinary teachers of his truth. (Marg. Ref. b.)

V. 2. The benedictions pronounced on this occasion, were introduced with a brief retrospect on former mercies; the language of which is very poetical: and it likewise refers to scenes, which would be much better conceived by the Israelites than they can be by us. When JEHOVAH came down, to manifest his glory, and promulgate his law, from mount Sinai, either the splendour of his majesty illuminated the distant mountains of Seir and Paran; or his approach was preceded by some glorious appearances from those mountains, as the rising sun is ushered in by the light of the dawning day; or, as some think, the words relate to the continued and glorious presence of God with Israel, while they were in the desert, near to those mountains. (Notes, Ps. lxxviii. 7, 8. Hab. iii. 3—5.)—At mount Sinai, however, he was attended by “ten thousands of saints,” or *holy ones*, or *holy angels*: who ministered to him in that grand display of his divine majesty. (Notes, Ex. xix. 16—20. Ps. lxxviii. 17. Gal. iii. 19—22. Heb. ii. 1—4. Jude 14—16.) Thence he gave the law, not only speaking it with a loud voice from the midst of the fire, but writing it upon tables of stone, which he delivered to Israel as a sacred deposit; and he enforced obedience to it with his whole power and authority; for it “went from his right hand for them.” It is called a *fiery law*, not only as delivered from the midst of fire, but because of the *fiery indignation* to which all transgressors are doomed, except as they find mercy through the gospel. Its sanctifying effects also, when written in the hearts of believers by the finger of the Spirit, where, as fire, it consumes the lusts, purifies the affections, and assimilates the soul to its own holy nature, many perhaps be intimated.

V. 3. Even the promulgation of this fiery law was the effect of the Lord’s special love to Israel; and in connexion with the gospel, as delivered to them under the legal ceremonies, (the shadows of good things to come,) it was the grand means of rendering them holy, and consequently safe and happy. (Notes, Ex. xx. 1. John i. 17.)—

As externally a holy people, they were taken under his immediate protection, while they “sat at his feet” and received his instructions; even as all his true saints are “kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.” (Marg. Ref.—Note, 1 Pet. i. 3—5.)

V. 4, 5. The law was given from God, and by Moses; who was also the mediator of that covenant, by which the congregation of Jacob’s posterity was incorporated, and which secured to them their temporal inheritance, while they retained their national fidelity. Yet the law itself, as comprising the whole revelation made to them, was their most valuable inheritance; as it shewed them the way of peace and life eternal, and ensured these blessings to all who truly attended to it.—In giving the law, Moses acted as a prophet: but he was also in reality “a king;” for he possessed all the authority, and performed all the functions of a king; though he neither took upon him the name or the state of royalty, nor received any tribute from Israel; and though he joined with him the heads of the people, and of the tribes, both as his council, and as subordinate magistrates. (Note, xviii. 15—19.)—Some suppose, that JEHOVAH himself is here meant; and doubtless he was King over Israel in all ages, and in an especial manner, whoever were his deputies: for in this sense, the judges were kings, as really as David and Solomon, though not so called.

V. 6. The order in which the tribes are here blessed, is different from all those elsewhere observed.—Reuben the first-born, though degraded by Jacob, and superseded by Judah as to the precedency in the encampments, is here first mentioned. (Note, Gen. xlix. 3, 4.) Notwithstanding these disgraces, and the rebellion in the wilderness, under Dathan, Abiram, and On, in which many of this tribe perished, Moses predicted, that it should not be destroyed, but should be multiplied to a great number; by which he also expressed his cordial good-will to them, notwithstanding their personal misconduct towards him.—As the Reubenites, having received their inheritance east of Jordan, were preparing to pass over Jordan, and fight for their brethren, we may also suppose, that some reference is had to this circumstance, and that the blessing implies a prayer for their protection.—The Septuagint join Simeon with Reuben in this benediction: but it is probable, that they did so merely because Simeon is not mentioned in the chapter. (Note, 8.)

V. 7. (Note, Gen. xlix. 8—12.) Judah was the governing and conquering tribe; and Moses prayed, that he might be protected and rendered victorious, when he went

q 2 Sam. vii. 9—11, 12. Ps. ii. xx. 2 xxi. 1. 8. cx. 1. 2. Luke xix. 27. 1 Cor. xv. 25. Rev. xx. 10—15. Ex. xxviii. 30. 36. Lev. viii. 8. Num. xxvii. 21. 1 Sam. xxviii. 6. Ezra ii. 68. Neh. vii. 65.

for him; <sup>a</sup>and be thou an help to him from his enemies.

8 ¶ And of Levi he said, 'Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be <sup>a</sup>with thy holy one, whom thou didst <sup>a</sup>prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribah;

9 Who <sup>a</sup>said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children: for they

Lev. xxi. 7. Num. xvi. 5. 2 Chr. xxiii. 6. Ezra viii. 28. Ps. xvi. 10. cvi. 16. Heb. vii. 26. Rev. iii. 7. viii. 2. 3. 16. Ex. xvii. 7. Num. x. 13. Ps. lxxxi. 7.

u Ex. xxxii. 26—29. Lev. x. 6. xxi. 11. Mal. ii. 6. Matt. x. 37. xii. 43. xxii. 16. Luke xiv. 26. 2 Cor. v. 16. Gal. i. 10. 1 Thes. ii. 4 1 Tim. v. 21.

forth to battle, and be brought back triumphant to his people; and that the tribe might have sufficient forces from among themselves, and from the other tribes; and especially the help of the LORD of Hosts himself. This was evidently a prophecy, which was fulfilled to Judah till the days of Christ, and in him shall be accomplished to the end.—Some commentators interpret the clause, "bring him to his people," as predicting the coming of the Messiah. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8. (*Note, Gen. xlix. 5—7.*)—Levi and Simeon had been left under a severe rebuke by Jacob: and the tribe of Simeon had in no wise distinguished itself; on the contrary, it had been notoriously guilty in the transgression of Baal-peor, and was greatly reduced in the wilderness. (*Notes, Num. xxv. 6—8. xxvi. 14.*) A portion therefore was assigned it within the lot of Judah, with which it was in great measure incorporated: and perhaps for that reason, it was not separately mentioned in this prophecy. (*Note, Josh. xix. 1—9.*)—But the curse of Levi had been turned into a blessing, on account of the transactions here referred to. Levi was the dying prophet's own tribe; but he only mentioned it, as the tribe which the Lord had chosen for himself: and, as the welfare of Israel was so immediately connected with the Levitical priesthood, he expatiated the more in his benediction and prophecy concerning it. The Urim and Thummim, or illuminations and perfections, (*Note, Ex. xxviii. 30.*) by which the high priest enquired of the Lord, formed one distinguishing token of his favour to this tribe: and Moses prophetically prayed for the continuance of these to the succeeding high priests, during many generations; which implied also the continuance of all needful gifts and graces to every order of that tribe, that they might fill up their several places, to the glory of God, and the maintenance of true religion in Israel.—It is however confessed by the Jews, that the "Urim and Thummim" were lost in the Babylonish captivity, and that nothing was substituted in their room: but in our "Holy One," our great High Priest, whom Aaron and his sons feebly shadowed forth, the things signified remain, and from him are communicated to all his true ministers and people, according to their measure. (*Notes, Eph. iv. 7—13.*)—There were two Meribahs, one of which is also called Massah, where probably Aaron and the Levites remarkably distinguished themselves, in opposing the murmurs of the people. (*Marg. Ref. t.*) At the other Meribah Aaron was found faulty: (*Note, Num. xx. 10—13.*) yet there is a tradition, that the tribe of Levi approved them-

have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant.

10 <sup>a</sup>They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law; <sup>a</sup>they shall put incense <sup>a</sup>before thee, and <sup>a</sup>whole burnt-sacrifice upon thine altar.

11 Bless, LORD, <sup>a</sup>his substance, and <sup>a</sup>accept the work of his hands: <sup>a</sup>smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again.

ix. 12, 13. Ps. li. 19. Ez. xliii. 27. y xviii. 1—5. Num. xviii. 8—20. xxxv. 2—8. z 2 Sam. xxiv. 23. Ps. xx. 8. Ez. xx. 40, 41. xliii. 27. Mal. i. 8—10. a Is. xxix. 21. Jer. xv. 10. Am. v. 10. Matt. x. 14, 15. Luke x. 10—12. 16. 1 Thes. iv. 8.

Or, Let them teach. xvii. 9—11. xxiv. 8. Lev. x. 11. 2 Chr. xvii. 8—10. xxx. 22. Neh. viii. 1—9. 13—15. 8. Ez. xlv. 23, 24. Hos. iv. 6. Mal. i. 6—8. Matt. xxiii. 2. 3. John xxi. 18, 19.

† Or, let them post. Ex. xxx. 7, 8. Num. xvi. 40. 46. 1 Sam. ii. 28. 2 Chr. xxvi. 18. Luke i. 9, 10. Heb. vii. 25. ix. 24. Rev. viii. 3—5.

‡ Heb. at thy nose. Ex. i. 9. 13. 17. 2 Chr. xxv. 2—8. a Is. xxix. 21. Jer. xv. 10. Am. v. 10. Matt. x. 14, 15. Luke x. 10—12. 16. 1 Thes. iv. 8.

selves faithful. The prophet, however, in this passage, seems to have referred to some remarkable instances not elsewhere recorded, in which the Levites were tried, and honourably distinguished themselves in the cause of God.

V. 9. In the provocation of the golden calf, the Levites, at God's command, inflicted punishment on the ringleaders, without respect to rank or relation, and in a very zealous and impartial manner. (*Note, Ex. xxxii. 27—29.*) Perhaps some of their own tribe and near relations were deeply involved in that guilt, whom they no more spared than other criminals: and though men might censure this severity, yet God highly approved of it, and honoured those who so honoured him. (*Notes, Num. xxv. 6—13. Luke xiv. 25—27. 2 Cor. v. 16.*)

V. 10. Besides offering sacrifices, officiating at the sanctuary, and acting as magistrates, the priests and Levites were the authorized public teachers, through the cities and villages in the several tribes of Israel. Too many of them however, in after ages, were more attentive to their perquisites than to their duty; (as it is generally the case in similar collective bodies;) and the ignorance and wickedness of the people were frequently chargeable upon their negligence and scandalous lives; so that the prophets were extraordinary messengers sent from God, especially to reprove the priests and Levites, and stir them up to their duty.—Some learned men indeed think, that the prophets were the only teachers of Israel; and that publicly instructing the people was no regular part of the office assigned to the priests or Levites, except as some of them acted as magistrates. But the preceding statement accords far better with the language of Scripture, here and elsewhere. (*Marg. reading and Marg. Ref. on it.—Note, 2 Chr. xvii. 7—9. xxx. 21, 22. Ezra vii. 6—10. Neh. viii. 5—7. Mal. ii. 4—9.*)

V. 11. The Levites had no landed inheritance, but were maintained out of the portion which God had reserved for himself; by which their interests were connected with the support of his worship. On this provision Moses predicted a special blessing from God. Some indeed interpret this clause, of their abilities for their sacred ministry, that the Lord would both enable them for their work, and prosper them in it.—The faithful discharge of their office might give offence, and so raise up enemies against them; while avarice would prompt numbers to defraud them, or even to seek the abolition of the whole order, as useless, that they might seize upon the revenues: but vengeance was prophetically denounced against all who should hate them,

<sup>b</sup> See on 27—29. 12 ¶ And of Benjamin he said, <sup>b</sup> The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by him; and the LORD shall <sup>c</sup> cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders.

<sup>c</sup> 1's. xci. 4. Is. li. 16. Matt. xxiii. 37. 13 ¶ And of <sup>d</sup> Joseph he said, Blessed of the LORD be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for <sup>e</sup> the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath,

14 And for <sup>f</sup> the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things <sup>g</sup> put forth by the moon,

15 And <sup>h</sup> for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills,

16 And for the precious things of <sup>i</sup> the earth and fulness thereof; and for <sup>j</sup> the good-will of him that dwelt in

the bush; let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, <sup>k</sup> and upon the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren.

17 His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and <sup>l</sup> his horns are like the horns of <sup>m</sup> unicorns; with them <sup>n</sup> he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth; and they are <sup>o</sup> the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh.

18 ¶ And of Zebulun he said, <sup>p</sup> Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out; and Issachar, in thy tents.

19 They shall <sup>q</sup> call the people unto the mountain; there <sup>r</sup> they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall <sup>s</sup> suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand.

or rise up against them, on any account whatever; as enemies to God and religion, and even to the true interests of the nation. (Note, Mal. iii. 7—12.)

V. 12. (Note, Gen. xlix. 27.) The tribe of Benjamin had their inheritance adjoining to mount Zion: and part of Jerusalem, and as some suppose, the temple itself, was situated within it. This was a distinguishing token of the Lord's love to them: the sanctuary was their security, while they adhered to it; for they were covered by the protection of the Lord continually, and had his power engaged in their behalf.—This tribe adhered to the family of David and the worship of God, when the ten tribes revolted and apostatized; and thus it became inseparably united and incorporated with that of Judah; and was preserved in consequence, when the ten tribes were scattered among the nations. (Marg. Ref. b.)

V. 13—16. It is here predicted, that the inheritance of the tribes descended from Joseph, should, through the blessing of God, be peculiarly fertile. By the seasonable rains and refreshing dews,—those *precious things* which come down from above and make the earth fruitful,—and by the springs which issue from beneath, and the benign influences of the sun, all kinds of valuable productions, peculiar to each revolving moon in succession, would be abundantly afforded. The mountains and hills of Joseph would grow vines, and olives, and timber-trees; and from beneath would be dug metals and minerals, and stone for building. In short their land should abound with every precious production, that the earth and its fulness can afford; all which, with a variety of spiritual privileges, would descend upon these tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, from the good-will and peculiar kindness of JEHOVAH.—The first appearance of the LORD in the burning bush, seems to have been recollected with grateful pleasure by the dying prophet; and he characterized Him, who would thus bless the sons of Joseph, from this circumstance, that he descended, as “the God of Abraham” and of his seed,

to dwell in a mean bush; and had now taken up his more abiding residence in the midst of Israel, who was equally unworthy of such an honour; but would in like manner be preserved by his gracious presence. (Notes, Ex. iii. 2—6.)—Joseph had been especially beloved by Jacob; he was renowned for piety, wisdom, and usefulness; his memory was dear to Israel and to Moses. On these accounts Moses enlarged in blessing his posterity, which evidently refers to the prophetic blessing Jacob had pronounced on him, under the same title of “him that was separated from his brethren.” (Note, Gen. xlix. 22—26.)

V. 17. Joseph, as if he had been the first-born, had the birth-right and the double portion, instead of Reuben; and Joshua, under whom Canaan was conquered, was of the tribe of Ephraim. Many proofs were given by these tribes of their courage, and they were signalized with much success, being powerful among their brethren and victorious over their enemies. This is figuratively noted by Joseph's being as “the firstling of his bullock, and his horns being as the horns of unicorns, with which he should push the people together to the ends of the earth,” or to the extremities of the land. The descendants of Joseph were also remarkable for their numbers; but in both respects Ephraim exceeded Manasseh, as Jacob had foretold, and Moses here attested; though Ephraim was much decreased in the wilderness, and was then less numerous than Manasseh. (Marg. Ref. on Num. xxi. 34. 37.—Notes, Gen. xlviii. 15—22.)

V. 18, 19. Zebulun and Issachar, sons of Leah, were united in this blessing, and their inheritances in Canaan, as appointed by lot, lay together. (Notes, Josh. xix. 10—23.) It was predicted that Zebulun would prosper, and consequently “rejoice in his going out:” that is, say some, as a merchant; “for he was a haven of ships.” (Notes, Gen. xlix. 13—15.) Thus “he sucked the abundance of the seas and of the treasures hid in the sand:” that is, he reaped, as it were, the harvest of the sea, or

20 ¶ And of Gad he said, 'Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad: 'he dwelleth as a lion, and 'teareth the arm with the crown of the head.

21 And he provided 'the first part for himself, because there, in 'a portion of the law-giver, was he 'seated; and 'he came with the heads of the people, he executed the justice of the LORD, and his judgments with Israel.

22 ¶ And of Dan he said, 'Dan is a lion's whelp; he shall leap from Bashan.

23 ¶ And of Naphtali he said, 'O

Naphtali, satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the LORD; 'possess thou the west and the south.

24 ¶ And of Asher he said, Let Asher be blessed with children; 'let him be acceptable to his brethren, and 'let him dip his foot in oil.

25 'Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; 'and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.

26 ¶ There is 'none like unto the God of 'Jeshurun, who 'rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.

Is. xix. 1. Ps. cxviii. 10.

worked its mines. In this case, we may understand his "calling the people to the mountain," of the endeavours which those of this tribe would use, in bringing the strangers, with whom they traded, acquainted with true religion.—But, as the Zebulunites were situated, at a distance from the Mediterranean sea, and upon the sea of Tiberias; perhaps *their fishery* was intended, and not their *foreign trade*: and in this way, the sea yields a revenue more valuable than the productions of mines of gold, and almost equal to the harvest of the plain.—Of Issachar it is foretold, that he should prosper, and "rejoice in his tents," as a shepherd tending his flock. And both Zebulun and Issachar would be zealous for the ordinances of God, and in "offering the sacrifices of righteousness" out of their just gains; and would use their influence in persuading others to accompany them to the mountain at Jerusalem, on which Moses foresaw that the temple would be built, but which lay very distant from the lot of these tribes, which was in Galilee.

V. 20, 21. (Note, Gen. xlix. 19.) The increase of Gad is here predicted, as the immediate work of the Lord, and to be acknowledged with adoring gratitude. When this tribe, in conjunction with Reuben, obtained his petition for a possession east of Jordan, of the first-fruits of Israel's conquests, "he provided the first part for himself, and was "seated in a portion of the law-giver;" that is, in the portion which Moses the law-giver had allotted him: (Notes, Num. xxxii. 29—41:) for most of the tribes had their inheritance assigned them by Joshua and Eleazar: in this he dwelt as a lion; and when any of the surrounding nations attacked him, he not only tare *their arm*, enfeebling their power, but *their head* too in bringing them under subjection. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1 Chr. v. 18—22. xii. 15.)—After the Gadites were established in their own settlements, they, and the tribe of Reuben and the half tribe of Manasseh, marched boldly across Jordan along with the rest of Israel, to assist in executing the righteous judgments of God on the Canaanites. (Notes, Josh. i. 12—15. xxii. 1—4.)

V. 22. (Note, Gen. xlix. 16, 17.) Jacob had compared Dan to a serpent, but Moses likened him to a young lion, when leaping from Bashan he irresistibly seized his prey. In Samson, who was of this tribe, both these emblems were realized: and when the Danites suddenly seized the

country at the northern extremity of Canaan, they were like the young lion leaping on the defenceless cattle. (Judg. xv. xvi. xviii.)

V. 23. (Note, Gen. xlix. 21.) Great peace and prosperity, from the special favour of the Lord, were predicted to Naphtali: and it is a tradition of the Jewish writers, that though the lot of this tribe lay in the northern part of the land, yet it was so remarkably fruitful, that they generally brought the first-fruits before the other tribes.—The lot of Naphtali lay to the south of that country on which Dan seized; and near to the sea of Tiberias: ("possess "thou the sea and the south:" Heb.) for the situation of this tribe in relation to the Danites seems intended.

V. 24, 25. (Note, Gen. xlix. 20.) Asher signifies *blessed*: and to this tribe Moses predicted a numerous increase, with much love and friendship from their brethren; and likewise most excellent olive-oil in vast abundance.—Some suppose that the promise, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass," referred to the productive mines of iron and brass, which abounded in Asher's lot, and were thus continually under his feet: but it has long been interpreted as a proverbial expression; which indeed is the most natural and obvious meaning of the words. If a man were about to travel in rough roads, or to climb craggy precipices, or to be stationed upon a slippery eminence, it would be useful for him to have plates or spikes of iron or brass fixed to his shoes: and, in like manner, the Lord would prepare Asher for every difficulty which he would have to encounter. According to this interpretation, the words, "And as thy "days, thy strength," are explanatory of the preceding clause, and signify, that as the day of trial required, strength should be communicated; or, as some expound the passage, 'As thy wants, so shall be thy sufficiency.' (Note, Eph. vi. 14—17.)

V. 26. Moses added to this prophetic blessing on each tribe in particular, a declaration of the glory of God and the happiness of Israel in general, and these were his last words which are recorded.—The "God of Jeshurun" (Note, xxxii. 15.) "rides upon the heavens;" that is, he comes in glorious majesty, and with irresistible force, to defend his people, and destroy their enemies; and in so doing displays all his excellencies, his wisdom, justice, truth, and love, in the most conspicuous manner. (Notes, Ps. civ. 3. Is. xix. 1.)

<sup>a</sup> 1 Sam. xv. 29  
Is. x. 2 cii. 24.  
Is. x. 6. viii. 15  
Jer. x. 10 Mic.  
v. 2. 1 Tim. i.  
17 Heb. ix. 14.  
<sup>1</sup> Ps. xviii. 2.  
xxvii. 5. xxxvi.  
7. xlv. 1. 7. 11.  
xlviii. 3. xci. 1.  
2 9. 15. Prov.  
xviii. 10. Is.  
xxxii. 2 Luke  
xiii. 34. Phil. iii.  
9.  
<sup>m</sup> Gen. xlix. 24.  
Prov. x. 25.  
Cant. ii. 6. Is. xxvi. 4. 1 Pet. i. 5. Jude 24  
Rom. viii. 2. xvi. 20. Rev. xx. 2, 3, 10. o Ex. xxxiii. 16. Num. xxiii. 9. Jer.  
xxiii. 6. xxxiii. 16. Ez. xxxiv. 25. Rev. xxi. 27. xxii. 14, 15. p viii. 7, 8 Ps.  
lxviii. 26 Prov. v. 15—18. Is. xlvi. 1.

27 The <sup>k</sup> eternal God is <sup>thy</sup> <sup>1</sup> Refuge,  
and <sup>m</sup> underneath are the everlasting  
arms: and he shall <sup>a</sup> thrust out the  
enemy from before thee, and shall say,  
Destroy them.

28 <sup>o</sup> Israel then shall dwell in safety  
alone: <sup>1</sup> the fountain of Jacob shall  
be upon a land of corn and wine;

also <sup>q</sup> his heaven shall drop down  
dew.

29 <sup>r</sup> Happy art thou, O Israel: who  
is like unto thee, O people, <sup>s</sup> saved by  
the LORD, <sup>t</sup> the Shield of thy help, and  
who is <sup>u</sup> the Sword of thy excellency!  
and thine enemies shall be <sup>v</sup> found liars  
unto thee, and <sup>w</sup> thou shalt tread upon  
their high places.

16. xix. 21. \* Or, subdued. Ps. xviii. 44. lxxvi. 3. lxxxii. 15. Margins. x xxxii.  
43. Josh. x. 24, 25. Hab. iii. 19.

See on 15.—xi.  
11. xxxii. 2  
Gen. xxvii. 28.  
r iv. 7, 8. Num.  
xxiii. 20—24.  
xxv. 5. 2 Sam.  
vii. 23. Ps. xxxiii.  
12. cxliv. 15.  
cxv. 8.  
Is. xii. 2. xlv. 17.  
1 Tim. iv. 10.  
t Gen. xv. 1. Ps.  
lxxxiv. 11. cxv  
9—11.  
u Judg. vii. 20. Ps.  
vii. 12. xlv. 3. Is.  
xxv. 1. xxxiv.  
5, 6. Jer. xii. 12  
xlvii. 6. Rev. i.  
x xxxii.

V. 27, 28. The eternity, immutability, and almighty power of God, form the secure Refuge and the firm support of his people in all dangers, pressures, and difficulties: for his arms of everlasting and unfailing power are put under them to sustain them. (Note, xxxii. 4.) The word rendered "Refuge," literally signifies *Dwelling-place*, for God is their Home, Rest, and Felicity. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ps. xc. 1, 2. John vi. 52—58.) This would secure to Israel the conquest of Canaan, and enable them to execute the divine command in the destruction of its inhabitants: and it would likewise ensure their peaceable and prosperous possession, so long as they were obedient, and did not forfeit their national covenant.—Alone: (28) Note, Num. xxiii. 9.

V. 29. Israel, being thus saved by the Lord, and rendered victorious by his power, as their Shield and Sword, would become terrible to their enemies; who would be constrained to dissemble their enmity, and yield a feigned or reluctant submission, as the Gibeonites did to Joshua. Thus Israel would be a most happy nation, and have most extraordinary privileges.—But the true "Israel of God" possess all these blessings in the noblest sense, and have them secured to them by still more precious promises, and an incomparably better covenant. (Notes, Ps. lxxxiv. 11, 12. Rom. viii. 28—39. Heb. xi. 13—16.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—7.

The faithful servants of God dare not flatter men in their sins, or shun to declare his whole counsel as far as they are able, even when that renders it necessary to denounce the most tremendous curses against all impenitent sinners: but at the same time, their hearts are full of the most compassionate and tender love; and could those whom their faithfulness exasperates, witness their affectionate desires and fervent prayers in secret for them, it must in some degree abate their resentment. (Note, Jer. xiii. 15—17.) Nay, even the awful warnings, which are most convincing and alarming to the conscience, spring from tender concern for the eternal welfare of sinners; and they who are hated for giving them, commonly live and die praying earnestly, that all the blessings of the new covenant may be communicated to their enraged persecutors. (Acts vii. 51—60.)—Though the divine law is "holy, just, and good;" yet when fully explained and enforced, and when applied by the Holy Spirit, it is still "a fiery law;" and sometimes occasions terrors, as great, and at least as well-grounded, as those which appalled Israel, when they heard it from the midst of the fire upon mount Sinai. (Note, Heb. xii. 18—21.) How intolerable then is the

thought of being compelled to meet the Judge, at the consummation of all things, to receive the eternal sentence according to it!—Yet this "fiery law" is most useful to shew us our need of a Saviour, and the nature, glory, and preciousness of his salvation: and when delivered to us by Jesus Christ, and written in our hearts by his Spirit, it peculiarly evidences the Lord's love to us, and directs us how to express our love to him. They, who have thus received the law from the hands of the Saviour, are "his saints," who, "being justified by faith, have "peace with God through him;" and, secure under his protection, they sit down at his feet daily to derive further instruction from his words, acknowledging him as their King, and yielding him prompt and willing obedience.—The blessings with which the Lord blesses this "church "of the first-born," are suited to each person's case, and are sufficient for them in every situation: and whilst every one properly fills his appointed place, all become blessings to others and receive benefit from them; whether appointed to the magistracy or ministry, or in a more private situation; and whether entrusted with wealth, or called upon to labour for bread, or even when, incapable of labour, to subsist upon charity.

##### V. 8—17.

They, who are employed in the sacred ministry, should be tried persons, approved of God, possessed of enlightened understandings, sound judgments, and upright hearts; that, being filled with zeal for the glory of God, and love to souls, they may not respect the persons of men, nor fear their frowns. They should be entirely superior to the allurements of covetousness and ambition, and even to an undue bias of natural affection; not desiring the advancement or affluence of their brethren or children. For their most important employment consists in teaching men the truths, precepts, and ordinances of God, with all faithfulness and diligence, that they may observe his word and keep his covenant. They should therefore give themselves wholly to the study of the Scriptures; and pour out their fervent prayers to the Lord to increase their ability, and to prosper the work of their hands; and leave it to him to provide for them and for their families after them, as well as to defend them and plead their cause, against all who rise up against them. It is also the duty of all to pray for the ministers of the Lord; that he would both give his abundant blessing on those who are faithful and able, and communicate wisdom and grace to all who bear the sacred office, that they may be rendered blessings to the people; and also perpetuate a succession of such ministers to future generations, and send forth skilful, faithful, and success-

## CHAP. XXXIV.

Moses ascends mount Nebo, and views the promised land, 1—4. His death, burial, and age, and Israel's mourning for him, 5—8. Joshua succeeds him, 9. No prophet arose like to him, 10—12.

a See on xxxiii. 43.  
Num. xxvii. 12.  
xxxiii. 47.  
• Or, the hill. See  
on Num. xxi.  
20. Marg.  
b 4. iii. 27. Num.  
xxxii. 33—40.  
Ez. xl. 2. Rev.  
xxi. 10.  
c Gen. xiv. 14.  
Josh. xix. 47.  
Judg. xviii. 29.

AND Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto <sup>a</sup>the mountain of Nebo, to the top of <sup>a</sup>Pisgah, that is over against Jericho: and the LORD <sup>b</sup>shewed him all the land of Gilead <sup>c</sup>unto Dan, 2 And all Naphtali, and the land of

Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, <sup>d</sup>unto the utmost sea, 3 And the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, <sup>e</sup>the city of palm-trees, unto <sup>f</sup>Zoar.

4 And the LORD said unto him, <sup>g</sup>"This is the land which I swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: <sup>h</sup>I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.

d xl. 24. Ez. xxi. 31. Num. xxxiv. 6. Josh. xv. 12.  
e Judg. i. 16. iii. 13. 2 Chr. xxviii. 15.  
f Gen. xiv. 2. 8. xix. 22. Num. xxxiv. 3.  
g Gen. xii. 7. xiii. 16. xv. 18—21. xxi. 3. xxviii. 13. Ps. cv. 3—11.  
h iii. 27. xxxiii. 52. Num. xx. 12. John i. 17.

ful labourers into every part of the earth.—To be situated near the lively ordinances, is a precious gift from the Lord to his beloved; and they, who value and improve this privilege, will find their situation so secure and comfortable, that they will not be induced to change it for any temporal convenience, emolument, or indulgence.—We should thankfully receive, from the blessing of the Lord, those valuable productions, which the fruitful earth yields through the successive seasons of the year, by the genial influences of the heavens above. But those good gifts which come down from "the Father of lights," through the "rising of the Sun of righteousness," and the pouring out of his Spirit, are infinitely more precious: and these belong to all who are separated from others by faith and holiness. For he, who once deigned to dwell in the bush, still dwells in all his people, to sanctify and preserve them: and thus "the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance."

## V. 18—29.

Happy are they, who through the blessing of God on any honest occupation, are enabled to maintain their families, and have a heart to consecrate their gain unto the Lord; who shrink not from labour, and freely incur expense, in offering "spiritual sacrifices of righteousness, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ;" and who zealously improve every opportunity and advantage, to bring others to join with them in so reasonable a service. Having chosen and secured, through the grace of God, "the first part for themselves," even "that good part which shall never be taken from them," (Note, Luke x. 38—41,) what can they do so becoming and profitable, as to assist their neighbours in seeking the same inheritance?—But in thus decidedly joining with the Lord against his enemies, they must expect opposition, and they will need to unite the boldness of the lion, the wisdom of the serpent, and the harmlessness of the dove, in their character and conduct. Being "satisfied, however, with the favour of the Lord, and filled with his blessing," and "being acceptable to their brethren," and useful to their fellow-sinners, they may well bear this trial. For all difficulties are rendered advantageous to true believers: and if their way be rough, their "feet shall be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," and their strength in every case proportioned to the emergency. (Note, 2 Cor. xii. 7—10.)—No words can express the glorious excellences of "the God of Jeshurun," or the privileges and felicity of his believing people. The righteousness in which they are justified is everlasting, and their salvation is secure. Bring

one with Christ by his life-giving Spirit, they are already "saved in the LORD;" "the eternal God is their" present "Refuge;" his everlasting arms form their unailing support; all his perfections are engaged in their behalf; he will hasten to their assistance with invincible force whenever their enemies assault them; and silence all the accusations of their malicious slanderers: (Note, Is. liv. 15—17:) he will guard their peace and character, as well as the life of their souls; he "will choose their inheritance" for them, and put them in possession of it; and there shall they dwell alone (28), when their "inward foes shall all be slain," and the devil and his angels driven away into everlasting punishment. There shall they be filled with the love of their God and Saviour, and be perfected in love to him and to each other, and all their employment shall be praise and grateful adoration. There will the felicity of every happy inhabitant reciprocally enhance that of all the rest; nor shall any emulation remain, but which shall most love and glorify the supreme Object of their united affections and adoration, and the Source of all their joys.—God help us to seek, and set our affections on, those things which are above, and to detach our souls from earthly, polluting, perishing objects; that we may not have our lot in the regions of darkness and despair, but with "the Israel of God" in the realms of love and bliss ineffable.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIV. V. 1—4. The last chapter closed the words and writings of Moses, and this chapter must have been added by another hand: but it is uncertain whether by Joshua, or by Samuel, or by some other prophet. Some indeed maintain, that Moses himself wrote it, by the Spirit of prophecy. This however is not at all probable: but, by whomsoever it was written, the information must have been originally communicated by immediate revelation. Perhaps the three last verses were added as late as the days of Ezra: but all the subsequent books of Scripture assume as undoubted facts the things recorded in it.—Moses appeared reluctant to leave his work; but, that being finished, he manifested no unwillingness to die. He now acquiesced in the will of God who refused him an entrance into Canaan: (Note, iii. 23—28:) he was animated with the immediate prospect of glory, which loosened all earthly attachments, and supplied him with strength and spirits to ascend the mountain, where he was to put off the tabernacle of his body; and it seems probable, that he went alone, and died without a witness, or a companion to close his eyes.—Abarim is supposed to be a ridge of

1 Josh. i. 1. Mal.  
iv. 4. John viii.  
35. 36. 2 Tim.  
ii. 24. Heb. iii.  
3—6 2 Pet. i. 1.  
Rev. xv. 3.  
k xxxi. 14. xxxii.  
50. Josh. i. 1, 2.  
1 Jude 9

5 <sup>1</sup>So Moses, the servant of the LORD, <sup>k</sup>died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD.

6 And he buried him in a valley, in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.

7 And Moses <sup>was</sup> <sup>m</sup>an hundred and twenty years old when he died: <sup>n</sup>his eye was not dim, nor his <sup>\*</sup>natural force abated.

8 And the children of Israel <sup>\*</sup>wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.

9 ¶ And Joshua the son of Nun was

<sup>p</sup>full of the Spirit of wisdom; for <sup>p</sup>Moses had laid his hands upon him: and <sup>r</sup>the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses.

10 ¶ And there <sup>\*</sup>arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom <sup>\*</sup>the LORD knew face to face;

11 In all <sup>u</sup>the signs and the wonders, which the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, to Pharaoh, and to all his servants, and to all his land;

12 And in all that mighty hand, and in all the great terror, which Moses shewed in the sight of all Israel.

Ex. xxxi. 3  
Num. xl. 17.  
1 Kings iv. 9  
12. 2 Kings ii.  
9. 15. Is. xi. 2.  
Dan. vi. 3. John  
iii. 34. Col. ii. 3.  
q Num. xxvii. 18  
—23. Acts vi. 6.  
viii. 17—19  
1 Tim. iv. 14. v.  
22.  
r Josh. i. 16—18.  
xviii. 15—18.  
Acts iii. 22, 23.  
vii. 37.  
t v. 4. 5. Ex.  
xxxiii. 11. Num.  
xii. 6—8.  
u iv. 34. vii. 19  
Ps. lxxviii. 43—  
53. cv. 26—38.

m xxxi. 2. Acts  
vii. 23, 30, 36.  
n Gen. xxvii. 1.  
xlviii. 10. Josh.  
xiv. 10, 11.  
• Heb. *moisture*  
*fied.*

o Gen. 1. 3. 10.  
Num. xx. 29.  
1 Sam. xxv. 1.  
Is. lviii. 1. Acts  
viii. 2.

mountains, *Nebo* the highest mountain in that ridge, and *Pisgah* the summit of that mountain.—The vision of Moses was miraculously assisted, in taking a distinct and deliberate survey of the promised land, as it was afterwards divided among the tribes of Israel. (*Marg. Ref.*) This would gratify his endeared affection for the people: and it was also a type of those prospects of the heavenly rest, which reconcile the believer to dissolution.

V. 5. “Moses, the servant of the LORD,” was obedient unto death, and as willingly obeyed this as he had any foregoing command, though it seemed much harder.—In this he resembled Jesus Christ: but Moses died in honour, in peace, and in the most easy manner; our Saviour expired on the ignominious and torturing cross!

V. 6. The bones of Joseph were carried into Canaan to be interred: but the LORD himself, (the immediate antecedent to the pronoun *he*,) buried the body of Moses, and so concealed it, that when this account was written no man knew of his sepulchre; and we have reason to conclude it was never afterwards found. The ministration of angels was probably employed, but no human assistance; and we may be sure nothing was placed that could lead to a discovery. (*Note, Jude 9, 10.*) No doubt this precaution was used to prevent superstition and idolatry; as many ages afterwards the Israelites burnt incense to the brazen serpent which Moses made. (*Note, 2 Kings xviii. 4.*) But not being allowed to venerate the relics of their law-giver, they seem never to have been guilty of that species of superstition, which has so long disgraced the Christian church.—When Moses died, the LORD buried him; but when Christ died, he was raised from the dead: for the Mosaic dispensation was superseded by the Christian, but Christianity shall endure to the end of time.—Nothing can be conceived more directly opposite to Scripture, than the tradition, sanctioned by several ancient Christian writers, and apparently favoured by some moderns, that Moses did not die, but went to heaven alive, as Enoch and Elijah did. We should be very careful not to give any countenance to this method of opposing tradition, or vain reasonings, to the divine testimony; for it opens the door to every kind of scepticism.

V. 7. The life of Moses was remarkably divided into three periods, each consisting of forty years: during the

first he sustained the rank of a courtier; during the second he was a shepherd in the wilderness; and during the third, he filled the important station of a law-giver and “king” in Jeshurun.” (*Ex. vii. 7. Num. xxxiii. 39. Acts vii. 23. 30.*)—Though he lived so much longer than the most of his contemporaries, (*Ps. xc. 10.*) he had experienced no failure in his faculties, but died, not by the course of nature, but according to the will of God, when his work was finished. Thus also Christ died in the vigour of life.—Some suppose that the shining of Moses’s face continued to his death.

V. 8. The Israelites not only paid Moses the customary honour at his death, but seem to have been deeply sensible of their loss. And perhaps even those who formerly were refractory and rebellious, when he had opposed their sins, at this time sincerely lamented the loss of so faithful a friend.

V. 9. *Notes, Num. xxvii. 18—21. Josh. i. 1—9.*

V. 10—12. Whether Joshua, or Samuel, or some later writer, inserted these words, they contain an acknowledgment, that the promise made to Moses had not at that time been accomplished. (*Note, xviii. 15—19.*) No prophet had arisen in all respects qualified and honoured of God as Moses had been, nor did any one arise until the coming of Christ: but he exceeded Moses as the Son does the servant; (*Note, Heb. iii. 1—6;*) and not only was known of the Father face to face, but came forth from the bosom of the Father, to reveal him, and his truth and salvation, to sinful men. Several even of the Jewish writers are sensible that this passage refers to the Messiah; for one of them writes thus:—“It cannot be but that a prophet shall at last arise like to Moses, or greater than he: for the King Messiah shall be as great or greater. Therefore these words are not to be expounded, as if there should never be such a prophet: but that in all the time of the following prophets, till the cessation of prophecy, none should arise like to Moses. But after that there shall be one like him, or rather, greater than he.” Doubtless this author writes absurdly enough, in supposing the cessation of prophecy to take place before the coming of the principal Prophet. Yet his testimony serves to shew, that the ancient scriptures naturally induced an expectation of a subsequent and more illustrious revelation, and

a far more honourable person than any who had then appeared.—Another Jewish writer says, on the words of Isaiah, “He shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high;” (*Is. lii. 13*;) that ‘the King Messiah shall be exalted above Abraham, extolled above Moses, and be very high above the angels of the ministry.’ ‘Upon which Conradus Pellicanus thus glosses and concludes his commentary, as I shall do mine, ‘What it is to be above the angels, let the Jews explain; we can understand nothing by it, but the very “Word of God, which “was in the beginning with God, and was God, by whom “all things were made, and without him nothing was “made that was made:” viz. the Lord God of hosts, to whom in perfect Unity, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory for ever, Amen.’ *Bp. Patrick.*

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As we must ere long be called into the eternal world, our wisdom and happiness consist in habitual readiness for that solemn event: and if we have experienced the salvation of God, we are prepared, and should be willing, to depart whenever it pleases him.—To “stand with our “loins girded,” diligently doing our proper work, and waiting the summons of the Lord, will best ensure those views of heavenly rest, and those foretastes of joy, which gild the prospect and cheer the heart of believers in passing that last gloomy vale. We need not be *anxious* about the presence of beloved relatives, or the solace of the Lord’s people or ministers in our dying moments: for should our

departure be sudden, alone, or even among strangers, the love and presence of our God and Saviour will abundantly suffice. Still less should we be concerned where our bones are laid; as the burial of Christ has consecrated every spot where a believer is interred, and his omnipotent voice will at length raise us incorruptible. But we should fear leaving any occasion of sin to survivors: for the enmity and envy which follow the Lord’s servants while they live, are frequently changed into superstitious regard for them after their decease; so that sometimes even their mistakes will then be espoused, and their failings imitated: and many eminent saints, now in glory, could they again revisit this lower world, would embrace that opportunity of burying, or burning, or expunging some passages out of, writings that they have left behind, perhaps without intention of being made publick; and which Satan has afterwards made use of as a handle against divine truth, far beside the intention of the writer, yet under the venerable sanction of his established reputation.—While respect is paid to the memory of the deceased, the living servants of God ought not to be undervalued: for, though in some respects inferior to their predecessors, God will qualify them for their work. His authority should therefore be honoured in them; and the measure of wisdom and holiness, which he has given them, esteemed and regarded. And as Jesus ever liveth to take care of his own cause, we need not mourn for the most eminent men, “as those who have no “hope” that the loss will be made up to the church of God.



# GENERAL MAP OF THE TRIBES



# THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

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WE now enter on that portion of the Old Testament, which is commonly distinguished as *historical*. For though the books of Moses contain a large proportion of history, and are the only authentick records existing of those primæval ages; and though several of the prophetic books are in part historical; yet these having been denominated “the *law* and the *prophets*,” from the grand peculiarities of each, the books before us may properly be called *historical*, by way of distinction.—From the death of Moses to that of Nehemiah, at least 1050 years intervened; indeed some genealogies in Nehemiah extend beyond that period: and of this succession of ages these books contain a connected and regular narrative, which is extremely interesting to the sober student, as well as edifying to every pious reader.—If we except some Phenician fragments, filled with inconsistencies, and of doubtful authority; and a few traditions concerning the Egyptians and Assyrians, distorted by the most extravagant relations, and evidently replete with fables; there is scarcely any thing extant, which gives us the least information of what was transacted in any of the nations of the world, during by far the greater part of this period. For it does not yet appear, that any dependence can be placed on those narratives from the eastern world, which have lately been brought into Europe, and have excited considerable attention; and which some have so highly extolled, as to insinuate, not only that they render questionable other ancient histories hitherto of approved authority, but that their testimony ought to have some weight even in opposition to the records of the Scripture. Yet it is notorious, that they are so disfigured by fable or allegory, as to be scarcely intelligible; and that they relate events of the most extravagant and incredible antiquity. Leaving these, however, till fuller investigation has shewn what credit they deserve; it is obvious to remark, that Herodotus, who used to be called *the father of history*, is supposed to have been contemporary with Ezra and Nehemiah, the latest writers of these scriptural records: and all that he collected, concerning times long preceding his own, is generally allowed to be of doubtful authority, and blended with much that is altogether fabulous. Yet the history on which we are entering, though *modern*, compared with that contained in the books of Moses, commences at least 1000 years before the days of this *father of history*! And (except as scepticks choose to confound well attested publick miracles, wrought by the almighty God for the most important of all purposes, with the absurd and pernicious fables of pagan writers,) the whole narrative is exceedingly probable and rational, and accords with the known character and general conduct of mankind, in the various circumstances in which they are placed. It also agrees with the most sober traditions and detached fragments of antiquity; and serves to elucidate many obscure parts of profane history, and to decide many questions in respect of ancient chronology. It also coincides with the manners and customs of those eastern regions, in the remotest ages, as far as any accounts of them have come down to us.

Many learned men have endeavoured to elucidate Scripture by passages from pagan writers; and their labours have not been useless: yet, almost uniformly, one hesitation occurs to the reflecting reader on every case; namely, a doubt whether the pagan customs were as ancient as the scriptural narration, which they were adduced to illustrate; or whether the scriptural history and institutions were not the real source, from which the pagan notions and customs were derived. It would be a very interesting employment, to enquire how far, on the other hand, ancient history, chronology, and even geography, and various things connected with these branches of learning, are indebted to the sacred volume. For though the records here transmitted to us, principally refer to a people in many respects far from considerable, and also unjustly despised in the world; yet they continually call the reader's attention to the most ancient transactions of all the surrounding nations: so that more satisfactory information is derived from the Scriptures concerning the Egyptians, the Phenicians or Tyrians, the Syrians, the Assyrians, the Chaldeans, and even the Medes and Persians, than from the writings of those persons who profess to give us the histories of those nations.

These considerations are suited to impress the mind of the reflecting reader with a high veneration for this part of the sacred Scripture, which beyond comparison is in all respects the most wonderful book in the world; but the nature and tendency of the history here given us should still more endear it to every real Christian. Not to anticipate the instructions which will be deduced from every chapter, it may in general be observed, that the whole is suited to make known to us the perfections and providence of God, in the most interesting and affecting manner; to shew what is the real character of man; and to evince both the immense importance and excellency, and the genuine nature, of true religion.—Even amidst the events of history, types and prophecies are interspersed, especially of the Redeemer, who is never wholly kept out of sight in any part of the sacred oracles. Publick miracles, of the most extraordinary nature, challenging the investigation of the most virulent enemies, and wrought on purpose to confirm

## THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

those messages from God, which were most offensive, either to idolatrous rulers, or a rebellious nation, are likewise here recorded.

We are not expressly informed who was the writer of each book in this collection ; but we have several intimations, that the *prophets*, or *seers*, of whom continual mention is made, were employed in this service. (1 *Chr.* xxix. 29. 2 *Chr.* xii. 15. xx. 34. xxvi. 22.) It is indeed not improbable, that the contemporary prophets wrote the principal transactions of their own times, under the superintendence of the Holy Spirit, by whom they were preserved from error and partiality, guided in selecting such facts as were most proper to be recorded, and instructed immediately where ordinary sources of information failed ; and that subsequent prophets, under the same superintendence, gave the history its present form. Perhaps some parts of it were compiled from ancient records, as late as the times of Ezra, who was himself an inspired writer ; and the rest revised by him and his assistants, with some short notes, elucidating the several parts of the narrative : and this may account for a few expressions, which seem to belong to later times than those of the events related, as well as for the references to some books then known, but not now extant.—Very little history, subsequent to the days of Ezra, is transmitted to us in Scripture, previous to that contained in the New Testament ; and a few incidents or genealogies, which seem to pertain to a rather later period, might be added by the prophet Malachi. But the canon of the Old Testament, for substance the same as we now have it, was evidently settled in the time of Ezra, and has never since received any material alteration.

These books, however, were undoubtedly a part of the sacred Scriptures, to which our Lord and his apostles continually appealed, and which the Jews in general received as the oracles of God, and as given by inspiration from him.—And it is exceedingly worthy of notice, that the several parts of the Bible thus reciprocally attest each other, and presuppose the undoubted truth of the history which they record, and the divine authority of the doctrines and commandments delivered in them : so that, like the stones in a well constructed arch, each supports and is supported by all the rest. In particular, the Psalms, the prophetic books, and every part of the New Testament, assume as acknowledged truth, that these historical records contain undoubted facts ; and these several divisions of the sacred Volume often constitute an important comment on each other.

The books, on which we now enter, do not contain a complete *political* history of Israel, but merely a connected account of the most material events, or of such as were most suited to convey important instruction : and because transactions, which in the general estimate of mankind are considered as comparatively *little*, frequently inculcate the most salutary lessons of heavenly wisdom ; these are often very fully recorded, while the more splendid concerns of courts and camps are passed over in silence, or but cursorily noticed.

The authority and value of this division of the sacred Scriptures being thus ascertained, a few additional remarks on the book of JOSHUA, with which it opens, may suffice.—In all the versions, as well as in the original, it is named from JOSHUA, either as the *author*, or as the principal *subject* : and it is probable he wrote the substance of it. (xxiv. 26.) The writer speaks of himself as a person concerned in the transactions which he relates : (v. 1 :) and the mention of Rahab, as still living in Israel, implies that he was a contemporary. (vi. 25.) But some passages doubtless were added afterwards, perhaps by Phinchas, or rather by a subsequent prophet : (xix. 47. xxiv. 29—33 :) yet several things adduced as proofs that the book was written at a later period, by no means establish that conclusion.—Among the various passages in which the history contained in this book is attested by other sacred writers, the following may be selected : 1 *Kings* xvi. 34. 1 *Chr.* ii. 7. *Ps.* cxiv. 3—5. *Acts* vii. 45. xiii. 19. *Heb.* iv. 8. xi. 30, 31. xiii. 5. *Jam.* ii. 25 : and at the same time it may be observed, that this book appeals to the books of Moses, as *then extant* ; and marks repeatedly the fulfilment of the promises and predictions contained in them, or confirms them as undoubtedly to be accomplished. (i. 8. viii. 30—35. xi. 15. 20. 23. xiv. 2—9. xx. 2. xxi. 43—45. xxii. 1—9. xxiii. 6—16. xxiv. 2—10. 19, 20.)

The Pagan writers were in some measure acquainted with this history ; and several of their fables are supposed to have been derived from it : especially the story of Phaeton driving the chariot of the sun for the space of one day, seems to have originated from the sun's staying his course for one day, at the word of Joshua : and it clearly shews, that a tradition prevailed of one day, in ancient times, having been wholly unlike all others, either before or after it.—It is probable that the Carthaginians were originally Phenicians, or Canaanites, who fled from the victorious sword of Joshua, first to Tyre, whence they colonized to Africa.

This book does not contain any explicit prophecies : except as the warnings given to the people, to expect the completion of those delivered by Moses, may be considered as prophetic ; or as the curse denounced on him that should rebuild Jericho was of that nature. (vi. 26.) But Joshua himself, his wars and victories, and the inheritance which he was appointed to assign to Israel, were typical preintimations of Christ and his conflicts and triumphs, and the rest reserved for all his true people.—This will be shewn more fully as we proceed ; and the wars which Joshua waged, and the devastations which he made, fully vindicated from the objections, that have been made against them.

Expositors have generally computed, that about seventeen years passed between the death of Moses and that of Joshua ; seven of which were spent in the conquest of Canaan, and ten in the peaceable possession of the land : but some learned men think that Joshua survived his victories twenty years, or nearly.—Every part of the book conveys useful instruction ; but the exhortations, with which Joshua took his leave of the people just before his death, are peculiarly interesting and affecting.





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42 Fleet Street, London, and 23 North Street, Cambridge, & 15, & 16, & 17, & 18, & 19, & 20, & 21, & 22, & 23, & 24, & 25, & 26, & 27, & 28, & 29, & 30, & 31, & 32, & 33, & 34, & 35, & 36, & 37, & 38, & 39, & 40, & 41, & 42, & 43, & 44, & 45, & 46, & 47, & 48, & 49, & 50, & 51, & 52, & 53, & 54, & 55, & 56, & 57, & 58, & 59, & 60, & 61, & 62, & 63, & 64, & 65, & 66, & 67, & 68, & 69, & 70, & 71, & 72, & 73, & 74, & 75, & 76, & 77, & 78, & 79, & 80, & 81, & 82, & 83, & 84, & 85, & 86, & 87, & 88, & 89, & 90, & 91, & 92, & 93, & 94, & 95, & 96, & 97, & 98, & 99, & 100.

## CHAP. I.

The Lord confirms Joshua as the successor of Moses, 1, 2. He shews the extent of the promised land, and instructs and encourages Joshua, 3—9; who gives orders about passing over Jordan, 10, 11; and reminds the two tribes and a half of their engagement, 12—15. The people promise obedience, 16—18.

NOW after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, it came to pass, that the Lord spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses's minister, saying, 2 Moses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

3 Every place, that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses.

4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea towards the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.

5 There shall not any man be able

to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

6 Be strong and of a good courage; for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land which I swear unto their fathers to give them.

7 Only be thou strong, and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

9 Have not I commanded thee:

97. 99. Prov. ii. 1—5. iii. 1. Col. iii. 16. 1 Tim. iv. 14—16. 29. 32. 33. vi. 1—3.—Matt. vii. 21. 24. xxviii. 20. Luke xi. 28. John xiii. 17. xiv. 21. Jam. i. 22—25. Rev. xxii. 14. 28. Acts iv. 19. 2 Or, do wisely. 3 Or, thou shalt cause this people to inherit. 4 Num. xxxiv. 17—29. 5 Gen. xxvi. 3. 6 See on 1.—xi. 15. Num. xxvii. 23. Deut. xxxi. 7. 8 Deut. v. 32. xii. 32. xxviii. 14. Prov. iv. 27. viii. 20. 9 Deut. xxix. 9. 1 Kings ii. 3. 1 Chr. xxii. 13. 10 Or, do wisely. 11 Marg. 12 Deut. vi. 6—9. xi. 18, 19. xvii. 18, 19. xxx. 14. xxxi. 11. Ps. xxxvii. 80, 81. xl. 10. cxix. 42, 43. Is. lix. 21. Matt. xii. 25. Eph. iv. 29. 13 Ps. i. 2, 3. xix. 14. cxix. 11. 15. 16. See on Deut. v. 29. 32. 33. vi. 1—3.—Matt. vii. 21. 24. xxviii. 20. Luke xi. 28. John xiii. 17. xiv. 21. Jam. i. 22—25. Rev. xxii. 14. 28. Acts iv. 19. 17 Judg. vi. 14. 2 Sam. xiii. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.

## NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1, 2. The beginning of this book is connected with the conclusion of Deuteronomy, as the continuation of the preceding history; and in the title given to "Moses, the servant of the Lord," reference is made to it. (Deut. xxxiv. 5.) We are not informed, whether God immediately revealed himself to Joshua on this occasion, or whether he enquired the divine will by the high priest. (Num. xxvii. 21.)—The death of Moses made it necessary for Joshua to enter fully on his office. (Notes, Num. xxvii. 18—20.)—It cannot be supposed that Israel passed over Jordan before the thirty days of mourning for Moses were expired; yet perhaps this renewal of Joshua's commission, and even the sending out of the spies, might take place in the mean while. (ii. 1.)—The Mosaic dispensation was introductory to that of the gospel, and the former must expire before the latter could appear in its glory. The moral law is exceedingly useful to the church of God, and to every believer: but the gospel alone can conduct us to the heavenly inheritance; (Note, John i. 17;) and being "dead to the law" as the ground of our confidence, is necessary to our salvation by Jesus Christ. (Note, Gal. ii. 17—21.) These things were typically taught by the death of Moses, and the succession of Joshua.

V. 3, 4. Lebanon seems to have been the termination of an extensive prospect, which lay open to Joshua at this time.—In the days of David and Solomon the whole country contained in this grant, was possessed by Israel, or tributary to their kings: but in general, through sin,

they came short of that prosperity which they might otherwise have enjoyed. (Notes, Ex. xxiii. 31. 2 Sam. viii. 3. 1 Kings iv. 21.)

V. 5. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Deut. xxxi. 3—8. Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

V. 7. The successor of Moses that eminent servant of God; the ruler over so numerous and untractable a people as Israel, and that people the worshippers of the true and living God; and the commander in so perilous an undertaking as the conquest of Canaan, would need great strength of grace and courage of faith: especially that he might persevere in the path of duty, unmoved by terrors, difficulties, or persuasions, and neither "turn to the right hand nor to the left;" not only observing the commandments of God himself, but impartially exerting his authority in enforcing them on all the people, which alone would be true wisdom, and ensure good success in his arduous undertakings. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1 Kings iii. 5—14. 1 Chr. xxii. 11—13. xxviii. 20, 21.)

V. 8. It is undeniable from the language here used, that Joshua possessed a written copy of the law: for if Moses had not himself written the books containing it, what meaning would there have been in this exhortation?—By constant meditation, the good treasure of divine truth must be deposited in Joshua's heart; that from that abundance his mouth might speak as occasion required, for the conviction, direction, or encouragement of the people; and likewise that he might know the duties of his important station. (Notes, Deut. vi. 6—9. xvii. 18. Ps. i. 1—3. cxix. 97—100.)

<sup>a</sup> *See* Deut. xx. 1.—*Isa.* xxvii. 1, 2. Jer. i. 7, 8. Be strong and of a good courage; "be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

10 ¶ Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying,

11 Pass through the host, and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for within "three days "ye shall pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God giveth you to possess it.

12 And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to half the tribe of Manasseh, spake Joshua, saying,

13 Remember "the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, The LORD your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land.

14 Your wives, your little ones, and your cattle, shall remain in the land which Moses gave you on this side Jordan; but ye shall pass before your

brethren "armed, all "the mighty men "of valour, and help them;

15 Until "the LORD have given your brethren rest, as *he hath given* you, and they also have possessed the land which the LORD your God giveth them; "then ye shall return unto the land of your possession, and enjoy it, which Moses the LORD's servant gave you on this side Jordan, toward the sun-rising.

16 And they answered Joshua, saying, "All that thou commandest us we will do, and whithersoever thou sendest us we will go:

17 According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: "only the LORD thy God be with thee, as he was with Moses.

18 Whosoever *he be* "that doth rebel against thy commandment, and will not hearken unto thy words in all that thou commandest him, he shall be put to death: "only be strong, and of a good courage.

V 11. The manna had not yet ceased to fall; (*Note*, v. 11, 12;) but probably the Israelites used more of other provisions, after they had taken possession of the kingdoms of Sihon and Og: and in the hurry of passing over Jordan and entering an enemy's country, there would not be leisure to gather manna enough for the people. In general they were thus directed to prepare all things necessary for the expedition.—This command seems to have been given after the return of the spies, as recorded in the subsequent chapter; for they were absent more than three days. (ii. 22.)

V. 12—15. The gentleness with which Joshua, the divinely constituted successor to Moses, entered on the exercise of his authority, may be contrasted with the conduct of Rehoboam when he succeeded Solomon. (*Notes*, 1 Kings xii. 1—15.)—All the men in the two tribes and a half, able to bear arms, had engaged to go over Jordan with their brethren: but it was doubtless understood, that some would be permitted to stay at home to guard their families and flocks; and the selection was left to Joshua. (*Notes*, Num. xxxii. 16—19.)

V. 16—18. This seems to have been the answer, not only of the two tribes and a half, but of the elders, or rulers, of the people in general, as concurring with them. They acknowledged Joshua as their governor, expressly engaged to be obedient, and determined that they who rebelled against his authority should be put to death. The words, "only the LORD thy God be with thee," may be understood as a desire or prayer that this might be the case; or as an intimation, that it was in confidence of this being the case, that they engaged to be obedient. In this sense they implied a caution to Joshua, to shun every thing which might tend to disappoint this expectation. (*Note*, 1 Kings i. 36, 37.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The removal of those, who have been faithful and useful, should quicken their survivors to redoubled earnestness and activity; both to make up, as much as they are able, the publick loss, and to prepare for their own dissolution. (*Note*, Ec. ix. 10.)—Every one of the Lord's servants, having performed the work assigned him, retires to rest, and others are raised up to succeed until their services also are finished; (*Acts* xiii. 36;) and generally they, who in the close of life are most honoured, have been previously submissive and diligent in more obscure situations.—No consciousness of inferiority, insufficiency, or even unworthiness, should induce us to decline the services allotted to us: for the same *fulness*, whence prophets and apostles received all their sufficiency, is open for us also; (*Note*, John i. 16;) and in our more limited spheres, and for the duties incumbent on us, we have a warrant to expect that "the Lord will be with us," even as he was with Moses or Paul; though he will not "speak to us face to face," or give us a vision of the third heaven, and of the unutterable things there displayed. (*Note*, 2 Cor. xii. 1—6.)—That man needs strong faith and great fortitude, who in this evil world would order his whole conduct according to the rule of the holy Scriptures; and "not turn "aside to the right hand or to the left," on account of any temptation, or through fear of consequences: but as God himself commands us to "be strong and courageous," we should consider this *precept* as an exhortation to cry earnestly to him, that he may give us strength and courage, and in this dependence we may go forth, assured that nothing can stand before us or impede our course; for "He will not fail us, nor forsake us."—But let it be especially noted, that well grounded confidence is always con-

## CHAP. II.

Two spies, sent by Joshua, enter Jericho, and are concealed by Rahab, 1—7. She informs them of the terror which had seized the Canaanites, 8—11; and covenants with them, 12—21. They return and make their report, 22—24.

• Or, *had sent*.

a Num. xxv. 1. xxxiii. 49.

b Num. xiii. 17—21. Judg. xviii. 2. 14. 17. Matt. x. 16. Eph. v. 15.

c v. 10. vi. 1—24. d vi. 17. 25. Matt. i. 5. Rahab. xx. 16. xxi. 31. Heb. xi. 31. Jam. ii. 25.

† Heb. *lay*.

e Ps. cxxvii. 1. Prov. xxi. 30. Is. xliii. 13. Dan iv. 35.

AND Joshua the son of Nun<sup>a</sup> sent out of<sup>b</sup> Shittim two men,<sup>b</sup> to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land,<sup>c</sup> even Jericho. And they went, and came into an<sup>d</sup> harlot's house named Rahab, and<sup>†</sup> lodged there.

2 And it was<sup>e</sup> told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men

in hither to-night of the children of Israel, to search out the country.

3 And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, 'Bring forth the men<sup>f</sup> that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come<sup>g</sup> to search out all the country.

4 And the woman<sup>h</sup> took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were.

5 And it came to pass about the time<sup>i</sup> of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that<sup>k</sup> the men went out; whither the men went I wot not: pur-

x. 23. Gen. xxxviii. 24. Lev. xxiv. 14. Job xxi. 30. John xix. 4. Acts xii. 4. 6.

g Gen. xlii. 9—12. 31. 2 Sam. x. 3. 1 Chr. xxi. 3. h Ex. i. 19. 2 Sam. xvi. 18, 19. xvii. 20. 2 Kings vi. 19.

i 7. Neh. xiii. 19. Is. lx. 11. Ez. xli. 1. 2. 12. Rev. xxi. 25. k Jer. i. 20. Rom. iii. 7, 8.

nected with proportionable humility and conscientiousness: and genuine courage chiefly appears in *daring to do our duty*, though censured by misjudging friends, or slandered and threatened by malicious enemies.—That we may be secured from deception, and be assured that we are reproached or persecuted, not for following our own fancies, but for the sake of truth and righteousness; we should endeavour, by daily meditation and prayer, to obtain an intimate acquaintance with the precepts as well as the promises of Scripture: for thus the path of duty will be evident to our own minds, and we shall be able to explain our reasons and motives satisfactorily to the candid and pious, when occasion requires; as well as to use our influence in bringing others to obey our God.—If we proceed according to his instructions, he will afford us all needful assistance, and perhaps "make our very enemies "to be at peace with us!" And when persons of different ranks, in due subordination, harmoniously concur in promoting the welfare of the church, and seeking the presence and blessing of the Lord, the prospect of success is very pleasing; and they who oppose such efforts merit the severest punishment.—May we then learn to trust in the Lord; to submit to those whom he hath placed over us; and to assist them with our prayers, and in every way that we are able: and may we endeavour to aid one another in the most disinterested manner, and with the most exact punctuality to every engagement. Especially may we be enabled to submit to the authority, and enlist under the banner, of the Captain of our salvation; to be obedient to his commands, and to fight the good fight of faith, in concurrence with all who love his name, and in opposition to all, within and without, that opposes his authority: for whoever refuses to obey him must inevitably perish.

## NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1. The beginning of this verse may be read, "Now Joshua *had sent*;" (*margin*.) that is, before the orders recorded in the preceding chapter. (*Note*, i. 11.)—It might be very useful to him to learn many things respecting the avenues of Canaan, the situation of Jericho, which was first to be assaulted, and the disposition of its inhabitants: and these might be known by ordinary means as well as by immediate revelation. Two persons, probably not of eminent rank, but of approved prudence, intrepidity,

and faith, were therefore selected, and sent by Joshua to search out, not the land at large, but Jericho and its confines, and to bring their report to him, and not to the congregation: for the word "secretly" seems to refer to his sending them; not to their concealing themselves from the Canaanites:—"He secretly sent two men, &c." Most likely, this measure was adopted according to some intimation of the will of God; for the spies were evidently guided and protected in a peculiar manner, and many important good consequences resulted from their enterprize. (*Notes*, Num. xiii.) They undertook this perilous service with boldness and promptitude; and passed Jordan, doubtless at the fords, the river not having yet overflowed its banks as it did soon after. Being arrived at Jericho, "they came into a harlot's house, ... and lodged there." Perhaps Rahab kept some kind of a house of entertainment for travellers; especially as she stated that "two men had come to her" of whom she knew nothing: yet from the testimony of two apostles, (*Marg. Ref. d*.) there can be no reasonable doubt but she had been a harlot, though now, it is probable, she was converted by the faith which was wrought in her; which was so eminent, that she was not only admitted into the society of God's people, but married into a noble family of the tribe of Judah from whom Christ sprang. *Bp. Patrick*. It may be supposed from these circumstances, that she was not far advanced in life at this time.—It is however evident from the whole narrative, that the spies were led thither by a special providence; and that Rahab entertained them out of regard to Israel and Israel's God, and neither for lucre, nor for any evil purpose.

V. 2, 3. The twelve spies, sent by Moses, seem to have passed unsuspected through the whole land: yet these two men no sooner entered Jericho than the king heard of it, and sent to apprehend them; while at the same time he, and the other kings of the country, seem entirely to have neglected to guard the passes of Jordan, the natural barrier of the land! (*Note*, iii. 2.) The spies were known or supposed to be Israelites, either by their apparel or appearance; and their business in that case could not be doubted.

V. 4—6. The words translated, "The woman took the two men, and hid them," might be rendered, "she had taken, ... and hidden them."—It is evident that Ra-

sue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them.

18. Deut. xxii. 8.  
2 Sam. xi. 2.  
Matt. xxiv. 17.  
m Ex. ii. 2. 2 Sam.  
xvii. 19. 1 Kings  
xviii. 4. 13.  
2 Kings xi. 2.  
Jer. xxxvi. 26.  
Col. iii. 3. Heb.  
xi. 23.  
n Judg. iii. 28. xii.  
6.  
o 5. Acts v. 27.  
p Ex. xviii. 11  
2 Kings v. 13.  
Job xix. 25. Ec.  
viii. 12. Heb. xi.  
1. 2.  
q Gen. xiii. 14—  
17. xv. 18—21.  
Ex. iii. 6—8.  
Deut. xxxii. 8.  
Ps. cxv. 16. Jer.  
xxvii. 5. Matt.  
xx. 15.  
r Ex. xviii. 27.  
Deut. ii. 25. xi.  
25. xxviii. 10.  
Judg. vii. 14.  
1 Sam. xiv. 15.  
2 Kings vii. 6.

6 But she had brought them up <sup>1</sup> to the roof of the house, and <sup>m</sup> hid them with the stalks of flax which she had laid in order upon the roof.

7 And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan, unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out; <sup>\*</sup> they shut the gate.

8 ¶ And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof;

9 And she said unto the men, <sup>r</sup> I know <sup>1</sup> that the LORD hath given you the land, and that <sup>r</sup> your terror is fallen

upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land <sup>\*</sup> faint because of you.

10 For <sup>\*</sup> we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt: and <sup>1</sup> what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites that *were* on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed.

11 And as soon as we had heard *these things*, <sup>u</sup> our hearts did melt, neither <sup>1</sup> did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: <sup>\*</sup> for the LORD your God, he *is* God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.

12 Now therefore I pray you, <sup>r</sup> swear <sup>r</sup> unto me by the LORD, since I have

\* Heb. melt. 11.  
1 Sam. xiv. 16.  
2 Sam. xvii. 19.  
Ps. cxx. 10. 14.  
xix. 1. Nah. ii.  
10.  
iv. 24. Ex. xiv.  
21—31. xv. 14—  
16.  
t Num. xxi. 24—  
35. Deut. ii. 30  
—37. iii. 1—8.

u See on v. 1. vii.  
5. xiv. 8. Deut.  
i. 28. xx. 8. 1a.  
xiii. 7. Nah. in  
10.  
+ Heb. rose up.  
Rev. vi. 16.  
Deut. iv. 39.  
1 Kings viii. 60.  
Ps. lxxxiii. 19a.  
cii 15. Jer. xvi.  
19—21. Dan. iv.  
34. 35. vi. 26—  
27. Zech. viii. 20  
—23.  
ix. 16. 18—20.  
1 Sam. xxx. 15.  
2 Chr. xxxvi. 13.  
Jer. xii. 16.

hab was acquainted with the business of the spies, before she received the message from the king: and being sensible of the danger to which they would be exposed, when every one was upon the watch as aware of the situation and purposes of Israel, and perhaps hearing the rumours about them, she had previously concealed them under some stalks of flax which were laid on the flat roof of her house: and by her answers to the messengers, she not only led them to suppose that the men were gone, but also that she was very desirous that they should be apprehended, which exceedingly tended to prevent suspicion.—Various opinions have been formed concerning Rahab's conduct on this trying occasion. Some object, that her treachery to her king and country cannot be vindicated: but it may be answered, that as she firmly believed the God of heaven had devoted the Canaanites to be utterly destroyed by the Israelites (9—11), she must either side with Israel and Israel's God against her country, or perish with it in a hopeless contest against the Almighty: so that, in *her circumstances*, she could not have acted otherwise, if influenced by a true and living faith. (Note, James ii. 25, 26.) In fact every true convert equally renounces the alliance of the Lord's enemies, however nearly connected, and refuses to join with them in rebellion and persecution of his servants. (Notes, Luke xiv. 25—27. 2 Cor. v. 16.) But as no people can possibly produce such an authenticated commission from God to destroy another nation, as Israel had to destroy the Canaanites: Rahab's conduct, in uniting interests with the enemies and invaders of her country, though her absolute duty, cannot now be drawn into precedent.—In respect of the falsehoods that she uttered, were not a general question of some importance and of great difficulty involved, it would be most obvious to resolve it into her ignorance of the divine law; and to say, that the principle and substance of her conduct being good were accepted, and that the sin which incidentally mixed with it was pardoned. But indeed, if it were her indispensable duty if possible to protect the spies, and there were no other conceivable way of doing this, it seems not necessary to condemn her conduct altogether. Stratagems of war, and similar impositions upon determined enemies and persecutors, are not absolutely condemned in

Scripture, though inconsistent with exact veracity; (*Marg. Ref. h*;) and if deception could in any case be justifiable, we can scarcely imagine one in which it would be more so. It is however certain, that in no case, except one equally extraordinary, ought the example to be imitated. (Notes, Ex. i. 19. 1 Sam. xix. 12—17. xxi. 1, 2. xxvii. 8—12.)

V. 7. “The fords,” or *passages*, were no doubt parts of the river, where it might be passed without danger, either by walking or swimming across. Here, probably, the messengers waited a considerable time to intercept the spies: and lest they should have staid in the city, the gates were immediately shut to prevent the possibility of their escape. But they found a way of getting out of the city, and in due time of crossing Jordan at the fords. (15. 23.)

V. 8—11. We have here an account of Rahab's faith and its fruits, which are spoken of with decided approbation by the apostles Paul and James. (Notes, Heb. xi. 31. Jam. ii. 25, 26.) She had heard of the miracles which God had wrought for Israel, and the promises that he had made to them: and whilst the same report exasperated or intimidated the other inhabitants of the land, she firmly believed JEHOVAH to be the only true God in heaven and earth, and the Israelites his only accepted worshippers; that his promises would certainly be fulfilled and his threatenings take effect; and that there was no way of escaping his vengeance, but by uniting interests with his people. Indeed Balaam himself seems to have been convinced in his judgment of these grand truths, as well as to have professed them with his lips; but then his ambitious and covetous heart abhorred them, and he persisted in enmity to God and Israel: while the conduct of Rahab proved, that she had the genuine principle of divine faith, which induced her to renounce all her interests among the devoted Canaanites; and to venture her life, and expose herself to the imminent danger of the most cruel tortures, in expressing her love for the people of God. (Notes, Heb. xi. 1, 2. 5, 6.)

V. 12—16. Rahab asked no other recompence for her perilous service, than preservation for herself and her near relations, when the promises of God to Israel had been fulfilled. Even the regard manifested to her relatives, who

<sup>a</sup> 1 Sam. xx. 14—17. xiv. 21, 22. Esth. viii. 6. 2 Tim. i. 16—18. Jam. ii. 13. <sup>a</sup> 13. Rom. i. 31. 1 Tim. v. 8. <sup>b</sup> 18. Ex. xii. 13. Mark xiv. 44. shewed you kindness, <sup>a</sup> that ye will also shew kindness unto <sup>a</sup> my father's house; and <sup>b</sup> give me a true token:

13 And *that* ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.

14 And the men answered her, Our life <sup>a</sup> for your's, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, <sup>a</sup> when the LORD hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee.

15 Then <sup>a</sup> she let them down by a cord through the window: <sup>a</sup> for her house *was* upon the town-wall, and she dwelt upon the wall.

16 And she said unto them, 'Get ye to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned: and afterward may ye go your way.

17 And the men said unto her, <sup>a</sup> We will be blameless of this thine oath which thou hast made us swear.

18 Behold, *when* we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of <sup>b</sup> scarlet thread in the window which thou

didst let us down by; and thou shalt <sup>a</sup> bring <sup>a</sup> thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee.

19 And it shall be, *that* <sup>k</sup> whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, <sup>i</sup> his blood *shall be* upon his head, and we *will be* guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, <sup>m</sup> his blood *shall be* on our head, if *any* hand be upon him.

20 And if thou utter this our business, then <sup>a</sup> we will be quit of thine oath which thou hast made us to swear.

21 And she said, According unto your words, so *be* it. And she sent them away, and they departed: <sup>a</sup> and she bound the scarlet line in the window.

22 And they went, and came unto the mountain, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned. And the pursuers sought *them* throughout all the way, but <sup>p</sup> found *them* not.

23 So the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the

<sup>†</sup> Heb. *gather*.  
i 13. vi. 23. Gen. vii. 1. xii. 2. xiv. 12—17. Esth. viii. 6. Luke xix. 9. Acts x. 27. 38. xi. 14. 2 Tim. i. 16.

<sup>k</sup> Ex. xii. 13. 23. Num. xxxv. 25 —28. 1 Kings ii. 36—42. Matt. xxiv. 17. Acts xxvii. 31. Phil. iii. 9. Heb. x. 29. 1 John ii. 27. 29. 1 Lev. xx. 9. 11. 2 Sam. i. 16. iii. 28, 29. Ez. xxxiii. 4, 5. Matt. xxvii. 24, 25. Acts xviii. 6. xx. 26. m 14. 2 Sam. iv. 11. 1 Kings ii. 32. Matt. xxvii. 25. n See on 17.

<sup>o</sup> See on 18. Matt. vii. 24. John i. 5.

<sup>p</sup> 1 Sam. xix. 10—12. 2 Sam. xvii. 20. Ps. xxxii. 6, 7.

were not sensible of their own danger, was a genuine effect of true grace. Rahab likewise gave the spies all the information in her power, and all which they wanted; and she deemed the solemn oath of JEHOVAH a sufficient security for the performance of their engagements! When, with great attention, caution, and trouble, she had dismissed them, and given them proper counsel, she performed her promise of secrecy; and at the appointed time collected her relatives into her house, as it had been agreed: and thus without reserve joined interests with the people of God. (Note, vi. 22, 23.) Her whole conduct manifested a reverential fear of the Lord, an entire belief of his word, a desire and hope of his favour, an affection for his people, and a disposition to forsake, venture, and suffer any thing in his cause. Multitudes, who had seen all the miracles wrought in Egypt and in the wilderness, and who had every advantage of instruction in the camp of Israel, continued unbelievers; very few indeed manifested such strong faith, such holy fear, such confidence in God, and such a disposition to labour and suffer for his sake, as this stigmatised inhabitant of accursed Jericho, who had only heard a general and indistinct report of his wonderful works for Israel! It cannot therefore be reasonably doubted, that her faith had, before this, been accompanied with deep repentance of those sinful practices, from which she derived the name of "the harlot;" which however is given her where her faith and works are most celebrated, as illustrating the great evangelical truth, that "where *sin* hath abounded, grace much more aboundeth." The same principles would also prepare her mind to receive

further instruction concerning the promised Messiah, and the true meaning of those sacrifices which typified his atonement, when that further advantage was afforded her. (Notes, Acts x. 1, 2, latter half. 3—8. 27—33.)

V. 17—20. These spies, not doubting that Joshua and Israel would confirm the transaction, most solemnly assured Rahab of security if she disclosed not the business; intimating, that they should expect death by some judgment of God if they deceived her: yet as men who revered an oath, and dreaded the guilt of perjury, they desired to have the terms of the agreement precisely stated and exactly explained before they parted; and they selected that house which had protected them, to be the refuge of those who were found in it, when others were utterly destroyed.—Though the Israelites were forbidden to form any alliance with the nations of Canaan, yet it is evident that individuals, who came cordially into their interests, might be spared. (Notes, ix. 19, 20. xi. 19, 20.)—This passage may remind us of the door sprinkled with the blood of the paschal lamb, that was the security of Israel, when the destroying angel was slaying the first-born of Egypt; which typified the sinner's security under the protection of the atoning blood, who has fled to it for refuge from the wrath and curse of an offended God. (Note, Ex. xii. 11—14.)

V. 21. It is probable, that Rahab immediately bound the scarlet line, or cord, in her window; that no suspicion might be excited by doing it when Israel approached the city.

V. 23, 24. Having been thus wonderfully protected

son of Nun, and told him all *things* that befell them.

24 And they said unto Joshua, <sup>q</sup> Truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land: for even <sup>r</sup> all the inhabitants of the country do <sup>s</sup> faint because of us.

<sup>q</sup> 1. 5 xxi. 44, 45  
Num. xiii. 32,  
33. Prov. xxv.  
13.  
<sup>r</sup> See on 9—11.—  
Ps. xlviii. 5, 6.  
Rev. vi. 16, 17.  
<sup>s</sup> Heb. melt. 11.  
v. 1 Ex. xv. 15.

### CHAP. III.

Israel arrives at Jordan, 1. The officers give orders concerning the passage: and Joshua also directs both

and restored in safety, the spies seem to have spoken little on the strict watch kept by the inhabitants of Jericho, or on their own narrow escape. But they reported the dismay of their enemies, not only as an encouraging circumstance, but as a token that the Lord had delivered them into their hands, having thus begun to perform his promises in their behalf. They seem, however, to have made their report privately to Joshua, and not to the people or elders. (*Notes*, Num. xiii. 26—33. xiv. 1—10.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—11.

As the greatest, wisest, and best of men must on many occasions use, as it were, the eyes and ears of others; it is of prime importance, that persons should be selected, on whose veracity and fidelity firm dependence may be placed.—The Lord has “a remnant according to the election of grace,” in many unlikely situations, and even of such as have *previously* borne very bad characters: for he will glorify his mercy and grace in saving some of every kind.—That reproach of former sins, which rests upon the reputation of atrocious offenders after they are pardoned, ought to be patiently endured: and they should thence take occasion to renew their repentance; and to pour out their earnest prayers, that their future conduct may both demonstrate the reality, and illustrate the nature, of that grace which they have received; that those may be ashamed, who persist in reviling them; and that many may glorify God on their account, be edified by their example, and encouraged by witnessing their good conversation in Christ.—The feeblest means, when accompanied by the divine blessing, produces most glorious effects: while the carnal heart, if left to itself, grows hardened in infidelity under the most conclusive evidence, and the most convincing ministry of the word! (*Notes*, Matt. xi. 20—24. xii. 41, 42.)—When the worst of sinners truly believe the word of God, a blessed change infallibly takes place: for the divine Spirit, through the exercise of faith, excites in them fear of wrath, hatred of sin, hope of mercy, reverence of the name and authority of the Lord, and love to him and his people; which are manifested by such actions, as they have opportunity and ability to perform. Thus they are led to repent, and to do works meet for repentance; to renounce worldly objects and connexions, as far as evident duty requires them; and to unite interests with the people of God: and they are prepared for self-denial, and to venture persecution and even death itself, rather than give up their hope and pursuit of salvation. They may at first have very little explicit

priests and people, 2—6 The Lord encourages and instructs Joshua, 7—9: and again, Joshua the people; assuring them that the waters would be divided before the ark, 10—13. The waters are divided, and Israel passes the river, while the priests bearing the ark stand in the midst of it, 14—17.

AND Joshua <sup>a</sup> rose early in the morning; and they removed from <sup>b</sup> Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over.

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xxii. 3. Ps.  
cxix. 60. Jer. vii.  
13. xxv. 3. xxvi.  
8. Mark i. 35.  
<sup>b</sup> ii. 1. Num. xxv.  
1. Mic. vi. 5.

knowledge of divine truth; and much infirmity, and many mistakes may mix with their endeavours to obey God, and to do good to his people: but their conduct will be conscientious, and their disposition teachable, and their light will increase continually. (*Notes*, Ps. xxv. 8, 9. Prov. iv. 18, 19. Hos. vi. 1—3.) And no faith, which is not manifested by these good fruits, will justify the sinner before God, or even his profession before his fellow-creatures.

##### V. 12—24.

When we really discover the danger to which our souls are exposed, from the wrath of an offended God, and are earnestly seeking salvation, we shall begin to feel for those who are not sensible of their own lost condition. This will induce us to attempt doing what we can to forward the salvation of our beloved friends and relations: and thus they who have been the grief and disgrace of their families, may, by the mercy of God, become their protection as well as ornament.—If we lost sinners have a prospect of escaping destruction, we should not seek great things for ourselves, either in the world or in the church: yet such distinctions are often conferred on those who least aspire to them.—While we are serving God, and employed for the good of his people, we may securely confide in his protection, and need not fear what man can do unto us; as the dangers, to which we may be exposed, will eventually excite the greater admiration of the truth, love, and power of God in our preservation: yet we should use every prudent and lawful means of safety; and be thankful to the instruments of it, and endeavour to recompense them. But even in exercising gratitude, we must not oblige our benefactors in any thing contrary to the will of God, or to the interests of his people; nor flatter them with the hope of deliverance from future punishment, except in the method of the gospel: and if any of our engagements are ratified with an oath, the utmost reverence and caution should be used in taking, and the greatest exactness in fulfilling, that solemn obligation.—While the accomplishment of some of God's promises, is a pledge for the performance of the whole to the true believer; those terrors of conscience, and that sense of divine wrath, which dismay the ungodly, but do not bring them to repentance, are fearful presages of approaching destruction. (*Notes*, Prov. x. 24. xi. 23.)

#### NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. Early in the morning, Joshua took measures for the removal of the whole congregation and all their baggage and possessions, from Shittim to the banks



THE RIVER JORDAN.

JOSHUA iii. 4. 2 Kings v. 10.



<sup>c</sup> See on i. 10, 11. **2** And it came to pass after <sup>e</sup> three days, that the officers went through the host;

**3** And they commanded the people, saying, <sup>d</sup> When ye see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and <sup>e</sup> the priests the Levites bearing it, then <sup>f</sup> ye shall remove from your place, and go after it.

**4** Yet there shall be <sup>g</sup> a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure; come not near unto it, that ye may know the way by which ye must go; for ye have not passed <sup>h</sup> this way <sup>i</sup> heretofore.

**5** And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for to-morrow the LORD will do wonders among you.

**6** And Joshua spake unto the priests,

saying, <sup>k</sup> Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.

**7** ¶ And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to <sup>l</sup> magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know <sup>m</sup> that as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.

**8** And thou shalt <sup>n</sup> command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the water of Jordan, <sup>o</sup> ye shall stand still in Jordan.

**9** And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and <sup>p</sup> hear the words of the LORD your God.

**10** And Joshua said, <sup>q</sup> Hereby ye shall know that the <sup>r</sup> living God is

<sup>k</sup> See on b.—Num. iv. 15. x. 33. Mic. ii. 13. John xiv. 2. 8. Heb. vi. 20.

<sup>l</sup> iv. 14. 1 Chr. xxix. 25. 2 Chr. i. 1 Job vii. 17. John xvii. 1. Phil. i. 20. ii. 9—11.

<sup>m</sup> See on i. 5. 17. <sup>n</sup> 1 Chr. xv. 11. 12. 2 Chr. xvii. 8. 9. xxix. 4—11. 15. 27. 30. xxx. 12. xxxi. 9. 10. xxxv. 2—6. Neh. xii. 24—28. xiii. 22. 28.

<sup>o</sup> 17. Ex. xiv. 13. Lam. iii. 28.

<sup>p</sup> See on Deut. iv. 1. xii. 8.

<sup>q</sup> Num. xvi. 28—30. 1 Kings xviii. 36, 37. xxii. 28.

<sup>r</sup> Ps. ix. 16. Ia. vii. 14. 2 Cor. xiii. 2. 3.

<sup>s</sup> Deut. v. 26. 1 Sam. xvii. 28. 2 Kings xix. 4. Jer. x. 10. Hos. i. 10. Matt. xvi. 16. John vi. 69. 1 Thes. i. 9. Heb. x. 81.

of Jordan, which is supposed to have been about seven miles distant. There they arrived in the course of the day; and lodged that night, that they might be ready to pass over the next morning.

V. 2. Three days from the orders before mentioned had now passed, (i. 11;) and perhaps from the return of the spies, during which time the people had made all requisite preparations. It does not appear, whether they expected a miraculous interposition to facilitate their passage, or whether they had thoughts of crossing the river in some other way: but they were very obedient and tractable, and seem to have harboured no distrust about the event.—At any time, the passage of such a multitude of men, women, children, flocks and herds, with all their substance, by fords or other ordinary means, must have been attended with much difficulty and delay, and with great danger if the enemies had opposed them; but when Jordan overflowed all its banks, it would probably have been impracticable (15): for whatever appearance this river may make to modern travellers, the whole history represents it, as having been at that time a considerable and rapid stream.—The miraculous passage of Jordan was peculiarly suited to attend the other wonders which the Lord had wrought for Israel. Thus their entrance into Canaan corresponded with their departure out of Egypt; (Notes, Ex. xiv, xv;) and the dismay of the Canaanites would be increased, the faith of Israel strengthened, their expectations raised, and their conquests facilitated.—It can only be attributed to a supernatural power, intimidating or infatuating the minds of the Canaanites, that they never attempted to defend this barrier of their country, or to obstruct the passage of Israel.

V. 3, 4. The Levites, of the family of Kohath, carried the ark, in ordinary circumstances: but on this signal occasion, as well as some others, the priests (who were of that family,) performed this service. (Num. iv. 15. x. 21. Notes, vi. 3—5. 1 Kings viii. 3.) They were commanded to march about three quarters of a mile before the people, till they arrived at their destined station: by which it appeared that the ark, as a pledge of JEHOVAH's protection while they were obedient, secured the people, not they it.

A noble defiance of the enemies of Israel was thus given; who were challenged to attack the unarmed priests, or to seize the unattended ark. The faith and courage of the priests were also tried, and displayed for an example to the people; and reverence for this symbol of JEHOVAH's presence was expressed in a manner, suited to the nature of that dispensation. The whole congregation would also have a fairer opportunity of viewing the ark, the dividing of the waters, and “the way by which they were to go,” than if it had been nearer: and as they witnessed the obedience of the inanimate creation to their covenant-God, they would thus be instructed to obey likewise.

V. 5. Sanctify yourselves.] Note, Ex. xix. 10—15.—‘Beside the legal purifications, one cannot but think that he intended they should dispose their minds, by holy meditations and prayer to God, to receive his benefits, and to be more sensible of them when they were bestowed on them.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 2 Chr. xxix. 5. Joel ii. 15—17.)

V. 7. The people desired to see that God was with Joshua, as he had been with Moses; (i. 17;) and the Lord promised him, (probably by immediate revelation,) that by dividing the waters of Jordan, he would put honour on him, as he had honoured Moses at the Red Sea. In this manner the Lord was pleased to mark out the persons, whom he appointed to govern Israel, till in the days of Samuel they desired to have a king: and then he selected Saul, and afterwards David and his posterity, to that office.—At the river Jordan, and probably at Bethabara, or the house of passage, even at the very same place where Israel passed over that river, the Lord Jesus began to be magnified by the descent of the Holy Spirit, and by a voice from heaven. (John i. 28.—Notes, Matt. iii. 13—17.)

V. 8. At the brink of the water the priests were commanded to stop, until the channel of Jordan had become dry; and then to take their station in the midst of it, till all the people were passed over (17).

V. 10—13. Joshua, in calling JEHOVAH “the living God,” and “the Lord,” or Proprietor and Governor, “of all the earth,” as well as “the God of Israel,” seems

<sup>a</sup> xv. 1. 2. Ex. xvi. 7. Dent. xxxi. 17. Judg. vi. 12. 3.  
<sup>t</sup> See on Gen. xv. 15—18.—Ex. iii. 8. xxi. 27—30. xxxii. 2. Dent. vii. 1. Ps. xiv. 2, 3.

<sup>a</sup> among you, and *that* he will without fail 'drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites.

<sup>u</sup> Ps. xiv. 1. Is. liv. 5. Jer. x. 7. Mic. iv. 13. Zeph. ii. 11. Zech. iv. 14. vi. 5. xiv. 9.

11 Behold, the ark of the covenant of "the Lord of all the earth" passeth over before you into Jordan.

<sup>v</sup> See on 3—6.—Is. iii. 12. x. 9.

12 Now therefore <sup>x</sup> take ye twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man.

<sup>y</sup> 15, 16. Ex. xiv. 19—22.

13 And it shall come to pass as soon as <sup>y</sup> the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, *that* the waters of Jordan shall be cut off *from* the waters that come down from above; and they shall <sup>z</sup> stand upon an heap.

<sup>z</sup> 15. Ex. xv. 8. Ps. xxxiii. 7. lxxviii. 13. cxiv. 3—5. Hab. iii. 15.  
<sup>a</sup> See on 3. 6.—vi. 6. Acts vii. 44. 45. 1 Cor. i. 24, 25.

14 ¶ And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents to pass over Jordan, and the priests <sup>a</sup> bearing

the ark of the covenant before the people;

15 And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and <sup>b</sup> the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water; (for <sup>c</sup> Jordan overfloweth all his banks <sup>d</sup> all the time of harvest;)

16 That the waters which came down from above stood, and <sup>e</sup> rose up upon an heap, very far from the city Adam, that *is* beside 'Zaretan; and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, *even* <sup>f</sup> the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho.

17 And <sup>h</sup> the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD <sup>i</sup> stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and <sup>k</sup> all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

especially to have aimed to render the stupendous miracle about to be wrought, (and which he foretold, that it might be the more impressive,) a convincing proof in the minds of the people, that all the gods of the nations were idols destitute of life and power: and that idolatry (to which they were excessively prone,) was as senseless, as it was impious and abominable. (*Notes*, Deut. iv. 35—40. 2 Kings xix. 14—19. Is. liv. 4, 5.)

V. 15. *Jordan overfloweth, &c.*] This annual inundation arose from the melting of the snows upon mount Lebanon. The barley-harvest was at hand, or already begun; and the overflowing of the river seems to have taken place, just before Israel was commanded to pass over it, which served to render the miracle more incontestable and stupendous. (ii. 7. 23.)

V. 16, 17. The waters *below* the place where Israel then was, ran off towards the dead or salt sea, which was once the *plain* of Sodom, and left the channel dry for the space of several miles; whilst those *above* accumulated, and stood like mountains very far back towards the sea of Tiberias, without inundating the adjacent country. (*Marg. Ref.* f, g.) As an illustrious example of faith and obedience, the priests, who bare the ark, marched into the midst of the dry channel, and there took their stand, with the waters piled up far higher than their heads and nothing to prevent their being overwhelmed by them, but the invisible power of God. Here they abode all day, till the people, encouraged by their example, had in succession marched over the river, with all that appertained to them, and were safely landed on the further shore! (*Notes*, iv. 3—10.)—The passage through the Red Sea took place in the night, when the Israelites were fleeing from the Egyptians with great trepidation: but they passed Jordan in the day-time, with previous warning, leisurely, directly opposite to Jericho, and with a triumphant defiance of the Canaanites.—

This passage of Israel over Jordan into the promised land, after their weary wanderings in the wilderness, evidently typified the believer's passage through death to heaven, when he has finished his course in this sinful world.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They who are attentive to the duties of their station, and enemies to sloth and self-indulgence, are likely to be eminent and useful; and they alone.—We ought to proceed in our appointed course, notwithstanding remote difficulties, which may appear to us insurmountable; and to rely on the Lord to remove them when the critical moment arrives: for his interpositions are intended to excite, not to supersede, our activity. But we should look well to the path of our feet, especially when "we have not passed *that way heretofore.*" (*Notes*, Prov. iv. 26, 27.)—The precepts of the word of God, his providential dispensations, and the counsel and example of his ministers and people, when properly attended to; together with the inward teaching of his Holy Spirit, humbly sought by earnest prayer; will make our way plain to us, though perplexed in itself; (*Note*, Prov. iii. 5, 6. P. O. Is. xxx. 18—33;) and we cannot in general go wrong in keeping close to the ordinances of God, and *thus*, as it were, following the ark in all its removals. In so doing, we need not fear rivers of trouble, mountains of difficulty, or hosts of opposing foes; but confiding in the faithful promise, the almighty power, and covenant-love of our God, "the living God, *the Lord of the whole earth,*" we may proceed with boldness and alacrity. Whether we be called to endure poverty, pain, reproach, persecution, or death, we are following "the Author and Finisher of our faith:" nor can we set our foot in any perilous or arduous spot, through the whole journey, but faith will there descry the print of the Redeemer's foot, who trode that very path to glory above;

## CHAP. IV.

Twelve men are appointed to take twelve stones out of Jordan for a memorial; and twelve stones are set up in the midst of Jordan, 1—9. The people pass over; God magnifies Joshua; and the priests are ordered to bring the ark out of Jordan, which then overflows as before, 10—18. The date of this event, 19. The twelve stones are set up in Gilgal, where Israel encamped, 20—24.

**AND** it came to pass, when all the people <sup>a iii. 17. Deut. xxvii. 2.</sup> "were clean passed over Jordan, that the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying,

2 Take you 'twelve men out of the people, out of every tribe a man; 3 And command you them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where <sup>b iii. 12. Num. i 4—10. xii. 7. xxiv. 18. Deut. i. 23. 1 Kings xviii. 81 Matt. x. 1—6.</sup> 'the priests' feet stood firm, <sup>c See on iii. 13.</sup> 'twelve stones; and ye shall carry them over with you, and 'leave them in the lodging-place where ye shall lodge this night.

4 Then Joshua called the twelve men whom he had <sup>d xxiv. 27. Gen. xxviii. 22. 1 Sam. vii. 12. Ps. ciii. 2. cxi. 4. Luke xix. 40. e 8. 19, 20.</sup> 'prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man; <sup>f See on 2.—Mark iii. 14—19.</sup>

and who calls us to "follow him, that where he is, there we may be also."—His ministers especially, are required to set the people an example of obedience, patience, and unshaken confidence in him; by abiding in those perilous or difficult stations which he has assigned them, when others fear to pass that way; and in so doing they may expect peculiar support and protection: (*Note, Acts viii. 1:*) but if they hesitate to take the lead in facing danger and enduring hardship; and shew an undue attention to their own ease, security, and indulgence, their exhortations will be very lightly regarded.—The more adventurous we are *in the path of duty*, the greater evidence we shall have of the Lord's love and care of us; for he will not disappoint the expectation of faith, but in due season exceed our most enlarged hopes. But would we experience the more signal effects of his love and power, we must study to put away from us the pollutions of sin, and be peculiarly careful not "to grieve the Holy Spirit;" we must diligently follow his directions, and give him all the glory.—Thus the Christian's course originates from "the working of the mighty power of God," in his deliverance from the yoke of sin and Satan; and that same power daily carries on the work of "renewing him in the spirit of his mind," amidst innumerable snares, temptations, and counteracting obstacles: but in the last conflict especially, he will find that the Lord "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that he asks or thinks, according to that power which now worketh in him;" (*Note, Eph. iii. 20, 21:*) so that even the feeble Christian shall conquer in this conflict, and pass safely through this path beset with terrors. This shall continue invariably to be the case, till all the company of the redeemed "are clean passed over," and landed safe on Canaan's shore.—For though none of them have passed this way heretofore; yet Jesus their Brother and Friend, the true "Ark of the covenant," has gone before, and crossed the river, when its floods were swelled to a tremendous height: and thus he has divided the floods before them. He safely reached the heavenly shore, when he rose from the dead as the first-fruits of his people, and ascended into heaven as their Forerunner: and he began to be magnified in the sight of all Israel, when, thus risen and ascended, he sent down his Holy Spirit, to give assistance to his apostles, and success to his holy gospel. To those who neglect this great salvation, death may well be "the king of terrors:" for its consequences will be to them tremendous beyond expression. But to believers even this "king of terrors" is become a friend. "To them to

"live is Christ, and to die is gain." (*Notes, Phil. i. 19—26.*) This world is a dreary wilderness, and they are often weary of their toilsome pilgrimage, though fed with the Bread of heaven, and drinking the Waters of life from the Rock of salvation: and though guided and guarded by their gracious Redeemer through all the dangers of the way; in their deliberate judgment they count it "far better to depart hence to be with Christ:" and they may meet death in the most horrid form (like Jordan overflowing all his banks,) without terror, if they are but able to keep the eye of faith fixed upon the Saviour, and on the inheritance provided for them in heaven.—Let us then treasure up our experiences of his faithful and tender care during the whole course of our lives, that they may come in aid to our faith and hope in this last conflict: let us carefully consider the examples of others, whose happy death we witness, or of which we read and hear, to allay our fears and encourage our hearts: let us prepare daily for this important season, by faith and repentance, and a conscientious attention to the duties of our station; and let us watch and pray against anxious or distressing fears. The Lord will provide for our passage over this Jordan, when the time comes: yea, he will come and meet us, and by his animating presence invigorate our faith and hope; till we join the innumerable multitude, that in the Canaan above are singing the praises of their greater Deliverer, who hath both redeemed them from far worse than Egyptian bondage, and brought them safe to the promised land, through his precious blood, and by his all-conquering arm.

## NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 2. These twelve men had before been selected, to hold themselves in readiness. (iii. 12.) One was chosen out of every tribe (4): for though some had received their inheritance on the other side of Jordan, they were all brethren, united in interest and religion; and it was proper they should all join in perpetuating the memory of this signal miracle.

V. 3—9. After all the people had passed over Jordan, and before they marched to the place of encampment, or had any opportunity of refreshing themselves and taking care of their families; they were required to use proper measures for transmitting to posterity a memorial that Jordan had been divided "before the ark of the LORD;" and so give parents an opportunity of instructing their children, concerning the wonderful works of God for Israel. (*Note, 20—24.*)—The priests patiently and courageously kept

5 And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the LORD your God into the midst of Jordan, and take ye up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel;

6 That this may be <sup>a</sup> a sign among you, <sup>b</sup> that when your children ask <sup>c</sup> their fathers <sup>d</sup> in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones?

7 Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.

8 And the children of Israel <sup>e</sup> did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the LORD spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there.

9 And Joshua <sup>f</sup> set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan; in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and <sup>g</sup> they are there unto this day.

10 For the priests which bare the ark <sup>h</sup> stood in the midst of Jordan, un-

til every thing was finished, that the LORD commanded Joshua to speak unto the people, according to all that <sup>i</sup> Moses commanded Joshua: and the people <sup>j</sup> hasted and passed over.

11 And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over, <sup>k</sup> that the ark of the LORD passed over, and the priests, in the presence of the people.

12 And <sup>l</sup> the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, passed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses spake unto them.

13 About forty thousand, <sup>m</sup> prepared for war, passed over before the LORD unto battle, <sup>n</sup> to the plains of Jericho.

14 ¶ On that day the LORD <sup>o</sup> magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and <sup>p</sup> they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life.

15 And the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying,

16 Command <sup>q</sup> the priests that bear the ark <sup>r</sup> of the testimony, that they come up out of Jordan.

17 Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, <sup>s</sup> Come ye up out of Jordan.

18 And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and <sup>t</sup> the soles

<sup>f</sup> xxii. 27. Ex. xii. 14. xiii. 9. xxxi. 13. Num. xvi. 38. Is. iv. 13. Ez. xx. 12. 20. h Ex. xii. 26, 27. xiii. 14. Deut. vi. 20, 21. xl. 19. Ps. xlv. 1. lxxi. 18. lxxviii. 3-6. Is. xxxviii. 19. Acts ii. 39. \* Heb. to-morrow. i iii. 13-16.

j See on 6.—Ex. xii. 14. xxviii. 12. xxx. 16. Num. xvi. 40. Is. lxxi. 3. Marg. 1 Cor. xi. 24. k 2-S. i. 16-18.

l Ps. cxi. 2-4.

m Gen. xxvi. 33. Deut. xxxiv. 6. Judg. i. 26. 1 Sam. xxx. 25. 2 Sam. iv. 3. 2 Chr. v. 9. Matt. xxvii. 8. xxviii. 15. n See on iii. 16, 17. —Is. xxviii. 16.

o Num. xxvii. 21. —23. Deut. xxxi. 9. p Ex. xii. 39. Ps. cxix. 60. Prov. xxvii. 1. Ec. ix. 10. 2 Cor. vi. 2. Heb. iii. 7, 8. q 18. iii. 8. 17.

r i. 14. Num. xxxi. 20-32.

s Or, ready armed. Eph. vi. 11.

t v. 10. 2 Kings xxxv. 8. Jer. xxxix. 5. li. 8. i. 16-18.—See on iii. 7.—1 Cor. x. 2.

u Ex. xiv. 21. 1 Sam. xii. 18. 1 Kings iii. 28. 2 Chr. xxx. 12. Prov. xxiv. 21. Rom. xiii. 4.

v See on iii. 3-6. Ex. xxv. 16-22. Rev. xi. 19.

x Gen. viii. 16-18. Dan. iii. 26. Acts xvi. 28. 35.—39.

y See on iii. 13. 15.

their station, not only till the whole multitude was passed over, but also till these twelve men had returned into the midst of the river, and taking each a large stone, probably as great as he could carry, had returned with them to the shore; and until twelve stones had been set up in the midst of the river. The twelve stones were taken from the very spot where the priests had kept their station; and the twelve other stones were set up in the same place. As the water would there be always of considerable depth, it may be supposed that these stones were formed into a kind of pillar, or monument, generally visible from the banks of the river.—The concluding words might be written by Joshua at the close of his life, or perhaps added by some later prophet. (Marg. Ref. m.)

V. 10. *Moses commanded.*] We do not read, that Moses gave any instructions about the passage of Israel over Jordan: but he charged Joshua to obey the Lord, and the people to be observant of Joshua; to which they peculiarly attended on this occasion.—It is said, “the people hasted,” as none of them wasted any time: perhaps some were timorous through unbelief; but there was no undue haste or confusion. (Note, Is. xxviii. 16, conclusion.)

V. 11. The people <sup>a</sup> beheld the water standing still on <sup>b</sup> an heap, while the ark was in the river; but come tumbling down when it was gone: which demonstrated that <sup>c</sup> it was God's presence with them, to which alone they <sup>d</sup> owed this miraculous mercy. *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 12, 13. This armed body of men, unencumbered with families or flocks, and prepared to repel the enemy, if they should attack them, would leave the other tribes more at liberty to attend upon their personal and domestick concerns. (Note, i. 12—15.)—Probably the inhabitants of Jericho witnessed from the walls of the city this astonishing scene; and saw their invaders encamp in those very plains, where it might have been expected the inhabitants of the land would have mustered their forces to oppose them. (Note, iii. 2.)

V. 14. In consequence of the honour which God put on Joshua on this occasion, the Israelites stood in awe of him, and submitted to his authority ever after, as the divinely appointed successor to Moses; perceiving that the Lord was with him, as he had been with Moses. (Note, i. 16—18.)

V. 15—18. The priests did not quit their station, till Joshua, who had commanded them thither, ordered them





JERICHO AND THE JORDAN.

JOSHUA IV. 19; VI. 26.

\* Heb. *plucked* of the priests' feet were \*lifted up  
 † Ex. xiv. 26—29. unto the dry land, \* that the waters of  
 ‡ 11. 15. 1 Chr. Jordan returned unto their place, \* and  
 xii. 15.  
 † Heb. *went*. Is. † flowed over all his banks, as *they did*  
 viii. 8. before.

19 And the people came up out of  
 ‡ Ex. xii. 2, 3. Jordan on the tenth day of the <sup>b</sup>first  
 † v. 9. x. 6. 43. month, and encamped in ° Gilgal, in  
 xv. 7. 1 Sam. xi. the east border of Jericho.  
 14. 15. xv. 33.  
 Am. iv. 4. v. 5.  
 Mic. vi. 5.

20 And <sup>d</sup>those twelve stones, which  
 † See on 3. 8. they took out of Jordan, did Joshua  
 pitch in Gilgal.

21 And he spake unto the children  
 † See on 6.—Ps. of Israel, saying, ° When your chil-  
 cv. 2—5 cxlv. 4 dren shall ask their fathers † in time  
 † Heb. *to-morrow*.

thence; nor did he thus order them till the Lord com-  
 manded him: so obedient were all parties to the word of  
 God, and so entirely confident of his protection! As soon  
 as the priests had reached the shore, and the ark, the sym-  
 bol of the Lord's presence, had left the river, the waters  
 reverted to their natural course, and flowed over all the  
 banks as before; shewing that the power of him, who en-  
 acted the laws of nature, had on this occasion suspended  
 them, for the display of his glory in performing his prom-  
 ises to the people. (Notes, 11. Dan. iii. 26, 27.)

V. 19. The Israelites passed over Jordan, exactly five  
 days short of forty years after they left Egypt, and just in  
 time to prepare for the celebration of the passover, upon  
 their entrance into Canaan, as they had celebrated it just  
 before their departure out of Egypt. (Note, Ex. xii. 3—10.)

V. 20—24. It is most natural to conclude, that these  
 stones were placed separately on some eminence, where  
 they would be conspicuous: and being exactly twelve, ac-  
 cording to the number of the tribes in Israel, and probably  
 no other stones near, at all like them in size and kind;  
 they would naturally excite enquiries, how they came there,  
 and what was meant by them. Thus the miraculous divi-  
 sion of Jordan, (as completing that kindness to Israel,  
 which was begun at the division of the Red Sea,) would  
 frequently become the subject of conversation, both among  
 the Israelites, and those who came thither from distant  
 nations; the tradition of this event would be perpetuated  
 and circulated very widely; and even the gentiles might  
 be induced to examine the sacred oracles, and to enquire  
 further concerning the glorious perfections and wonderful  
 works of Israel's God.—In these respects this memorial  
 would tend to promote true religion; "that all the people  
 "of the earth might know the hand of the LORD, that it  
 "is mighty." But it would especially give parents an op-  
 portunity of diverting the inquisitiveness of their children  
 into a profitable channel, by encouraging them to ask  
 questions on the subject; and by giving them such answers,  
 as would tend to bring them acquainted with the works of  
 God, and to impress them with the fear of his name; that  
 so one generation after another might be confirmed in  
 worshipping him alone, and be restrained from idolatry.—  
 These stones are supposed to have remained, till the days  
 of Christ, or even longer. (Notes, Ex. xii. 11—14. xiii. 8—  
 10. Ps. lxxviii. 3—8. cxi. 4.)

to come, saying, What *mean* these  
 stones?

22 Then ye shall let your children  
 know, † saying, Israel came over this  
 Jordan on dry land.

23 For the LORD your God dried up  
 the waters of Jordan from before you,  
 until ye were passed over, as the LORD  
 your God did to the Red Sea, ° which  
 he dried up from before us, until we  
 were gone over:

24 That <sup>b</sup>all the people of the earth  
 might know the hand of the LORD,  
 † that it is mighty; that <sup>k</sup>ye might fear  
 the LORD your God † for ever.

f See on 11. 17.—  
 Ex. xiv. 29. xv.  
 19. Ps. lxvi. 6.  
 6. Is. xi. 15, 16.  
 xlv. 27. ii. 10.  
 Rev. xvi. 12.  
 g Neh. ix. 11. Ps.  
 lxxviii. 16—19.  
 lxxviii. 13. Is.  
 xliii. 16. lxiii  
 12—14.  
 h Ex. ix. 16. Deut.  
 xxviii. 10. 1 Sam.  
 xvii. 46. 1 Kings  
 viii. 43. 2 Kings  
 v. 15. xix. 19.  
 Ps. cvi. 8. Dan.  
 iii. 26—29. vi.  
 26, 27.  
 i Ex. xv. 16. 1 Chr.  
 xxix. 12. Ps.  
 lxxxix. 18.  
 k Ex. xiv. 31. xx.  
 20. Deut. vi. 2.  
 Ps. lxvii. 6—8.  
 lxxxix. 7. Jer.  
 x. 6, 7. xxxii  
 40.  
 † Heb. *all days*.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The works of the Lord are so worthy of remembrance,  
 and the heart of man is so prone to forget them, that vari-  
 ous methods must be adopted to keep them in remem-  
 brance.—Our own ease should be disregarded, and our  
 ordinary employments or refreshments postponed, that we  
 may lose no time in rendering to the Lord the tribute of  
 praise for mercies received, while the sense of gratitude  
 glows in the heart, and before the lively impression has  
 time to wear off.—There is a peculiar style in the works  
 and in the word of God: majestic in simplicity, expres-  
 sive and emphatick; but with genuine dignity, disdaining  
 the encumbrance of useless ornament and affected splend-  
 our. Never did triumphal column or arch, with all the  
 magnificence of architecture, form so proper a monument  
 of some celebrated victory, as did the twelve rude stones  
 from Jordan's channel of the miraculous passage of Israel  
 into Canaan, under the conduct of the ark of the Lord.  
 Such is the instituted memorial of the Redeemer's dying  
 love: simple, impressive, and entirely calculated to shew  
 forth his death and passion in the most affecting manner;  
 to be a suitable profession of our repentance, faith, and  
 grateful love; and to express our devotedness to him, our  
 fellowship with him and his people, and our expectation  
 of future harmonious felicity in the realms above. Yet all  
 this is veiled under so plain an exterior, that the carnal  
 eye can see no comeliness or excellency in it, any more  
 than in him whose love is commemorated: and to make  
 it suit the grovelling minds of the worldly, and the selfish  
 purposes of the ambitious, it has been dressed up with  
 pomp and parade of meaning and of ceremony; which  
 have so disguised and perplexed the divine appointment,  
 that many of the true disciples of Christ have been strangely  
 frightened from it, as if some formidable mischief lay con-  
 cealed within; to the dishonour of the Lord, and the detri-  
 ment of their own souls. But we should take every pro-  
 per occasion of attending on that sacred ordinance, learn-  
 ing from the word of God its simple meaning and inten-  
 tion; and, should gladly speak of them, when opportunity  
 is afforded, to our children, our neighbours, and to every  
 enquirer. In this, and in every thing else, the curiosity  
 of children should be improved as an opening to their in-  
 struction: and they who take pleasure in searching out

## CHAP. V.

The Canaanites are affrighted, 1. Joshua, at God's command, circumcises Israel: the need there was of this, 2—8. The place is called Gilgal, 9. The pass-over is kept at Gilgal, 10, 11. The manna ceases, 12. One appears to Joshua, calling himself "The Captain of the Lord's host," 13—15.

AND it came to pass, when <sup>a</sup>all the kings of the Amorites, which *were* on the side of Jordan westward, and all the kings of the <sup>c</sup>Canaanites, <sup>d</sup>which *were* by the sea, <sup>e</sup>heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over, that their heart melted; <sup>f</sup>'neither was there spirit in them any more because of the children of Israel.

2 ¶ At that time the LORD said unto Joshua, Make thee <sup>g</sup>sharp knives, and <sup>h</sup>circumcise again the children of Israel the second time.

3 And Joshua <sup>i</sup>made him sharp knives, and circumcised the children of Israel at <sup>j</sup>the hill of the foreskins.

4 And this *is* the cause why Joshua did circumcise: <sup>k</sup>'All the people that

came out of Egypt *that were* males, *even* all the men of war, died in the wilderness by the way after they came out of Egypt.

5 Now all the people that came out were circumcised; but all the people *that were* born in the wilderness by the way, as they came forth out of Egypt, *them* <sup>l</sup>they had not circumcised.

6 For the children of Israel <sup>m</sup>walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people *that were* men of war, which came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: unto whom the LORD <sup>n</sup>sware, that he would not shew them the land, which the LORD sware unto their fathers that he would give us, <sup>o</sup>a land that floweth with milk and honey.

7 And <sup>p</sup>their children *whom* he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised: for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way.

8 And it came to pass <sup>q</sup>when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp <sup>r</sup>till they were whole.

<sup>a</sup> xii. 9—24. xxiv. 15. Gen. x. 15—19. xv. 18—21. xlviii. 22. Judg. xi. 23. 2 Sam. xxi. 2. Ez. xvi. 3. Am. ii. 9.  
<sup>c</sup> xvii. 12. 18. Gen. xii. 6. Ex. xxxiii. 28. Judg. i. 1. iv. 2. Ezra ix. 1. Ps. cxxxv. 11.  
<sup>d</sup> Num. xiii. 29. Judg. iii. 8. Zeph. ii. 4—6.  
<sup>e</sup> See on ii. 9—11. —Ex. xv. 14, 15. Ps. xlviii. 4—6. Rev. xviii. 10.  
<sup>f</sup> 1 Sam. xxv. 37. 1 Kings x. 5. Is. xliii. 6—8. Ez. xxi. 7. Dan. v. 6.  
<sup>g</sup> Or, knives of stnt. Ex. iv. 25. Gen. xvii. 10—14. Deut. x. 16. xxx. 6. Rom. ii. 29. iv. 11. Col. ii. 11.  
<sup>h</sup> Gen. xvii. 23—27. Matt. xvi. 24.  
<sup>i</sup> Or, Gibeah ha-raioth.  
<sup>j</sup> 1 Sam. xiv. 29. xxvi. 64, 65. Deut. ii. 16. 1 Cor. x. 5. Heb. iii. 17—19.

<sup>k</sup> Deut. xii. 8, 9. Hos. vi. 6, 7. Matt. xii. 2. Rom. ii. 26. 1 Cor. vii. 19. Gal. v. 6. vi. 15.  
<sup>l</sup> Num. xiv. 32—34. Deut. i. 3. ii. 7, 14. Is. xcv. 10, 11. Jer. ii. 2.  
<sup>m</sup> See on Ex. iii. 8. 17.—Ez. xx. 6. 15. Joel iii. 18.  
<sup>n</sup> Num. xiv. 31. Deut. i. 39.  
<sup>o</sup> Heb. when the people had made an end to be circumcised.  
<sup>p</sup> Gen. xxxiv. 25.

the works of the Lord, and in diffusing their knowledge among strangers, or perpetuating it to posterity, shall more and more understand his loving kindness and mercy. (Ps. cvii. 43.)—Gladly should we all render every service we can to the church of God, and consider ourselves as having one common interest with all the families of the redeemed, however separated by rivers, seas, or mountains, or by the more *unnatural* partition-walls of sects and parties: and in so doing, we may safely commit our families and interests to the protection of Israel's God.—When, with careful attention to the commands and providence of God, we have taken the place, and engaged in the service, assigned us; we ought patiently to abide in it, and not to attempt to remove, till he evidently commands us thence. Nothing can hurt us in doing this, and nothing should intimidate us from it. In like manner also, we ought patiently to wait our dismissal from this sinful world, ready to depart, but willing to bear the cross and maintain the conflict, till the Lord's purposes for his own glory be accomplished in us.—But the removal of the righteous is frequently like the opening of the flood-gates of divine judgments upon guilty nations, which have been restrained by their presence, example, and prayers; and much more when the ministers and ordinances of God are removed, may national calamities be expected. But let us bless God that this is not the case with our favoured land: let us unite in prayer that it may not be: and let us also remember, that we may derive benefit from all the mercies shewn to his church in all ages and nations, and should bless God

for them; and every recent favour should excite us to repeat his praises for former blessings.

## NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1. Great terror had before pervaded the minds of the inhabitants of Canaan, in every part of the country: yet the kings seem to have kept up their courage, till they heard that the barrier of the land had been broken through, by a miracle similar to the dividing of the Red Sea; and that the whole multitude of Israel was actually encamped in their country, with the express purpose of possessing it, and extirpating the former inhabitants. On hearing this, their hearts melted with terror, as wax before the fire; and this both anticipated and facilitated their destruction. (Marg. Ref.)—The words "*We* were passed over," intimates that the writer was one of the company.

V. 2—8. It is probable, that there had been a general circumcision, a short time before the departure of Israel from Egypt; of all those who were then found uncircumcised: and with reference to it, this circumcision, which took place immediately on their entering the promised land, was called "the second time." It is evident that the Israelites, who had been born in the wilderness, were left uncircumcised: but it is not so manifest whether this omission arose from negligence; or whether the Lord dispensed with it during their wanderings, when every removal would have rendered it dangerous to many infants; or whether the nation was laid under a kind of interdict,

9 And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day have I <sup>p</sup> rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you: wherefore the name of the place is called <sup>q</sup> Gilgal unto this day.

10 And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and <sup>r</sup> kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even, in the plains of Jericho.

11 And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, <sup>s</sup> unleavened cakes, and parched <sup>t</sup> corn in the self-same day.

12 And <sup>u</sup> the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; <sup>v</sup> but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

13 ¶ And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that <sup>w</sup> he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold there stood <sup>x</sup> a Man over against him, with <sup>y</sup> his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, <sup>z</sup> Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?

14 And he said, Nay; <sup>a</sup> but as <sup>b</sup> Captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua <sup>c</sup> fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, <sup>d</sup> What saith <sup>e</sup> my Lord unto his servant?

15 And the Captain of the LORD's host said unto Joshua, <sup>f</sup> Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.

<sup>p</sup> Gen. xxxv. 14.  
1 Sam. xvii. 26.  
36. Ps. cxix. 39.  
Jer. ix. 25. Ez.  
xx. 7. xxiii. 3. 8.  
Eph. ii. 11, 12.

<sup>q</sup> That is, rolling.  
iv. 19.

<sup>r</sup> Ex. xii. 3, &c.  
Num. ix. 1—5.

<sup>s</sup> Ex. xii. 18—20.  
xiii. 6. 7. Lev.  
xxiii. 6. 14.

<sup>t</sup> Ex. xvi. 35. Neh.  
ix. 20, 21. Rev.  
vii. 16, 17.

<sup>u</sup> Deut. vi. 10, 11.  
Prov. xiii. 22.  
Is. lxx. 13, 14.  
John iv. 38.

<sup>w</sup> Gen. xxxiii. 1.

<sup>x</sup> 6. Dan. viii. 3.

<sup>y</sup> z. 5.

<sup>z</sup> vi. 2. Gen. xviii.

<sup>a</sup> 2. xxxii. 24—30

<sup>b</sup> Judg. xiii. 8, 9.

<sup>c</sup> 11, 22. Dan. x.

<sup>d</sup> 5. Hos. xii. 3—5.

<sup>e</sup> Zech. i. 8. Rev.

<sup>f</sup> i. 13.

<sup>g</sup> Num. xxii. 28.

<sup>h</sup> 1 Chr. xxi. 16,

<sup>i</sup> 17.

<sup>j</sup> 1 Chr. xii. 17,

<sup>k</sup> 18.

<sup>l</sup> a Ex. xxxiii. 20—

<sup>m</sup> 22. Is. lv. 4. Dan.

<sup>n</sup> x. 13. 21. xii. 1.

<sup>o</sup> Heb. ii. 10. Rev.

<sup>p</sup> xii. 7. xix. 11.

<sup>q</sup> 14.

<sup>r</sup> Or, Prince.

<sup>s</sup> b Gen. xvii. 3, 17.

<sup>t</sup> Lev. ix. 24. Num.

<sup>u</sup> xvi. 22, 45. Matt.

<sup>v</sup> viii. 2. Luke v.

<sup>w</sup> 12. Rev. xix. 10.

<sup>x</sup> xxii. 8, 9.

<sup>y</sup> c 1 Sam. iii. 9, 10.

<sup>z</sup> Is. vi. 8. Acts ix.

<sup>a</sup> 6.

<sup>b</sup> d Ex. iv. 10, 13.

<sup>c</sup> Ps. cx. 1. Matt.

<sup>d</sup> xxii. 44. Luke i.

<sup>e</sup> 43. xx. 42. John

<sup>f</sup> xx. 28. Phil. iii.

<sup>g</sup> 5.

<sup>h</sup> e Ex. iii. 5. Acts

<sup>i</sup> vii. 32, 33. 2 Pet.

<sup>j</sup> i. 18.

when the rebellious generation was doomed to die in the wilderness. It is generally agreed, that the passover was celebrated only once, during Israel's continuance in the desert; and the people there did not want any mark of distinction from other nations: so that circumcision, in respect of its principal objects, was not so requisite in that situation, as after they were settled in Canaan; where every instituted ordinance, and every method of distinction and separation, must be used. The command however given to Joshua, and by him to the people, to perform this painful operation on so great a multitude, immediately upon entering the enemy's country, when it was well known that they would by it be for some time utterly disabled, formed a very great trial of their faith; (Note, Gen. xxxiv. 25—28;) and their prompt and universal obedience, in such critical circumstances, manifested a confidence in the Lord's protection, and a submission to his will, which confirm the sentiment, that this was the best of all the generations of Israel.—As circumcision might be performed by any one; though the number to be circumcised was great, the whole would soon be completed, probably on the first day after their passage over Jordan.

V. 9. When the Israelites were brought into the promised land, and the covenant of the Lord was thus solemnly ratified with them, as the seed of Abraham, by the appointed seal; the reproach of their Egyptian bondage, and idolatrous customs, was rolled away; and it was plain, that the Lord had not brought them forth into the wilderness to destroy them. (Notes, Gen. xvii. 7—12. 23—27. Ex. iv. 24—26. 1 Sam. xvii. 25, 26.)—The word "Gilgal" signifies rolling. The same place was also called, "the hill of the foreskins;" because of the great numbers whose foreskins were left buried there (3).

V. 10. The general circumcision of the people was preparatory to the solemn observance of the passover in its season; for no uncircumcised person might eat of it. (Notes, Ex. xii. 43—45. 48, 49.) This was a proper entrance upon the promised land, as a holy land. The celebration of the passover immediately preceded Israel's de-

parture out of Egypt; and formed nearly their first employment on entering Canaan: for they were both brought out of Egypt, and into the land of their inheritance, "that they might keep the LORD's statutes, and observe his laws." (Note, Ps. cv. 43—45.) Having been circumcised on the eleventh day of the month, they would be enabled to eat the passover on the evening of the fourteenth; while those who had before been circumcised might prepare for their brethren: and by the time that the days of unleavened bread were ended, they would be perfectly healed and fit for action. In the mean time, the Canaanites were intimidated, and restrained from assaulting them. Nay, their very confidence in thus setting their enemies at defiance, while they attended to the ordinances of their religion, and engaged JEHOVAH to fight their battles, if it were known among the inhabitants of the land, would tend to increase their consternation. (Note, Ex. xxxiv. 24.)

V. 11, 12. The people would find abundance of old corn in the deserted granaries of the affrighted inhabitants; and the barley-harvest being ripe, after offering the sheaf of first-fruits, they ate also new parched corn: and thus the manna, being no longer necessary, ceased, after having been sent them regularly for almost forty years! (Ex. xvi. 35.)

V. 13—15. Joshua was either taking a view of Jericho, in order to attack it, or employed in serious meditation and prayer, or both alternately; when he was surprised with the appearance of one, in form as "a Man,...with his sword drawn in his hand." Joshua, not at all intimidated, accosted him, and demanded of him whether he was an ally or an enemy; and he received for answer, that he was come, not only as an Ally, but as Commander-in-chief over the LORD's host, and over Joshua himself: upon which Joshua recognized and worshipped him as his Lord; and reverently prostrating himself upon the earth, waited and asked to know his will. Not only was this worship received, but he was further commanded to shew the same token of respect to the heavenly vision, which had been

## CHAP. VI.

Jericho is shut up: and the Lord instructs Joshua how to conduct the siege, 1—6. Joshua directs the priests to carry the ark round the city, preceded by other priests, sounding with trumpets, and attended by the people, 6, 7. They thus march round the city daily for six days, and seven times on the seventh day, 8—16. The city and all in it, (except Rahab and those with her,) are devoted to destruction, 17—19. The people shout, the walls fall down, and the city is

required when the LORD appeared to Moses in the bush: (*Notes*, Ex. iii. 2—6 :) and this being done, he received from him the orders contained in the ensuing chapter, which is a continuation of the subject, and is very improperly separated from the close of this.—All these circumstances prove beyond a doubt, that this *armed Man* was no other than the Son of God, JEHOVAH, the second Person in the sacred Trinity, the Captain of our salvation, anticipating his incarnation, and assuring Joshua of success in this war. (*Notes*, Gen. xxxii. 30. Hos. xii. 3—6. Phil. ii. 5—8.) ‘Jesus, our Lord, the Prince of his Father’s host, ‘appearing to him who was a type of him, at Jericho, ‘with a drawn sword, promised to be the Defender of his ‘people.’ *Archbp. Usher*. ‘The Angel, who suffered himself to be worshipped, and by whose presence the place ‘where he appeared was sanctified, so that Joshua was ‘commanded to put off his shoes, no doubt was he whom ‘all the angels in heaven worshipped.’ *Bp. Patrick*.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

How dreadful is the case of those, who are irreversibly devoted to destruction, for whom no mercy is reserved, and who see the deserved vengeance of God advancing towards them with steady pace, without any possibility of averting or escaping it! Such will be the horrible situation of the wicked, when summoned to appear before the tribunal of an offended God. Nor can words express the anguish of their feelings, or the greatness of their terror, when they shall call in vain “upon the rocks and mountains to fall upon them,” and hide them from the intolerable frown of their angry Judge, and from the dire sentence which he is prepared to execute upon them. As “men’s hearts cannot endure, or their hands be strong,” in such circumstances; oh, that they would now take warning, even before it be too late, that they would flee for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them in the salvation of the gospel!—The maxims and conduct of the church of God are widely different from those of the world. What other general ever opened a campaign in an enemy’s country, in the manner that Joshua did? On such occasions, all attention paid to the exercises of religion is too generally considered as a needless waste of time. Yet, if the help of God be indeed the best security for success, and if his anger is more to be feared than the sword of any enemy; it will be found true policy to begin every expedition with repentance of sin, and attendance on the solemn worship of the Lord, and with using every method of securing his protection; though to a carnal eye that method may appear unfavourable to success. (*Note*, Matt. vi. 33, 34.)—But especially the Christian soldier must thus

taken and destroyed; but Rahab is preserved, 20—25. A curse is denounced on him who should rebuild Jericho, 26. Joshua becomes renowned, 27

Now Jericho \* was straitly shut up, \* because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in.

2 And <sup>b</sup> the LORD said unto Joshua, <sup>c</sup> See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour.

<sup>a</sup> Hel. did shut up, and was shut up. ii. 7. 2 Kings xvii. 4. <sup>b</sup> See on v. 13—15. <sup>c</sup> 9—24. viii. 1. xi. 6—8. Judg. xi. 21. 2 Sam. v. 19. Neh. ix. 24. Dan ii. 21. 44. iv. 17. 35. v. 18.

begin his spiritual warfare: nor can he face any of his enemies without “the circumcision of the heart,” as the internal “seal of the righteousness of faith,” and the ratification of the new covenant between a reconciled God and his soul. (*Notes*, Rom. ii. 25—29. iv. 9—12.) Then feeding on Christ, the Paschal Lamb who was sacrificed for sinners, and keeping the “feast with the unleavened bread “of sincerity and truth,” he will be prepared for the conflict. (*Note*, 1 Cor. v. 6—8.) Yet he will not prosper, so long as he neglects any of the ordinances or commandments of God; or lies under the reproach of living in conformity to the world, or of acting in any respect inconsistently with his holy profession. But duly attending to the worship of God and the means of grace, and daily girding on his divine armour, he may boldly defy all his enemies, and rest assured of the presence and protection of the great “Captain of salvation;” whose Person he will reverently worship, whose orders he will diligently observe, on whose assistance he will entirely depend, and by whom he will at length be made more than conqueror.—Many things are amiss in the best state of the church on earth: but when young persons have not so much as the appearance of religion, it will redound to the reproach of their parents, being generally the consequence of their misconduct.—When the upright believer is convinced of his neglect or sin, he will readily set about amendment; and when he is in a proper frame of mind, he will account the most self-denying commands, or mysterious dispensations of the Lord, reasonable, wise, and kind. Finally, what the Lord requires of his people, he will supply them with the means of performing: when one source of provision fails he will open another; nor shall the manna for their souls ever fail, till they arrive at the Canaan above, and feast on its rich and inexhaustible provisions.

## NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1. The king and people of Jericho did not possess courage enough to attack the invaders; but they shut themselves up in the city, where doubtless they expected to defend themselves under the protection of the walls, till succours should arrive from other quarters. It does not appear, that they made any advances toward an accommodation.

V. 2. (*Note*, v. 13—15.) It is indisputable that the very person, who in the preceding chapter called himself “the Captain of the host of the LORD,” is here called JEHOVAH, which shews he was not a created angel, but “God himself, who alone could promise and perform what ‘follows.’ *Bp. Patrick*. By commission from him, and according to his instructions, Joshua was directed to con-

d 7. 14. Num. xiv. 9. 1 Cor. i. 21—26. 2 Cor. iv. 7. 3 And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days.

e Lev. xxv. 9. Num x. 1—10. Judg. vii. 7, 8. 15—22. 2 Chr. xiii. 12. xx. 17. 19. 21. 1s. xxvii. 13. Zech. iv. 6. Gen. ii. 3. vii. 2. 3. Lev. iv. 6. xiv. 16. xxv. 8. Num. xxiii. 1. 1 Kings xviii. 43. 2 Kings v. 10. Job xiii. 6. Zech. iv. 2. Rev. i. 4. 20. v. 1. 6. viii. 2. 6. x. 3. xv. 1. 7. xvi. 1. g 16. 20. Ex. xix. 19. h Judg. vii. 20—22. 1 Sam. iv. 5. xvii. 20. 52. 2 Chr. xiii. 15. Jer. l. 15. i 1s. xxy. 12. xxx. 25. 2 Cor. x. 4. 5. Heb. xi. 30. • Heb. under it. k 8. 13.—See on iii. 3.—Ex. xxv. 14. Deut. xxi. 2.—4 Acts ix. 1.

4 And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. 5 And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout: and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.

6 ¶ And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD.

duct his hostilities against the Canaanites: and this authority sanctioned, and even sanctified, all the terrible executions with which it was attended; the sword in his hand being the sword of justice drawn against condemned criminals. (Notes, Num. xxxi. 2. 14—18.)

V. 3—5. By prescribing this extraordinary method of besieging Jericho, the Lord was pleased to put honour upon the ark, as the symbol of his presence, and to manifest that all the victories of Israel were from him: for this was a specimen of them. The faith and patience of the people were thus proved and increased. Their regard to the priesthood likewise would be augmented; and they would be induced the more readily to give the priests their dues, when the Lord had thus employed them in the conquest of the land. The preaching of the gospel also, and its effects were typified.—The words (רִמְוֹת שִׁירָה), translated “rams' horns,” may be rendered *trumpets of the jubilees*, that is, such as were to be blown in the year of jubilee: for the entrance of Israel into the promised land was indeed a jubilee to them. (Notes, Lev. xxv. 8—22.) Instead of the dreadful trumpet of war, they were ordered to sound the trumpet of joy, as already conquerors, in the anticipation of assured faith. The word, signifying *horn*, occurs indeed in the fifth verse; but, even if interpreted literally, it only proves that *horns* were used, without restricting the meaning to *rams' horns*: and perhaps *horn* may be understood figuratively for *trumpet*. (1 Chr. xxv. 5.) No scriptural instance, on any other subject, is adduced, in which *רִמְוֹת* signifies a *ram*; that it has this meaning, is principally inferred from the Chaldee paraphrase. Probably the trumpets before made, and others of the same kind, were used on this occasion; for, as the number of the priests increased, more trumpets were doubtless formed, either of silver, or of some other materials. (Note, Num. x. 2—10.)—The repeated prescription of the number *seven*

7 And he said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the LORD.

8 And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on before the LORD, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them.

9 And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the rear-ward came after the ark, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets.

10 And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice; neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout.

11 So the ark of the LORD compassed

must not pass unnoticed: “Seven priests,” “seven trumpets,” “seven days,” and “seven times on the seventh day.” (Marg. Ref. e, f.) This attention to the number *seven*, in Scripture, probably had reference to the creation of the world in six days, and the Lord's resting on the seventh, which completed the first week: this was the first reason assigned for the sanctification of the sabbath, and occasioned the measuring of time by the periodical return of the seventh day, in most ages and nations ever since. (Notes, Gen. ii. 2, 3.) One of these seven days must have been a sabbath-day; the Jews say, that it was the last, on which the city was taken: and as they were doing the work of God, for his glory, no objection arises against it from the fourth commandment; any more, than against the man's carrying his bed on the sabbath-day, in honour of Christ who had healed him. (Notes, John v. 10—18.)

V. 7. It may be supposed, that the procession was made at such a distance, as to be out of the reach of arrows or missile weapons from the walls. It would be needful for the army to go before in order to level the fences, and remove all obstructions in passing round the city. So unprecedented a procession would doubtless at first create much surprise, and some consternation, among the inhabitants: but when one day passed after another, and no effect followed, they would probably become secure, and treat the whole with derision as a senseless parade.

V. 9. The armed men preceded the priests who blew the trumpets, and those who carried the ark: but after them the people in general seem to have followed, with some persons appointed to close the rear, and to prevent any from straggling from the main body.

V. 10. This implies, that a profound silence must be observed, and that no conversation was allowed.

the city, going about *it* once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp.

<sup>p</sup> See on iii. 1.—  
Gen. xxii. 3.  
<sup>q</sup> See on 6—8.—  
John ii. 5—8. vi.  
10, 11. ix. 6, 7.  
Heb. xi. 7, 8.

12 And <sup>p</sup> Joshua rose early in the morning, and <sup>q</sup> the priests took up the ark of the LORD.

<sup>r</sup> 1 Chr. xv. 26.  
Matt. xxiv. 13.  
Gal. vi. 9.

13 And seven priests, bearing seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD, <sup>r</sup> went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; but the rear-ward came after the ark of the LORD, *the priests* going on and blowing with the trumpets.

<sup>s</sup> 3 11. 15.

14 And <sup>s</sup> the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days.

<sup>t</sup> Ps. cxix. 147.  
Matt. xxviii. 1.  
2 Pet. i. 19.

<sup>u</sup> See on 4.

15 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early, <sup>t</sup> about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: <sup>u</sup> only on that day they compassed the city seven times.

<sup>v</sup> See on 5.—Judg.  
vii. 20—22. 2 Chr.  
xiii. 16. xx. 22,  
23.  
<sup>w</sup> Or, devoted. vii.  
1. Lev. xxvii. 28.  
29. Num. xxi. 2.  
3. 1 Chr. ii. 7.  
Ezra x. 8. marg.  
Is. xxxiv. 6.  
Jer. xlvii. 10. Ez.  
xxxix. 17. Mic.  
iv. 13. 1 Cor.  
xvi. 22. Gal. iii.  
10. 13.

16 And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, <sup>v</sup> Shout, for the LORD hath given you the city.

17 And the city shall be <sup>w</sup> accursed,

*even it, and all that are therein, to the LORD: <sup>x</sup> only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, <sup>y</sup> because she hid the messengers that we sent.*

18 And ye, <sup>z</sup> in any wise keep *your-selves* from the accursed thing, <sup>a</sup> lest ye make *yourselves* accursed when ye take of the accursed thing, and <sup>b</sup> make the camp of Israel a curse, <sup>c</sup> and trouble it.

19 But <sup>d</sup> all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, *are* <sup>e</sup> consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into <sup>f</sup> the treasury of the LORD.

20 So the people shouted when *the* <sup>g</sup> priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that <sup>h</sup> the wall fell down <sup>i</sup> flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

21 And they <sup>j</sup> utterly destroyed all that *was* in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox, and sheep, and ass, with the edge of the sword.

V 16. *Given you the city.*] It is not before said, that Joshua had given the people this assurance: and some think that he was directed to conceal from them the event of the procession, in order to make the fuller proof of their faith and obedience. (Notes, iii. 2—4.)—He could not give this notice to the whole body, except by messengers, sent to make proclamation in different places; and these might sufficiently notify what follows also, though not before explicitly mentioned.

V. 17—19. (Note, Lev. xxvii. 28, 29.) This city was, as it were, the first-fruits of Canaan, and as such wholly devoted to the Lord. The only advantages, which the people derived from this miraculous victory, were the destruction of their enemies, the dominion of the land, and the enriching of the sanctuary. For every living creature must be slain, except Rahab, and those who had taken refuge in her house; whatever part of the spoil was not consumed with fire, was ordered to be brought into the treasury of the Lord; and if any Israelite dared to appropriate the smallest part to himself, the curse of Jericho would rest upon him, and upon the camp of Israel, until he also and all that appertained to him were utterly destroyed. (Notes, vii. Deut. vii. 25, 26. 1 Sam. xv. 1—3. 8, 9. 22, 23. 1 Kings xx. 41, 42.) The whole was to be made a solemn and awful sacrifice to the justice of God upon a people, which had filled up the measure of their iniquities

V. 21. The Canaanites were ripe for destruction; and the Lord was pleased, instead of destroying them by a pestilence, a famine, an earthquake, a deluge, or fire from heaven, to employ the Israelites as the executioners of his vengeance, both for their warning and instruction, and for that of all who read these records. Had an angel been commissioned to slay them, (as one did Sennacherib's army,) who would have charged him with iniquity or cruelty? (Note, 2 Kings xix. 35.)—In all public calamities infants are involved; and tens of thousands of infants die in great agony every year. Now, either God is not the Agent in these calamities, (which opinion, though often implied in men's reasonings on these subjects, is not far from atheism;) or they must consist with the most perfect justice and goodness. What injustice then could there be, in his ordering the destruction of a guilty race by the sword of his people? Or what injustice can be charged on them, while executing his express commission, as ratified by undeniable miracles? If the history be authentic, this was the case: and that must be judged of by other rules.—It is evident that the hand of God would be far more noticed in these uncommon events, than if he had destroyed his enemies by the ordinary course of second causes; as the very objections and clamours of infidels demonstrate: and the malignity of sin, with the indignation of God against sinners, and his power and determination to inflict condign punishment on them, would be far

h 17 ii. 1, &c. 22 But <sup>h</sup>Joshua had said unto the two men that had spied out the country, Go into the harlot's house, and bring out thence the woman, and all that she hath, <sup>1</sup>as ye sware unto her.

ii. 12—14. 17—20. ix. 15. 18—20. 2 Sam. xxi. 2. 7. Ps. xv. 4. Ez. xvii. 13. 16. 18, 19. 23 And the young men that were spies went in, and brought <sup>1</sup>out Rahab, and her father, and her mother, and her brethren, and all that she had; and they brought out all her <sup>1</sup>kindred, and <sup>1</sup>left them without the camp of Israel.

24 And they <sup>1</sup>burnt the city with fire, and all that *was* therein: <sup>m</sup>only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass, and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.

more conspicuous and impressive. Thus, in all governments, solemn publick executions, in which the punishment of the criminal is avowedly inflicted for a specified offence, have always been deemed far more suited to produce salutary effects on the minds of all concerned; than secretly and without notice putting criminals to death in a dungeon, or elsewhere. In short, every man, who by reading the account of these awful judgments, in any age or place, has been led to a deeper sense of the evil of sin, and warned to repent and seek mercy from the Lord, will to eternal ages glorify the divine wisdom and goodness, in the very dispensations, which embolden the blasphemies of the impenitent and unbelieving. (Notes, 2. Num. xxxi. 2.)

V. 22, 23. As Rahab's house stood upon the wall of the city, the preservation of it must have been the effect of the Lord's special care: for had he so pleased, she might have perished when the wall fell down, without any violation of the engagement into which the spies had entered in behalf of Israel. (Notes, ii. 12—20.)—But her faith saved her: this temporal deliverance was the pledge of eternal felicity: she was first honoured as the means of preservation to her relations; and then she became a wife and mother in Israel, and an ancestor of David and of Christ!—She and all her relations were, however, excluded from the camp of Israel, till they had been purified, according to the law.

V. 25. *She hid, &c.*] 'Which proceeded not merely from her humanity, but was a noble act of courageous faith.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 26. Jericho, as *devoted to utter destruction*, was to be left a perpetual desolation, and if any man ventured to rebuild it, he would do it at his peril. (Note, 1 Kings xvi. 34.) Probably Joshua bound the nation, by means of their princes and elders, by an oath, as connected with this curse, that they would leave it in ruins.

V. 27. No wonder that the fame of that commander was celebrated, even by enemies, before whom the river was divided, and the strong walls of the city fell down, without any visible cause.—Joshua might very well write this of himself, as the whole honour was referred to the LORD God of Israel.

25 And Joshua <sup>h</sup>saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and <sup>e</sup>she dwelleth in Israel *even* <sup>p</sup>unto this day: because she hid the messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.

26 ¶ And Joshua <sup>q</sup>adjured *them* at that time, saying, 'Cursed *be* the man before the LORD, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest *son* shall he set up the gates of it.

27 So <sup>r</sup>the LORD was with Joshua; and <sup>s</sup>his fame was *noised* throughout all the country.

#### ACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—14.

When sinners are repeatedly warned to flee from the wrath to come, and alarmed and disquieted in their consciences with apprehensions of impending vengeance, and yet harden their hearts in impenitence, and disdain to sue for peace or ask forgiveness from God; they may be considered as "devoted to utter destruction:" nor can any counsel, courage, strength, or numbers, afford them the least security, in their infatuated contest with the Almighty.—When the Lord effects his purposes by such means and instruments as we deem *adequate*; our views are apt to terminate upon *them*, and to overlook *Him* "who worketh *all things according to the counsel of his own will.*" To obviate this propensity, our God sometimes deviates from the common track, and works by methods or instruments, which in themselves *appear* not at all suited to produce the intended effect; nay, indeed have no direct connexion with it. (Notes, Num. xxi. 6—9. Ez. xxxvii. 1—10. John ix. 4—7.) But it is our duty to use only those means which the Lord appoints or allows; to submit to his will and depend upon his blessing; and with patient waiting and self-denying diligence to expect the event: and we shall thus succeed as far as is conducive to our real good.—He takes peculiar pleasure in leading men's attention to his own truths and ordinances; in exercising their faith and patience; in inuring them to submit their understandings implicitly to his teaching, and their will to his authority; and in securing to himself their praises and thankful acknowledgments. In promoting true religion especially, he works by means and instruments, which the proud, the learned, the wise, and the wealthy, of this world, generally despise. The doctrine of a crucified Saviour, GOD MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH, as the only foundation of a sinner's hope of acceptance, and the only source of sanctifying grace; preached by ministers, frequently of obscure birth and moderate abilities, and destitute of the advantages of eminent learning or eloquence; *sometimes* even homely in their appearance and address; and who are themselves conscious of much unworthiness, and insufficiency for so arduous and important an employ:—

## CHAP. VII.

Achan takes of the accursed thing; and Israel is defeated before Ai, 1—5. Joshua, with the elders, humbles himself, and complains before God, 6—9; who shews the cause, and directs him how to proceed, 10—15. Achan, taken by lot, confesses his crime, 16—23. He and all belonging to him are stoned, burned, and destroyed, 24—26.

this, I say, from generation to generation, in every country of the world, has been the Lord's ordinary method of accomplishing those purposes, which philosophers, moralists, and law-givers, have attempted in vain; namely, of teaching numbers "to do good who have been accursed to do evil." The disregarded Trumpet blown by the despised minister,—“the preaching of the cross, which is foolishness to them that perish,”—is only the token: the operation is from God. (*Notes, Rom. i. 13—16. 1 Cor. i. 20—31. ii. 3—5. 2 Cor. iv. 7. x. 1—6.*) When that signal is given in simple dependence upon “the exceeding greatness of his mighty power,” it becomes indeed mighty through him, and Satan's strong holds fall before it.—Thus, at different periods, have heathen idolatry and Popish superstition sunk before this trumpet's feeble blast, attended with the shout, the fervent united prayers, of the true Israel.—At some future period, (perhaps commencing early in the seventh thousand years,) this gospel shall be preached far more earnestly, more generally, and more successfully than ever; all Satan's remaining bulwarks shall fall down to the ground; “and the kingdoms of the earth shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ.” (*Notes, Is. xxx. 23—25. Rev. xi. 15—18.*)—In the mean time the gospel is never preached in vain, in any nation, city, or village, by ministers of any name who simply seek the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Let experience decide, whether in our age and nation, this same “foolishness of preaching” has not done more towards checking the enormous progress of profligacy and open ungodliness, and producing a regard to the ordinances and commandments of God in every part of the land, than all other means combined: and whether a greater number of undeniable instances of atrocious sinners being transformed into new creatures, leading new lives, and becoming excellent relations and members of society, cannot be produced, among those who profess and preach “Christ Jesus and him crucified,” than among those who patronise a system, deemed more rational, wise, and liberal.—The latter is man's contrivance, and is left to its own efficacy; the former is the ordinance of God, and like the trumpets sounding round the walls of Jericho, is rendered effectual by his almighty power.

## V. 15—27.

Would we witness the blessed effects of the gospel, the ministers of Christ must strictly adhere to the directions of their Lord, and simply expect, pray, and wait for his blessing; not yielding to weariness, though they long seem to labour in vain. They must be “instant in season, and out of season;” embracing every opportunity of preaching the word to few or to many, every day, but abounding on the Lord's day; and they must disregard the causeless reproaches, scoffs, and slanders of opposers: but

**BUT** the children of Israel \* committed a trespass in the accursed thing: <sup>a</sup> for \* Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, <sup>b</sup> took of the accursed thing: and \* the anger of the LORD was kindled against the children of Israel.

<sup>a</sup> xxii. 16. 2 Chr. xxiv. 18. Ezra ix. 6. Dan. ix. 7.  
<sup>b</sup> xxii. 20.  
<sup>c</sup> 1 Chr. ii. 6, 7. Achur. Zimri.  
<sup>d</sup> See on vi. 17, 18.  
<sup>e</sup> xxii. 18. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. 1 Chr. xxi. 7. Ec. ix. 18. Jon. i. 7. 1 Cor. v. 1—6. Heb. xii. 15, 16.

be careful that they give no occasion to those, who seek occasion of speaking reproachfully. The people also, who know the joyful sound, should shew their concurrence by a diligent attendance upon the word preached: they should endeavour to strengthen the hands and encourage the hearts of the ministers, by their holy examples and concurring endeavours, in their families and among their connexions; and unite in earnest and constant prayers for the blessing of God upon their labours.—But it should be peculiarly noticed, that the same gospel, which proclaims salvation to the chief of sinners who believe, becomes the occasion of increasing and accelerating condemnation to the obstinate and impenitent; who are never more in danger of immediate destruction, than when most careless and secure. (1 *Thes. v. 3.*)—Where the Lord hath given faith he will in due time complete salvation: and when his grace is bestowed upon one in a family, that one is often made the honoured instrument of bringing others to share the same blessings.—The severest judgments of God, however they are at present objected to, will, at the day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, appear most perfectly righteous.—Whoever is honoured as an instrument in the Lord's work, should count the glory of God his first object, and patiently wait his time and manner of being graciously recompensed: for a covetous, selfish professor, or minister of religion, who is more attentive to his own gain than to the glory of God, is not only accursed himself, but a curse to the society or congregation to which he belongs.—That can never be lost which is devoted to God, nor wasted which is spent in his service; and not the least kindness shewn to any of his people for his sake will go unrewarded.—But how deep are the counsels of God! Grace abounds to some of the chief of sinners, while vengeance is poured out upon others! His salvation and his curse are both for ever: and woe be to that man who attempts to obliterate the memorials, or disannul the attestations, which the Lord has made, of his abhorrence of sin, and his vengeance against impenitent sinners!

## NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1. The most promising appearances had been often blasted by the sins of the people; but here wrath came upon the whole congregation, through the sin of one man! (*Note, xxii. 20.*)—Contrary to the express command of God, and in contempt of his awful curse, (*Note, vi. 17—19.*) Achan had ventured to appropriate part of the spoil of Jericho. The temptation was strong: and there is more cause to wonder that none else were guilty, than that one was; especially as the Israelites were comparatively poor, and such treasures as Jericho contained were alluring objects. At the opening of the worship at the tabernacle, we meet with one striking instance of the

2 And Joshua sent men from Jericho to <sup>f</sup> Ai, which is beside <sup>g</sup> Beth-aven, on the east side of Beth-el, and spake unto them, saying, <sup>h</sup> Go up and view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai.

3 And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up: but let <sup>\*</sup> about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai, and make not all the people to <sup>l</sup> labour thither: for they are but few.

4 So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men; and <sup>k</sup> they fled before the men of Ai.

5 And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: for they chased them *from* before the gate, even unto Shebarim, and smote them in <sup>†</sup> the going down: <sup>†</sup> wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.

6 And Joshua <sup>m</sup> rent his clothes, and <sup>n</sup> fell to the earth upon his face before

severity of divine justice. (Notes, Lev. x. 1—3.) Here, upon the commencement of the wars of Canaan, we read of another: and the infancy of the Christian church presents a similar example. (Note, Acts v. 1—11.) All these were doubtless intended to increase reverence and godly fear, and to promote circumspection; as well as to prevent wickedness in general, and hypocrisy in particular, from disgracing the camp of Israel, or the church of God.—That the example of Achan might excite the more general vigilance in Joshua, in the elders, and in every Israelite; they were given to understand, that the guilt of an individual, in these atrocious crimes, would be accounted a national sin, until detected and punished: for they were all one body; nor could any part be infected with so dire a disease, without the detriment and danger of the whole.

V. 2. (Notes, Gen. xii. 8. xxviii. 19.) Beth-el, which signifies the *house of God*, seems to have been afterwards called Beth-aven, or the *house of vanity*, when the golden calf was placed there to be worshipped: yet it is probable the name Beth-aven was far more ancient than that event; and that either some town, or some tract of land, in that neighbourhood, was so called in the days of Joshua. (xviii. 12.)—It is taken for granted by some learned men, that terms of peace were offered to each of these cities, before it was assaulted, according to the law given by Moses. (Note, Deut. xx. 10—18.) But several things in that law could be applicable only to cities belonging to other nations, and not to the devoted Canaanites; no mention is made of this in the history; and some things seem irreconcilable with the supposition, that peace was offered to these cities. ‘The Israelites were to offer peace to the Canaanites, and spare their lives, on condition of their emigrating for ever from their country; or renouncing idolatry, adopting the principles of the patriarchal religion contained in the precepts of Noah, resigning their territory, dissolving their national union, and submitting to become slaves. For it is evident, that they could not tolerate idolatry, nor enter into any equal leagues, which the idols who were worshipped as the guardian gods of the adverse party, must be supposed to witness and sanction; nor leave in possession of their cities and lands, those nations, whose country the great JEHOVAH had assigned to them as their peculiar inheritance.’ ... ‘But if the nations of Canaan had renounced idolatry, and submitted to slavery or emigration, they might have been preserved from extermination, is strongly confirmed, by that passage of the sacred history, which adds this remarkable observation: “Joshua made war a long time

“with all these kings.—There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon: all others they took in battle; for it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they might come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them, as the Lord commanded Moses.”’ *Graves on the Pentateuch*, vol. ii. note, pp. 38—45. (Note, xi. 19, 20.)—It appears evident, that had the Canaanites, or any part of them, of *their own accord*, sued for peace, or rather for the sparing of their lives, on the terms here mentioned; they might have been spared. For the Israelites had no commission to pursue into other lands those who, fleeing from the sword of Joshua, emigrated; nor did any of the rulers or kings of Israel afterwards, attempt to destroy the subjected remnant of the ancient inhabitants. (Note, 1 Kings ix. 20—22.)—But the supposition that these terms were to be previously proposed to them, has no scriptural foundation. (Notes, ix. 3—5. 14, 15.)

V. 3—5. The easy conquest of Jericho had not only encouraged the people to hope for great success, through the power of the Lord fighting for them; but had also excited a contempt of the enemy, and a disposition to spare themselves, and to expect the Lord to do all for them, without using the proper means. Even Joshua seems to have formed his measures, on this occasion, without asking counsel of the Lord; (Notes, ix. 14, 15. Num. xxvii. 21;) who left all parties to follow their own devices, in order to bring to light and punish Achan’s sin. Yet, as they must have been unsuccessful, now that the Lord had left them, his providence should be observed in this circumstance; for the discomfiture of the whole army would have been far more discouraging, than that of a small company.—Being, however, left to themselves, their courage wholly forsook them, and they fled with precipitation: and though the loss sustained was comparatively small, they were excessively dismayed on account of it.—Whether those who fell were secretly guilty of any atrocious crimes or not, the Lord was no doubt righteous in this dispensation.

V. 6—9. Joshua, and the elders of Israel, very justly considered this ill success as a divine rebuke, and properly expressed their sorrow and humiliation before the ark of the Lord, in the most self-abasing posture, and with the customary tokens of deep distress. (*Marg. Ref. m*, n.) Joshua’s pleas in prayer also were excellent; and his concern for the honour of God, far more than even for the

<sup>f</sup> xii. 8. Gen. xii. 8. *Hai*, Neh. xi. 31. *Aija*.  
<sup>g</sup> xviii. 12. Gen. xxviii. 19. *Hos* iv. 15.  
<sup>h</sup> ii. 1. Prov. xx. 18. xxiv. 6. Matt. x. 16. Eph. v. 15.

<sup>\*</sup> Heb. about 2000 men, or about 3000 men.  
<sup>l</sup> Prov. xiii. 4. xxi. 25. Luke xiii. 24. Heb. iv. 11. vi. 11, 12. 2 Pet. i. 5. 10.

<sup>k</sup> Lev. xxvi. 17. Deut. xxviii. 26. xxxii. 30. *Is. xxx.* 17. *Is.* 2.

<sup>†</sup> Or, *Morad*.  
<sup>†</sup> See on ii. 9. 11 v. 1.—Lev. xxvi. 36. Ps. xxiii. 14. *Is.* xiii. 7.  
<sup>m</sup> Gen. xxxvii. 29. 34. Num. xiv. 6. 2 Sam. xiii. 31. Ezra ix. 3—5. Esth. iv. 1. Job i. 20. Acts xiv. 14. Num. xvi. 22. 45. 2 Sam. xii. 16.

the ark of the LORD \*until the even-  
tide, he and the elders of Israel, and  
\*put dust upon their heads.

7 And Joshua said, Alas ! O Lord  
God, <sup>a</sup> wherefore hast thou at all  
brought this people over Jordan, \*to  
deliver us into the hand of the Amo-  
rites, to destroy us? \*Would to God  
we had been content, \*and dwelt on  
the other side Jordan !

8 O Lord, <sup>a</sup> what shall I say, when  
Israel turneth their \*backs before their  
enemies !

9 For the Canaanites, and all the  
inhabitants of the land \*shall hear of  
it, and shall <sup>a</sup> environ us round, and cut  
off our name from the earth : and \*what  
wilt thou do unto thy great name ?

10 And the LORD said unto Joshua,  
Get thee up ; \*wherefore <sup>a</sup> liest thou  
thus upon thy face ?

11 <sup>a</sup> Israel hath sinned, and they have  
also \*transgressed my covenant which  
I commanded them ; for they have  
even taken of \*the accursed thing, and  
have also <sup>b</sup> stolen, and <sup>c</sup> dissembled also,  
and they have put *it* even <sup>a</sup> among their  
own stuff.

12 Therefore \*the children of Israel  
could not stand before their enemies,  
*but* turned *their* backs before their  
enemies, because <sup>a</sup> they were accursed :  
\*neither will I be with you any more,  
except ye destroy the accursed from  
among you.

13 Up, <sup>b</sup> sanctify the people, and say,

fate of Israel, if their enemies should prevail and destroy them, was the genuine language of "the spirit of adoption." (Notes, Ex. xxxii. 11—14. Num. xiv. 13—19.) Yet this was evidently mixed with much infirmity. To consider this trivial check as the forerunner of total ruin ; to enquire wherefore the Lord had brought them over Jordan ; and to admit the thought, that it was in order to deliver them into the hands of the Amorites ; were proofs of unbelief, which may be accounted for, but were wholly inexcusable, especially after the express promises and miraculous successes which he had just before received.—To attempt, by a qualifying interpretation, fully to vindicate so high a character as Joshua, would form a perfect contrast to the impartiality of the sacred historian.

V. 10—12. At the very time, when the Lord shewed his gracious acceptance of Joshua's humiliation and prayers, he gently rebuked his despondency and unbelief. He had already spent a full proportion of time in this manner : and, as chief magistrate, he had other work to do ; which when he had duly performed, he might expect better suc-

Sanctify yourselves against to-morrow ;  
for thus saith the LORD God of Israel,  
*There is* 'an accursed thing in the  
midst of thee, O Israel : thou canst not  
stand before thine enemies, until ye  
\*take away the accursed thing from  
among you.

14 In the morning therefore ye shall  
be brought according to your tribes :  
and it shall be, *that* 'the tribe which  
the LORD taketh shall come according  
to the families *thereof* ; and the family  
which the LORD shall take shall come  
by households ; and the household  
which the LORD shall take shall come  
man by man.

15 And it shall be, *that* <sup>a</sup> he that is  
taken with the accursed thing shall be  
burnt with fire, he and all that he hath ;  
because <sup>a</sup> he hath transgressed the co-  
venant of the LORD, and because he  
hath \*wrought <sup>a</sup> folly in Israel.

16 So Joshua <sup>a</sup> rose up early in the  
morning, <sup>a</sup> and brought Israel by their  
tribes ; and the tribe of Judah was  
taken :

17 And he brought the <sup>a</sup> family of  
Judah ; and he took the family of the  
Zarhites : and he brought the family  
of the Zarhites man by man ; and  
Zabdi was taken :

18 And he brought his household  
man by man ; and Achan, the son of  
Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of  
Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, <sup>a</sup> was  
taken.

cess. (Notes, Ezra x. 2—5.)—The Lord had not failed of his promises, nor was he unable to help his people : but they had sinned ; and by appropriating a part of the devoted spoils of Jericho, they had exposed themselves to the wrath of God, as well as deprived themselves of his protection ; and the crime was so great, that unless the offender were made a publick example, it would be interpreted as a breach of covenant, and the Lord would not any more be with the people. (Notes, 1. vi. 17—19.)

V. 13—18. The Lord did not point out the criminal immediately ; but he left the matter in ambiguity for some time, and at last brought it to light gradually : that both magistrates and people might learn to do their duty, and to keep a vigilant eye over one another ; and that the delay and the process might make the transaction more solemn, and excite the more careful self-examination, and sanctification of themselves, by every method appointed in the law. (Note, iii. 5.) After this, the decision seems to have been made by lot, as an appeal to the heart-searching God. (Note, Prov. xvi. 33.)—The feelings of Achan

19 ¶ And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, <sup>a</sup> give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and <sup>b</sup> make confession unto him: and <sup>c</sup> tell me now what thou hast done; hide *it* not from me.

20 And Achan answered Joshua, and said, <sup>d</sup> Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done.

21 When <sup>e</sup> I saw among the spoils a goodly <sup>f</sup> Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a <sup>g</sup> wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then <sup>h</sup> I coveted them, and <sup>i</sup> took them; and, behold, <sup>j</sup> they *are* hid in the earth

in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.

22 So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent: and, behold, *it was* hid in his tent, and the silver under it.

23 And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and <sup>k</sup> laid them out before <sup>†</sup> Heb. poured. the LORD.

24 And Joshua, and all Israel with him, <sup>l</sup> took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and <sup>m</sup> his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had; and they brought them unto <sup>n</sup> the valley of Achor.

must have been very poignant, when he was thus, by one lot following another, singled out as the accursed person, for whose sake wrath was come upon Israel. (Notes, 1 Sam. xiv. 36—44. Jon. i. 7—10.)—It may be enquired why Achan, being conscious of guilt, did not abscond: but it may be answered that his flight would have been a confession of the crime, which perhaps he still hoped to conceal; he could only have retired among the devoted Canaanites; and he would have been in great danger of being intercepted, had he attempted it. Indeed it is not probable, that Joshua and the elders publicly disclosed the business, till the morning of the decision.—Some think that Achan, being deeply penitent, waited his doom in submission to the divine justice: yet in that case, it is most probable that he would have made an immediate confession.—The tribe, family, and parentage of the offender are specified with great exactness, that the infamy might not rest on the reputation of any other of the same name. (Marg. Ref. r.)

V. 19. Without the least reproach, and with great meekness, Joshua gave Achan the best counsel of which his circumstances could possibly admit. He addressed him even with the tender appellation of “My son,” and exhorted him “to give glory unto God by confessing his sin.” This would imply an acknowledgment, that the commandment was reasonable, and the penalty equitable; that he himself was indeed the transgressor, and merited the punishment. It would give the Lord the glory of his omniscience, justice, holiness, authority, and truth, and indeed of all his perfections; and by taking shame to himself, and accepting the punishment of his sin in this world, Achan might best seek for mercy to his soul in the world to come. (Note, Ps. li. title.)—Joshua’s conduct in this difficult service is worthy of the imitation of all Christian magistrates, when under the painful necessity of pronouncing the sentence of death upon criminals.

V. 20. Had not Achan’s confession been extorted by the preceding process, and delayed till he could no longer conceal his guilt, he might justly have been deemed a true penitent. Though late, however, it was frank and in-

genuous: he not only allowed the fact, and the offence against Israel, but acknowledged “that he had sinned against the LORD God of Israel;” he descended to particulars, attempted no excuse or extenuation, complained not of the severity of the sentence, and made no attempts to prevent or delay its execution. (Notes, Job xxxiii. 27—30. Jon. i. 8—16. Luke xxiii. 39—43.)

V. 21. The temptation entered by the eye, and excited the concupiscence of the carnal heart: thus “lust was conceived and sin brought forth.” (Notes, Gen. iii. 6. Ex. xx. 17. Jam. i. 13—15.) The goodly Babylonish garment, (some magnificent robe brought from Shinar, or Babylon, doubtless at a great price,) was rescued from the flames; and gold and silver, to the amount of a hundred pounds sterling, or rather more, were sacrilegiously kept back from the treasury of the Lord. For such a goodly price did Achan render himself *accursed*, forfeit the fair prospect of a rich inheritance in Canaan, become “the troubler of Israel,” and ruin his whole family; besides the imminent danger to which he exposed his immortal soul! No sooner had he got possession of his plunder than it became his burden: had he not been miraculously detected, he would have been consumed with terrors, and not have dared to use his ill-gotten treasure: and when the other Israelites had been enriched, and enjoyed their abundance with credit and a blessing, he would have lost all the comfort of his portion! So differently do the objects of temptation appear at a distance, from what they do when apprehended, and when the infatuation ceases! (Notes, 2 Kings v. 20—27. Matt. xxvii. 3—5.)

V. 22. The silver, and probably the gold also, lay under ‘the garment of Shinar,’ as it is called in the original.

V. 23. The accursed thing being thus separated from Israel’s substance, and “laid before the LORD,” both evidenced Achan’s guilt, and the innocence of others; that the wrath of the Lord might rest on *him*, and be turned away from *them*.

V. 24. *His sons, &c.*] No intimation is given that Achan’s sons, or any of his family, were accessory to his crime: nothing but their punishment can excite a suspicion

h 11—13. vi. 18.  
Gen. xxxiv. 20.  
1 King xviii. 17.  
18. 1 Chr. ii. 7.  
Hab. ii. 6—9.  
Gal. v. 12. 2 Thes.  
i. 6.  
i Lev. xx. 2. xxiv.  
14. Deut. xiii.  
10. xvii. 5. xxi.  
21. xxii. 21—24.  
k 15. Gen. xxxviii.  
24. Lev. xx. 14. xxi. 9.

25 And Joshua said, <sup>b</sup> Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee, this day. And <sup>l</sup> all Israel stoned him with stones, and <sup>m</sup> burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones.

of it. Magistrates indeed were forbidden to put the children to death for the parents' crimes, unless expressly authorized to do so by God himself: but all lives are the Lord's, and forfeited by sin; the ungodly deserve worse punishment than temporal death, and the righteous are the sooner taken to heaven. Some have thought that Achan's children were only spectators of his awful doom; but the narrative implies that they were involved in it (25).—This circumstance would be a vehement expression of the exceeding enormity of the offence, and would render the example more affecting and alarming. (Note, Ex. xx. 5.)

V. 25, 26. It seems that Achan and his family were first stoned, and then burned; which might denote the anger of God, that beyond death will pursue and punish the impenitent.—The heap of stones would perpetuate the memory of his sin and punishment, for the instruction of future generations: as would also the name given to the place, which signifies *Trouble*. (Note, Hos. ii. 14—17.) Indeed *Achan* is himself called *Achar*, or *Trouble*, in the subsequent history. (Note, 1 Chr. ii. 7.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—9.

When by their heinous sins men provoke the Lord to anger, he commonly leaves them to mistaken counsels, and thus they are corrected by their own iniquity.—The people of God can never expect to prosper in any undertaking, concerning which they have not enquired of him, to know his will and implore his assistance; (Note, Prov. iii. 5, 6;) or in which they have indulged sloth and vain confidence, or tempted God by the neglect of proper means. But human nature is prone to extremes: like children, we are easily elated by a little success, and presume that we shall carry all before us: and when, in order to humble us and check our self-confidence, the Lord is pleased to throw some discouragement in our way; we are easily cast down into despondency, and induced to forebode the most fatal consequences!—Every failure in such undertakings, as evidently accord to the will of God, and the duty of our place and station, should cause us to humble ourselves before him, to flee to his mercy-seat, to pour out our hearts in prayer, and enquire “wherefore he contendeth with us:” and to plead his promises and the glory of his great name, as engaged to support that cause which we are endeavouring to promote, whatever becomes of us and our worthless names.—Yet in the very prayers of the best of men there is often much evil, which the Lord might *justly* condemn, and for which he frequently rebukes and chastens them; especially when they appear ungrateful for former mercies, and murmur or despond on account of present trials, distrust his faithfulness, or suspect his future intentions, as declared by his express promises.

26 And they <sup>l</sup> raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. <sup>m</sup> So the Lord turned from the fierceness of his anger: wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of <sup>n</sup> Achor unto this day.

viii. 29. x. 27.  
2 Sam. xviii. 17.  
1 Sam. iii. 58.  
m Deut. xiii. 17.  
2 Sam. xxi. 14.  
Is. xl. 2. Joel ii.  
13. 18. Jon. iii.  
8. 10. Zech. vi.  
8.  
That is, *Trouble*  
See on 25.

##### V. 10—18.

“What shall we say when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies?” It is not enough that the forces be recruited, the passes strengthened, the cowards punished, the valiant rewarded, the soldiers animated by word and deed, and the ensuing assault conducted with more skill and circumspection. The matter is not thus: “Israel hath sinned,” and God is provoked; and nothing can ensure success, till his indignation is turned away, and the accursed thing is removed out of the camp. Times of publick danger and calamity, therefore, with nations professing Christianity, peculiarly require zeal for reformation: notorious criminals ought then to be searched out, and brought to condign punishment; especially such as have enriched themselves by sacrilege, perjury, murder, oppression, and iniquitous traffick. While such criminals are suffered to escape with impunity; nay, till something effectual has been done towards expiating national guilt, by the execution of publick justice, on those whose daring crimes have brought the wrath of God on a guilty land; there is little cause to wonder, if the inhabitants turn their backs upon their enemies, and little hope that God will be with them any more, notwithstanding their fastings and prayers. Since these things have been so much disregarded in protestant countries, they have been left to quarrel with one another; and to become the instruments of each other's correction, instead of being united and prospered, in repelling the assaults of their common enemies.—And may it not also be seriously questioned, whether the case be not the same with respect to the success of the gospel, and the state of religion among us? It is to be feared that there has often been more zeal shewn, in supporting the interests of one party against another, than for the interests of vital godliness against the cause of infidelity, profligacy, and formal profession: and that in this competition, men, in other respects conscientious, not only accept the proffered support of some one not unlike covetous and sacrilegious Achan, but assiduously seek after it. It is still more evident, that there has not been due care taken to censure or exclude such persons, as are evidently the slaves of avarice, worldly lusts, and the pride of life; and to direct the searching word of God to their consciences, in such a manner as *effectually* to make them understand, that their profession of the doctrines of the gospel, their attendance on the ordinances, and their support of the ministers of Christ, will never save their souls, unless their idols be dethroned, and their hearts and lives renewed by converting grace. There is reason to fear that there are Achans in many of our congregations, whose lives prejudice men against the truth, and bring a secret blight on our ministry: nor “will the Lord be with us any more,” unless we use our best endeavours, without any partial or personal regards, to separate them from

## CHAP. VIII.

Joshua, encouraged and instructed by God, to form an ambushment against Ai, 1—8. The city is taken and destroyed with the inhabitants, its king hanged up, and its spoil divided, 9—29. An altar is built on Ebal, sacrifices are offered, the law is written on

stones, and the blessings and curses pronounced, as Moses had commanded, 30—35.

**AND** the LORD said unto Joshua; Fear not, neither be thou dismayed;

among us. And it is proposed as a matter of serious enquiry, whether the present lamentable divisions among the professors of evangelical truth; the confessedly small success of the gospel, compared with that of former times; and the most alarming progress of open infidelity; be not in great measure owing to the same cause as Israel's defeat before Ai.—But first of all we should look into our own hearts, and make diligent search, whether there be not some accursed thing there, which God sees and abhors; some unmortified lust, some iniquitous gain “put among our own stuff;” some withholding from God and the poor their dues, in order to gratify avarice, or support luxury and the pride of life. If this is the case, no wonder we do not prosper in our souls, or in our ministry; no wonder if we get little benefit from our attendance on ordinances, or see no considerable effects from our unremitting and most earnest preaching from year to year. Nor can we expect to prosper any better, until the accursed thing be destroyed out of our hearts, removed out of our houses, and forsaken in our lives. Let us, however, not only be careful, that we ourselves do not dissemble any secret iniquity; but remember that we are accountable for our families also, if we do not use all our circumspection, and exert our utmost authority, to preserve them free from every accursed thing. In this way will Israel prosper, our souls be “like a watered garden,” and “the word of God have free course and be glorified.” He will be with us and fight for us, and Israel shall no more turn their backs upon their enemies.

V. 19—26.

Would we avoid the commission of gross iniquity, we must “make a covenant with our eyes” and all our senses; we must learn to behold every object by faith through the medium of God's word, not by sense through the medium of a worldly judgment and a carnal mind; we must repress the first movings of concupiscence, and pray earnestly not to be led into temptation; we must habituate ourselves to meditate on the future consequences of sinful gratifications to our characters, families, connexions, and temporal interests,—to our conscience, peace, and eternal concerns,—to the church of God, and the world around us; and to place ourselves, by an effort of the imagination, in those very circumstances in which we should be, were the sin committed, and the infatuation vanished; and to consider what our judgment and feelings in that case would be. We should also treat all expectations of secrecy and impunity, as the delusions of Satan. From our Judge we can conceal nothing; and secreting our offences from our fellow criminals will avail us very little, since we may be sure our iniquity will at length find us out. (*Note, Num.*

take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: <sup>b</sup> see, I have given into thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land.

2 And thou shalt <sup>c</sup> do to Ai and her king, as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: <sup>d</sup> only the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves. <sup>e</sup> Lay thee an ambush for the city behind it.

<sup>b</sup> See on vi. 2.—  
Ps. xlvii. 3. Dan.  
ii. 21. 27, 38. iv.  
25, 35.  
<sup>c</sup> 24, 28, 29.—See  
on vi. 21.—x.  
28. Deut. iii. 2.  
<sup>d</sup> 27. Deut. xx. 14.  
Job xxvii. 16, 17.  
Ps. xxxix. 6.  
Prov. xiii. 22.  
xxviii. 20. Jer.  
xvii. 11. Luke  
xii. 20, 21.  
<sup>e</sup> 7, 9, 12, 14, 19.  
Judg. xx. 29—  
33. 2 Chr. xiii.  
13. xx. 22. Jer.  
li. 12.

xxxii. 23.) We should also accustom ourselves to self-denial and patient waiting; for the blessings that God reserves for his people are like fruit, which will be wholesome when it has had time to ripen, but will certainly be noxious if greedily and prematurely gathered.—When we are conscious that we have sinned, we should ingenuously confess our guilt; and if the matter requires it, we should glorify God and take shame to ourselves, by an open acknowledgment of our crimes, and justify him in all the punishments which we now endure: for, blessed be his name, through him who was made a curse for us, all manner of sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven to the true penitent. But even when final condemnation is escaped, what terrible effects does sin produce! What fatal consequences often ensue in this world, to the sinner himself, and to all connected with him! How “one sinner destroyeth much good!” What will then be the wrath to come! Let us take warning, and without delay flee from it to Jesus, the sinner's Friend.—Finally, though atrocious criminals should be punished with unrelenting firmness, and all should unite in protesting against their crimes; yet their misery should not be insulted, nor their immortal souls forgotten: but calm expostulations, serious instructions, and compassionate exhortations, should be used to bring them to repentance, that they may obtain mercy from God in a future world; and every method should be adopted, which can render the example of public justice productive of as deep and durable an impression as possible, upon the minds of the survivors.

## NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. Jericho had been taken by miracle, without danger or fatigue; in order to teach the people to depend on God, and to give him the glory of all their success. But they seem to have inferred that they might despise their enemies and indulge themselves. (*Note, vii. 3—5.*) They were therefore in the next instance instructed, that diligence, self-denial, and the exertion of all their powers both of body and mind, were required in order to secure success: and the whole force of Israel was commanded to march against this small city. Some think, however, that this was ordered, that all might equally share the spoil.—An ambush was also to be formed, by the command of God himself; for it was as lawful to outwit their enemies, as to overpower them. No treaties were violated, no oaths broken, no falsehoods uttered; and it cannot be requisite to inform our enemies of our intentions and purposes, however they may be deceived by appearances. But perjuries, lies, and infractions of treaties, cannot, in any war or in any case, be allowable

3 So Joshua arose, and all the people of war, to go up against Ai: and Joshua chose out thirty thousand mighty men of valour, and sent them away<sup>1</sup> by night.

4 And he commanded them, saying, Behold, ye shall<sup>2</sup> lie in wait against the city, *even* behind the city; <sup>3</sup>go not very far from the city, but be ye all ready:

5 And I, and all the people that *are* with me, will approach unto the city: and it shall come to pass, when they come out against us, as at the first, <sup>1</sup>that we will flee before them,

6 (For they will come out after us,) till we have<sup>4</sup> drawn them from the city; for they will say, <sup>1</sup>They flee before us, as at the first: therefore we will flee before them.

7 Then ye shall rise up from the ambush, and seize upon the city: <sup>2</sup>for the LORD your God will deliver it into your hand.

8 And it shall be, when ye have taken the city, *that* ye shall<sup>1</sup> set the city on fire: according to the commandment of the LORD shall ye do. <sup>2</sup>See, I have commanded you.

9 ¶ Joshua therefore sent them forth; and they went to lie in ambush, and abode<sup>3</sup> between Beth-el and Ai, on the west side of Ai: but Joshua<sup>4</sup> lodged that night among the people.

10 And Joshua<sup>5</sup> rose up early in the morning, and numbered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai.

11 And<sup>6</sup> all the people, *even the people of war that were* with him, went

up, and drew nigh, and came before the city, and pitched on the north side of Ai: now *there was* a valley between them and Ai.

12 And he took about<sup>7</sup> five thousand men, and set them to lie in ambush between Beth-el and Ai, on the west side<sup>8</sup> of the city.

13 And when they had set the people, *even* all the host that *was* on the north of the city, and their<sup>9</sup> liers in wait<sup>10</sup> on the west of the city; Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley.

14 And it came to pass, when the king of<sup>11</sup> Ai saw *it*, that they hasted and rose up early, and the men of the city went out against Israel to battle, he and all his people, at a time appointed, before the plain; but<sup>12</sup> he wist not that *there were* liers in ambush against him behind the city.

15 And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled<sup>13</sup> by the way of the wilderness.

16 And all the people that *were* in Ai were<sup>14</sup> called together to pursue after them: and they pursued after Joshua, and were<sup>15</sup> drawn away from the city.

17 And there was not<sup>16</sup> a man left in Ai or Beth-el, that went not out after Israel: and they left the city open, and pursued after Israel.

18 And the LORD said unto Joshua, <sup>17</sup>Stretch out the spear that *is* in thy hand toward Ai; for I will give it into thine hand. And Joshua stretched out the spear that *he had* in his hand toward the city.

or excusable. (Notes, ii. 4—6. ix. 19, 20. 2 Sam. xxi. 1—3. Ez. xvii. 15—21. xxi. 25—27.)

V. 9—12. There is some difficulty in determining, whether the thirty thousand men, first mentioned, (3, 4,) at length assaulted the city openly, whilst only the five thousand lay in ambush; or whether the whole force of Israel appeared in arms against Ai, and the thirty thousand formed one ambushment, and the five thousand formed a second in another place. But the latter opinion agrees best with the narrative.

V. 13, 14. After the first party was sent to lie in ambush, a whole day seems to have been spent in making preparations; and every thing being ready, Joshua during the next night drew up his army in the valley, and so was seen in the morning by the king of Ai.

V. 17. Greater infatuation cannot be imagined, than upon so trifling an advantage as the former, (vii. 4, 5,) and so slight an appearance of further success as the present, to leave the cities defenceless, that they might pursue a numerous army! But the Canaanites were left to be blinded by pride, obstinacy, and rage against Israel, in order to their more speedy destruction. (Notes, iii. 2. ix. 1, 2. xi. 19, 20.)—The king and people of Beth-el appear to have been confederate with those of Ai, and to have been subdued and destroyed at the same time.

V. 18. Joshua stretched forth his hand with the spear, perhaps with some flag upon it, at the time when God commanded him: probably it was a preconcerted signal to those who were in ambush, expected by some appointed to watch for it: and it was an especial token of

c 6-8.

19 And 'the ambush arose quickly out of their place, and they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand: and they entered into the city, and took it, and hasted, and set the city on fire.

d Gen. xix. 28.  
Is. xxiv. 10.  
Rev. xviii. 9.  
xix. 3.  
e Job xi. 20. Ps.  
xlviii. 5, 6. lxxvi.  
8. Am. ii. 14.  
16. Rev. vi. 16  
—17.  
• Heb. hand

20 And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and behold, 'the smoke of the city ascended up to heaven; 'and they had no 'power to flee this way or that way: and the people that fled to the wilderness turned back upon the pursuers.

21 And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city ascended, then they turned again, and slew the men of Ai.

f vi. 21. x. 28. xl.  
11, 12. Deut. vii.  
2. Job xx. 5.  
Luke xvii. 26—  
30. 1 Thes. v. 3.  
g 23. x. 17. 1 Sam.  
xv. 8. Rev. xix.  
20

22 And the other issued out of the city against them; so they were in the midst of Israel, some on this side, and some on that side: and they smote them, so that they 'let none of them remain or escape.

23 And 'the king of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joshua.

24 And it came to pass, when Israel had made an end of slaying all the inhabitants of Ai in the field, in the wilderness wherein they chased them, and when they were all fallen on the edge of the sword until they were consumed, that all the Israelites 'returned unto Ai, and smote it with the edge of the sword.

25 And so it was *that* all that fell

h x. 30—41. xi.  
10—14. Num.  
xxi. 24

the divine assistance. He seems to have remained upon some eminence, in the sight of the Israelites, during the battle; and to have persevered in holding up his spear, till all the enemies were destroyed; as Moses had done with his rod, during Joshua's conflict with the Amalekites. (26. Note, Ex. xvii. 8—13.)—Thus Joshua conquered by seeming to yield: and this has been accommodated to Christ, when "by death he overcame him who had the power of "death," deprived the king of terrors of power to hurt his people, and prepared the way for the utter destruction of this last enemy.

V. 25. The men of Beth-el, who aided those of Ai, seem not to be included in this number.

V. 27. Thus the people began to receive a gracious recompence for their self-denial, in refraining from the devoted spoil of Jericho; Achan having already received the just punishment of his sacrilege.

V. 28. When a few houses had been set on fire, the flame and smoke would suffice to convince the men of Ai of their desperate situation. But after the Israelites had plundered the city, the whole was burnt down, and left to

VOL. I.

that day, both of men and women, *were* twelve thousand, *even* all the men of Ai.

26 For Joshua 'drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.

27 Only 'the cattle and the spoil of that city, Israel took for a prey unto themselves, according unto the word of the Lord, which he commanded Joshua.

28 And Joshua burnt Ai, and made it 'an heap for ever, *even* a desolation 'unto this day.

29 And 'the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until even-tide: and 'as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcase down from the tree, and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and raise thereon 'a great heap of stones, *that remaineth* unto this day.

30 ¶ Then Joshua 'built an altar unto the Lord God of Israel, 'in mount Ebal;

31 As Moses the servant of the Lord commanded the children of Israel, 'as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an 'altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lifted up *any* iron: 'and they offered thereon burnt-offerings unto the Lord, and sacrificed peace-offerings.

32 And he 'wrote there upon the

18. Ex. xvii. 11.  
12.

k 2. xi. 14. Num.  
xxxi. 22. 26. Ps.  
1. 10. Matt. xx.  
15.

Deut. xiii. 16.  
2 Kings xix. 26.  
Is. xvii. 1. xlv.  
2. Jer. ix. 11.  
xlix. 2. 1. 26.  
Mic. iii. 13.  
m See on iv. 9.  
n x. 26. 28. 30. 33.  
Deut. xxi. 23.  
Esth. vii. 10. Ps.  
cvii. 40. cx. 5.  
Acta xii. 23.  
x. 27.

p vii. 26. 2 Sam.  
xviii. 17.

q Gen. viii. 20. xii.  
8.  
r 33. Deut. xi. 29.  
xxvii. 4—6. 13.

s 34. 35. 1. 8.  
2 Kings xiv. 6.  
xxii. 8. 2 Chr.  
xxv. 4. xxxv. 12.  
Ezra vi. 18. Neh.  
xiii. 1. Mark xii.  
26.  
t Ex. xx. 24. 26.  
Deut. xxvii. 5.  
1 Kings xviii. 31.  
32.  
u Ex. xviii. 12.  
xxiv. 6. Deut.  
xxvii. 6, 7.  
x Deut. xxvii. 2.  
8. 8.

be a *perpetual* desolation: and the ruins continued as a proof of the transaction, till the close of Joshua's life, and probably long after, though we read of a city of nearly the same name in Nehemiah. (Neh. xi. 31. *Aija*, or *Aiya*.)

V. 29. The kings of Canaan lay under the same curse as their subjects, and probably were more deeply criminal. The reserving of the king of Ai for a solemn execution, would tend to strike terror into the other kings, contribute to the success of Israel, and give their proceedings the stamp of a *judicial process*, and of executing the vengeance of God upon his enemies. (Notes, x. 24. 1 Sam. xv. 32, 33. Is. xxiv. 21, 22.)

V. 30—35. (Notes, Deut. xi. 29, 30. xxvii.) As soon as Joshua found access to the mountains, Gerizim and Ebal, which the Lord had appointed; he without delay, and notwithstanding the unsettled state of Israel, and the machinations of their enemies, proceeded to renew the ratification of the covenant between the Lord and his people, as it had been commanded by Moses. Accordingly he built the occasional altar, (*Marg. Ref. t.*) and offered the instituted sacrifices; writing the law, or the prescribed

stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel.

<sup>y</sup> *xxix. 2. xxiv. 1. Deut. xxvii. 12. 18. xxix. 10, 11.* 33 And <sup>y</sup> all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark, and on that side, before <sup>y</sup> the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, as well <sup>y</sup> the stranger as he that was born among them; half of them over against mount Gerizim, and half of them over against mount Ebal, <sup>b</sup> as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel.

<sup>c</sup> *Deut. xxxi. 10—12. Neh. viii. 2. 3. ix. 3. xlii. 1.* 34 And afterward <sup>c</sup> he read all the

words of the law, <sup>d</sup> the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law.

35 There <sup>e</sup> was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, <sup>f</sup> with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that <sup>e</sup> were conversant among them.

#### CHAP. IX.

The kings of Canaan confederate against Israel, 1, 2. The Gibeonites by fraud obtain a covenant of peace, 3—15. The fraud is detected: yet their lives are spared on account of the oath sworn to them, 16—21. They are made bond-servants, and willingly submit, 22—27.

abstracts from it, on the plaistered stones; proclaiming the blessings and curses from the two mountains, according to the appointed form; and reading over *the whole law* to all the people.—It is evident, that the books of Moses, *as written by him*, are here repeatedly spoken of as extant at the time of this transaction.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—22.

When sin is repented of, and put away as “an accursed thing,” we may expect encouragement, and a blessing from our reconciled God and Father: and the more we fear him with filial reverence, and dread to offend him, the less need have we to “fear what man can do unto us.”—When we truly believe, and rightly understand, that “without the LORD we can do nothing,” that our sufficiency and success must come from him and that all the glory must be rendered to him; we shall be far from lying down in supineness and self-indulgent sloth: on the contrary, we shall be excited to use, with all diligence and perseverance, every commanded and allowable means; and to seek the help and blessing of God to render them effectual. Indeed inactivity, because we can do nothing of ourselves, when the Lord has promised effectual help to those who call upon him, must be the effect of man’s perverseness and Satan’s suggestions, thus wresting the Scriptures from their most obvious meaning: for in all other important concerns, common sense teaches us, that the less we can do of ourselves, the more need we have to seek the help, and to observe the directions, of those who are able and disposed to assist us. And thus to be diligent and earnest with all our heart and soul in seeking salvation, resisting temptation and striving against sin, is true Christian wisdom, and the due medium between the extremes to which human nature is propense: for in such an arduous conflict, we need both *exertion* and much *assistance*, and they who speak as if a *little exertion* and a *little help* might suffice, know nothing experimentally of the warfare.—In every undertaking, prudent counsel is as conducive to success, as vigorous exertion; and on some occasions well-timed yielding secures the advantage better than pertinacious opposition.—They, who “honour the LORD with their sub-

stance,” and are not in haste to be rich, will eventually be no losers; yet Christians must wait till they arrive at the heavenly Canaan to receive their full reward: and there they will enjoy their everlasting portion, when that of worldlings will be spent, and their souls fixed in utter misery. Indeed “the prosperity of fools destroys them,” and their short-lived presumptuous rejoicing will speedily end in lamentations, and mourning, and woe.—As the Lord gives wisdom to those whom he loves, and means to prosper; so he infatuates those who have filled up the measure of their iniquity.

##### V. 23—35.

It is our duty to reverence the aged, to honour those who are placed in authority over us, and to compassionate the weak and helpless, the feeble sex and the tender age: but the Judge of all the earth will involve all the impudent in one common condemnation, without any other distinction, than that of their different degrees of guilt; so that they, who have abused the greatest abilities, riches, or authority, will be distinguished by the largest measure of divine vengeance.—However busy, unsettled, or exposed we are, the concerns of religion must have our first attention; and if we “seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all things else shall be added unto us.” In doing this we must rest our hope on the atonement of the great Redeemer; and keep the holy law of God continually before us, as the rule of our grateful obedience. We must remember the awful curses of the old covenant, to quicken our pace in fleeing to the refuge which is appointed us, to keep alive the salutary fears of coming short, and to restrain us from sin in an hour of temptation. But we must embrace and plead the precious promises of the new covenant, for our encouragement, in denying ourselves and bearing the cross. We ought also to instruct our families, and train up our children in the knowledge of these most important subjects; and speak of them freely even to strangers, who are conversant among us. Happy are they, who begin early in life to attend to them: for in their declining age they may look back with comfort to their early engagements, and the unnumbered benefits which they have derived from them.

**AND** it came to pass, when <sup>a</sup>all the kings which <sup>b</sup>were <sup>c</sup>on this side Jordan, in the hills and in the valleys, and in all the coasts <sup>d</sup>of the great sea over against <sup>e</sup>Lebanon, <sup>f</sup>the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, heard <sup>g</sup>thereof;

2 That they <sup>h</sup>gathered themselves together to fight with Joshua, and with Israel, with one <sup>i</sup>accord.

3 And when the inhabitants of <sup>j</sup>Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto <sup>k</sup>Jericho and to Ai,

4 They did <sup>l</sup>work wilily, and went, <sup>m</sup>and made as if they had been ambassadors; and took old sacks upon their asses, and <sup>n</sup>wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up;

5 And <sup>o</sup>old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was dry <sup>p</sup>and mouldy.

6 And they went to Joshua unto <sup>q</sup>the camp at Gilgal, and said unto him, and to the men of Israel, <sup>r</sup>We be come from a far country; now therefore make ye a league with us.

## NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1, 2. The inhabitants of Canaan in general must have heard, that the Israelites had passed over Jordan, and commenced hostilities: and in particular, that they had destroyed Jericho and Ai; and solemnly covenanted with JEHOVAH, as if already in possession of the country. Had they not been intimidated or infatuated, they would with combined force have opposed the passage of Israel over Jordan: but after all the miracles which had been wrought, an accommodation, if possible, was the only thing which they could reasonably attempt. (Notes, 3—5. v. 1.) From this, however, they were withheld by a desperate obstinacy and rage; and being ripe for vengeance, they were left to be hardened, and blindly to rush upon destruction of their own accord.—They confederated together at this time; but subsequent events seem to have deranged their first plans, and delayed their proceedings. The varied expressions here used, include the inhabitants of the land to the utmost western and northern borders. As the Girgashites are not mentioned in the history of the subsequent wars, (iii. 10. xxiv. 11;) it has been concluded that they generally emigrated after the fall of Jericho.—This might indeed be the case: but the tradition of one of their Rabbies, quoted by Selden, that three letters were written by Joshua, before the invasion of the land by Israel, purporting, ‘Let those who choose to flee, flee; let those that choose peace, enter into treaty; let those that choose war take up arms;’ that in consequence of this, the Girgashites, believing the power of God, fled away retreating into Africa:—this, I say, has no foundation in Scripture, and is by no means consistent with the narrative there given. See *Graves on the Pentateuch*, vol. ii. pp. 43, 44.

V. 3—5. The Gibeonites had heard of the late destruction of Jericho and Ai, with the slaughter of all the inhabitants, as well as of the former miracles wrought in Egypt; and also of the destruction of Og and Sihon, with their subjects. (9, 10.) They had also learned, that the Israelites were commanded to destroy all the inhabitants of the land, without entering into any league with them, or giving quarter; and that the Lord had expressly promised to give them the victory over them all (24). The other inhabitants of the land likewise had heard the same, and

were thus rendered the more determined in their opposition: but the Gibeonites, or at least some of their principal men, (for it does not appear that they had a king,) were induced to believe that the word of the Lord would certainly be accomplished, and that all opposition would be unavailing; and they concluded, that the only prospect of safety lay in an accommodation, upon any terms. Had they cast themselves, without reserve, upon the mercy of Israel, and of Israel’s God, there is no doubt that they would have been spared, as Rahab and her relations had been: for though the Lord would not allow his people to make exceptions to his general rule of destroying the Canaanites, for their own ease and emolument, by forming alliances with them while they continued idolaters; yet in this and all other cases, he was ready to favour those who trusted in his mercy. The Gibeonites, however, not being acquainted with this limitation, and interpreting the general command in its utmost rigour, despaired of being preserved, if they were detected; but they supposed, that if they could bring the rulers of Israel under the bond of an oath, even by means of a deception, that oath would secure them from death. Accordingly they formed a stratagem, which cannot be vindicated; though it may admit of some excuse, from their imminent danger, and from their ignorance of the divine law: and they succeeded according to their expectation.—The supposition of some expositors, that these Gibeonites had, before this, refused terms of peace when offered them, is not only unsupported by facts, but it is contrary to the general tenour of the narration.—The ambassadors, probably, were the chief persons among them, but they pretended to be sent by some foreign princes: and, according to the customs of those days, when inns at regular stages were not known, and consequently men took with them provisions for their journey, as is now done for a voyage; they fitted themselves out in such a manner, that they appeared to have come from a very distant country, to shew that their provisions were either exhausted or spoiled by the length of their journey, and even their clothes and vessels worn out. No doubt the several circumstances were artfully devised, and appeared very plausible to Joshua and Israel; though we cannot so well judge of them by modern manners and customs.

7 And the men of Israel said unto <sup>o</sup> the Hivites, Peradventure ye dwell among us: and <sup>p</sup> how shall we make a league with you?

8 And they said unto Joshua, <sup>q</sup> We are thy servants. And Joshua said unto them, Who <sup>r</sup> are ye? and from whence come ye?

9 And they said unto him, From a very far country thy servants are come, <sup>r</sup> because of the name of the LORD thy God: for <sup>s</sup> we have heard the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt,

10 And all that he did to the <sup>t</sup> two kings of the Amorites that <sup>u</sup> were beyond Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, which <sup>v</sup> was at <sup>w</sup> Ashtaroth.

11 Wherefore our elders, and all the inhabitants of our country, spake to us, saying, <sup>x</sup> Take victuals <sup>y</sup> with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say unto them, <sup>z</sup> We are your servants; therefore now make ye a league with us.

12 This <sup>a</sup> our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the

day we came forth to go unto you; but now, behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy:

13 And these bottles of wine, which we filled, <sup>b</sup> were new, and behold they be rent; and these our garments and our shoes are become old, by reason of the very long journey.

14 And <sup>c</sup> the men took of their victuals, and <sup>d</sup> asked not counsel at the mouth of the LORD.

15 And Joshua <sup>e</sup> made peace with them, and made a league with them to let them live: and the princes of the congregation sware unto them.

16 ¶ And it came to pass at the end of three days, after they had made a league with them, <sup>f</sup> that they heard that they <sup>g</sup> were their neighbours, and <sup>h</sup> that they dwelt among them.

17 And the children of Israel journeyed, and came unto their cities on the third day. Now their cities <sup>i</sup> were <sup>j</sup> Gibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, <sup>k</sup> and Kirjath-jearim.

18 And the children of Israel smote them not, because the princes of the

<sup>r</sup> 1 Kings viii. 41.  
2 Chr. vi. 32, 33.  
Neh. ix. 5. Ps.  
lxxii. 19. lxxxiii.  
18. cxlviii. 13.  
Is. lv. 5.

<sup>s</sup> 24. ii. 9, 10. Ex.  
x. 16. xv. 14.  
Num. xiv. 15.  
Is. lxvi. 19.  
<sup>t</sup> Num. xxi. 24—  
35. Deut. ii. 30—  
37. iii. 1—7.

<sup>u</sup> xii. 4. Deut. i.  
4. 1 Chr. vi. 71.

<sup>x</sup> i. 11. Matt. x. 9,  
10. Luke ix. 8.  
<sup>y</sup> Heb. in your  
hand. Gen. xliii.  
12.  
<sup>z</sup> See on 8.—Eath.  
viii. 17.

<sup>a</sup> See on 4, 5.

<sup>†</sup> Or, they received  
the men by reason  
of their victuals.

<sup>a</sup> Ex. xxviii. 30.  
Num. xxvii. 21.  
Judg. i. 1. xxi.  
xv. 18, 19. Sam.  
xiv. 18, 19. xxi.  
10. xxii. 9—12.  
xxx. 7, 8. 2 Sam.  
ii. 1. v. 19. 1 Chr.  
x. 14. Ezra viii.  
21. Prov. iii. 5,  
6. 1s. xxxk. 2.  
Jam. i. 5.  
<sup>b</sup> ii. 12—19. vi. 22  
—25. xi. 19. Deut.  
xx. 10, 11. 2 Sam.  
xxi. 2. Jer. xlviii.  
7, 8.  
<sup>c</sup> 1 Prov. xii. 19.

<sup>d</sup> x. 2. xviii. 25—  
28. 1 Chr. xxi.  
59. 2 Chr. i. 3.  
Ezra ii. 25. Neh.  
vii. 29.

<sup>e</sup> xv. 9. 60. xviii.  
14. 1 Sam. vii. 1.  
1 Chr. xiii. 5, 6.  
2 Chr. i. 4.

V. 7. God had forbidden Israel, to enter into a league with any of the devoted nations. (*Marg. Ref. p.*) An equal league, say many learned men: but the scripture makes no such distinction. Indeed an agreement to spare the lives of such persons or tribes, as chose either to leave the country; or, renouncing idolatry, resigning all their possessions, and submitting to be slaves, to continue among the Israelites; is the only league, which it is supposed might be made with them. But even this does not appear to have been proposed to them beforehand.—*Hivites.] Marg. Ref. o.*

V. 8—11. The ambassadors probably meant to insinuate, that the Israelites had never heard the name of their country, because of its great distance; though their countrymen had so far off heard the report of the works which God had wrought for his people, in desolating Egypt and rescuing them, and in destroying before them the kings of the Amorites. And they stated, that these reports had so impressed their minds, as to render them greatly desirous of their friendship; that for this purpose they had undertaken a very fatiguing journey; and that the nation was willing to become the tributaries of Israel, if they might in return have security, that they should not be destroyed at any future period, by their increasing power and spreading dominion.—At the same time, they artfully avoided mentioning the passage of Israel over Jordan, and the destruction of Jericho and Ai; as willing it should be understood, that they had not yet heard of these more recent miracles and successes.—The address was well calculated

to insinuate itself into the minds of the Israelites, who would doubtless be gratified with the thought of being so renowned, that their power was dreaded, and their friendship courted, by distant nations: while the favour of Joshua, and of the more pious among them, would be conciliated by the respectful mention which they made of the name and works of JEHOVAH; especially as it had been foretold that these miracles should produce this effect. (*Notes, 2 Sam. xiv. 13—20. xv. 7—9. Prov. xxix. 5.*)

V. 14, 15. Joshua and the chief persons in Israel, having examined the provisions of the pretended ambassadors, hastily concluded, that the state of them corroborated the account which they had given; and without further hesitation entered into league with them, and by oath engaged that, instead of destroying, they would protect the people whom they represented. This precipitate treaty, entered into with strangers, to which they had little inducement except flattering words and fair speeches, shewed great credulity and impolicy: but the chief fault of Joshua and the princes was, that they did not ask counsel of the Lord, in a matter of such importance, when the means of doing so were always present with them. (*Note, Num. xxvii. 21.*)—It does not however appear, that it would have been wrong, if they had received the submissions of any of the Canaanites who voluntarily craved mercy, professed repentance, and renounced idolatry: and therefore the league with Gibeon was valid, though fraudulently sought for, and impolitically entered into.

V. 17, 18. The people seem to have murmured, because

<sup>f</sup> 2 Sam. xxi. 7. congregation 'had sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel. And all the congregation murmured against the princes.

<sup>g</sup> 20. Ec. viii. 2. ix. 2. Jer. iv. 2. 19 But all the princes said unto all the congregation, ' We have sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel: now therefore, we may not touch them.

<sup>h</sup> 2 Sam. xxi. 1-6. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 13. Prov. xx. 25. Ez. xvii. 13-16. 18. 19. Zech. v. 3. 4. Mal. iii. 5. Rom. i. 31. 1 Tim. i. 10. 20 This we will do to them; we will even let them live, <sup>h</sup> lest wrath be upon us, because of the oath which we sware unto them.

<sup>i</sup> 23. 27. Deut. xxix. 11. 2 Chr. ii. 18. 21 And the princes said unto them, Let them live; but 'let them be hewers of wood and drawers of waters unto all the congregation; <sup>k</sup> as the princes had promised them.

<sup>l</sup> Gen. iii. 13, 14. xxvii. 35, 36. 41. —45. xxix. 25. 2 Cor. xi. 3. in 6. 9, 10. 22 And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them saying, 'Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, <sup>m</sup> We are very far from you; when ye dwell among us?

<sup>n</sup> See on Gen. ix. 25. 26.—Lev. xxvii. 28, 29. 23 Now therefore ye are <sup>a</sup> cursed; and there shall <sup>a</sup> none of you be freed

from being bondmen, and <sup>a</sup> hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God.

24 And they answered Joshua, and said, Because it was certainly told thy servants, how that <sup>p</sup> the LORD thy God commanded his servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you, therefore <sup>q</sup> we were sore afraid of our lives because of you, and have done this thing.

25 And now, behold, <sup>r</sup> we are in thine hand: <sup>a</sup> as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do.

26 And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not.

27 And Joshua 'made them that day hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the LORD, even unto this day, <sup>a</sup> in the place which he should choose.

Gibeonites, therefore, would have their lives spared, in regard to the oath of God, (which was all that was expressly engaged for,) they must consent to become, not only tributaries, but slaves to Israel: especially as they had acted deceitfully, and could not expect to have a treaty, thus obtained, interpreted in any other than the least favourable sense. If then they would consent to become "hewers of wood and drawers of water to the congregation," and especially to the priests and Levites at the house of God, their lives should be spared.

V. 24. Whatever the sentiments of the Canaanites were concerning JEHOVAH and his people, they considered Israel as acting according to the command of *their* God, and not merely of their own mind, in making war against them and seeking to exterminate them. Others by this conviction were hardened in desperate resistance, but the Gibeonites were induced to form a project for escaping. This by no means consists with the supposition, that peace had before been offered to the Canaanites, and that the Gibeonites having once refused to accede to it, were afterwards driven to adopt the measure here recorded. (Note, 1, 2.)

V. 25, 26. The terms proposed must have appeared exceedingly humiliating and rigorous, when we consider that "Gibeon was as one of the royal cities, and all the men thereof were mighty," (x. 2,) and that not even the chief persons were excepted: and this forms a considerable proof, that the principal men, at least, were actuated by faith and the fear of God. It seems there was considerable difficulty at first, in protecting the Gibeonites from the violence of the people, who were greatly dissatisfied with the conduct of the princes: but the firmness and harmony of the latter, and the manner in which they concluded the transaction, at length satisfied all concerned.

V. 27. The cities and lands of the Gibeonites were

they were restrained from immediately seizing these cities, and plundering them: yet they at length possessed them, for we find them mentioned in the division of the land. (Marg. Ref. d, e.)

V. 19, 20. Had the oath engaged the princes to an action in itself unlawful, it would not have been binding: for such an oath binds him who has taken it, to nothing but deep repentance of his rashness and profaneness. (Notes, Matt. xiv. 8—11. Acts xxiii. 12—22.) But it was not in itself unlawful to spare the lives even of Canaanites, in such circumstances. The princes had indeed been imposed upon by a false pretext, but they had solemnly engaged by oath to the deputies of Gibeon, that they would let their people live: and they must not violate the oath, though it was to their own hurt. (Ps. xv. 4.) It is evident that God approved of their conduct in this respect, and was displeased with Saul, when he long afterwards injured the Gibeonites. (Note, 2 Sam. xxi. 1—3.) So that even in the war, which by special commission Israel waged against the accursed Canaanites, the infraction of solemn treaties, and the violation of solemn oaths, were by no means tolerated.—This deserves the serious consideration of those, who are concerned in the government of states and kingdoms; where politicians are seldom found so scrupulous as these princes of Israel, when interest, and popular prejudice or clamour, unite to tempt them to break through their obligations. And, if there were any hereticks, more certainly devoted to destruction than the accursed Canaanites; none but antichrist would conclude, that no faith was to be observed with them, or that the most solemn oaths sworn to them might be dispensed with.

V. 21—23. The original curse pronounced upon the descendants of Canaan was, that they should be "the servants of servants." (Note, Gen. ix. 24, 25.) If the

## CHAP. X.

Five kings war against Gibeon, 1—5. At the request of the Gibeonites Joshua goes to assist them; and, being encouraged by God, he routs the enemy with great slaughter; while still greater numbers are destroyed by hail-stones, 6—11. At Joshua's

ceded to Israel: and the people were made the servants of the priests and Levites, to do the meanest and hardest work belonging to the sanctuary; and probably were afterwards distinguished by the name of *Nethinim*, or *dedicated persons*. (Note, 1 Chr. ix. 2.) Thus the matter was settled to the satisfaction of all parties; and the people were gratified with having the estates of the Gibeonites, and the benefit of their services in the sanctuary, and, while they continued together, for themselves also. The priests and Levites had a valuable acquisition, and would not only be exempted from much hard labour, but set at liberty to attend more devotedly to their proper work. The Gibeonites preserved their lives: and though laid under a present rebuke for their prevarication; the appointment was overruled for their great advantage, by their being brought into the courts of the Lord, and employed so favourably for the good of their souls: and instead of being destroyed, as *accursed from God*, they were admitted into his service as *wholly devoted to him*.—The transaction had also a very favourable aspect upon the Gentile nations, and pre-intimated their admission into the church.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

## V. 1—15.

While the people of God are most zealously engaged in devotion, their enemies are peculiarly instigated by Satan to confederate against them: but they, who associate against such as are earnest in serving the Lord, will only the more speedily be broken in pieces. (Note, Is. viii. 9, 10.) The conduct of the enemies of true religion is indeed both hateful and infatuated: yet their unanimity might often suggest a profitable hint to Christians; to shame them out of their *intestine* contentions, and instruct them to unite in opposing the incursions of the common enemy. —Flattering words, and plausible pretences to piety, often induce even wise and good men too easily to lay aside suspicion, and even to give countenance to impostures: nor do any act prudently, who are so hasty in their measures, as not to take time for consulting the Lord.—It is an unspeakable blessing to be under the government of those who fear God, and are anxious to avert his impending wrath from a guilty land, and to adopt decisive measures for that purpose; since these will generally escape, when others are hurried on into destruction by hardened, obstinate, and atheistical rulers. For the same warnings and promises of God's word, and the same reports of his mercy to his people and judgments upon his enemies, which move some to "flee from the wrath to come," and to seek shelter from the threatening storm, only increase the enmity and desperation of others.—When the consciences of sinners are first alarmed with the dread of wrath, and filled with the anguish of remorse, they are generally actuated by a "spirit of bondage:" (Note, Rom. viii. 14—17 :) and being greatly ignorant of God, of his law, and his gospel of rich grace abounding even to the chief of sinners; they

word the sun and moon stand still, 12—15. The five kings are discovered in a cave, and shut up there, till at length they are ignominiously put to death, 16—27. Makkedah, Libnah, Lachish, Eglon, Hebron, and Debir, are taken and destroyed, with the king of Gezer, and many others, 28—42. The army returns to Gilgal, 43.

frequently seek relief by such methods, as only serve to increase their guilt: and their carnal contrivances, and false dependences, are seldom free from assumed appearances and hypocritical pretences, by which they attempt to impose upon others, and do actually impose upon themselves. Yet when there is an evident earnestness to escape the wrath of God, we may confidently expect a happy event; that which began with a large mixture of evil, may yet end well; and sinners, who were under an awful curse, may become blessed and a blessing.

## V. 16—27.

The Lord Jesus, (the true Joshua,) sees through every disguise, and abhors all iniquity; yet he will not reject sinners, either on account of former crimes, or of the manifest evil which pollutes their endeavours for salvation. But he will reprove them, and convince them of their guilt; he will bring them to repentance, and shame them out of their secret hypocrisy; he will teach them to trust in his mercy alone; he will save their souls and make them his servants: and though he correct them for their sins, or allot them a low station and hard service in his church; yet he will teach them to acquiesce, and be thankful, and readily to say, "Behold we are in thy hand: as it seemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do." And indeed, to exchange the highest station in the world, for the meanest place among the servants and in the courts of the Lord, though it appears a degradation, and is a trial, will in due time be found to be very great preferment. (Note, Ps. lxxxiv. 10.) But he over-rules many things for his own glory, and the advantage of his church, which are not done according to his commandments, and consequently are not examples for us to imitate.—Though we have been imposed upon, we must not think ourselves at liberty to retaliate: solemn engagements made, even to our hurt, must be conscientiously adhered to: and much allowance should be made for those, whose minds are disquieted with the fear of impending ruin, and who have not enjoyed the advantage of good instruction.—But if men, in order to save their lives, are considered as acting reasonably, when they renounce all their interests, stoop to any concessions, accept of any terms, and become willing to endure any hardships: how reasonable is it, that we should be influenced by the fear of eternal punishment, and the hope of everlasting life, to renounce the world, mortify our lusts, deny ourselves, and submit to the cross; to humble and abase ourselves in the very dust before God; and to "count all but dung, that we may win Christ and be found in him!" (Note, Phil. iii. 8—11 :) that we should be in haste to have the covenant of peace ratified to our souls; to cut off the offending limb, and to pluck out the offending eye; and in short, to yield up ourselves to the Lord without reserve, craving only that our souls may be saved, and that he would make us his servants, though in the lowest place, and amidst the greatest hard-

**N**OW it came to pass, when <sup>a</sup>Adonizedek king of Jerusalem had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; (<sup>b</sup>as he had done to Jericho and her king, so he had done to Ai and her king;) and <sup>c</sup>how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them;

2 That <sup>d</sup>they feared greatly, because Gibeon *was* a great city, as one of <sup>e</sup>the <sup>f</sup>royal cities, and because it *was* greater than Ai, and all the men thereof *were* mighty.

3 Wherefore Adonizedek, 'king of Jerusalem, sent unto Hoham king of <sup>g</sup>Hebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia king of <sup>h</sup>Lachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying,

4 Come up unto me, <sup>i</sup>and help me, that <sup>k</sup>we may smite Gibeon: for it hath made peace with Joshua, and with the children of Israel.

5 Therefore the five <sup>l</sup>kings of the

Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped before Gibeon, and made war against it.

6 And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua <sup>m</sup>to the camp to Gilgal, saying, <sup>n</sup>"Slack not thy hand <sup>o</sup>from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the <sup>p</sup>mountains are gathered together against us.

7 So <sup>q</sup>Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour.

8 And the LORD said unto Joshua, <sup>r</sup>"Fear them not; for I have delivered them into thine hand: there shall not a man of them stand before thee.

9 Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, *and* went up from Gilgal <sup>s</sup>all night.

10 And <sup>t</sup>the LORD discomfited them

ships! In coming thus to the Saviour we do not proceed upon a *peradventure*: we are invited to draw nigh, and are assured that "whosoever cometh unto him, he will in no wise cast out." But let us take heed, that we come and cleave to the Lord with an upright heart. We hope indeed that many of the Gibeonites were true believers, though not native Israelites: but we are sure that many, who preach, and write, and labour very diligently, and even usefully to others, are only "hewers of wood and drawers of water to the congregation of the LORD," and have no inheritance in Israel, but are themselves cast-aways.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1—5. Adoni-zedek signifies *the lord of righteousness*, and this king was probably a descendant, as well as successor, of Melchizedek, "the king of righteousness;" though he retained nothing of his progenitor's piety, but the mere name which his conduct belied. It cannot reasonably be doubted, that Jerusalem was the same place as Salem: (Notes, Gen. xiv. 18—20. Ps. lxxvi. 2:) and some think it obtained the name Jerusalem, about the time when Israel invaded Canaan.—The kings, whose dominions lay further north, as well as those in the south, had confederated against Israel; and probably were collecting their forces for a general assault: (Note, ix. 1, 2:) but the report of Gibeon's alliance with Joshua induced these five kings, whose territories lay in the south, and near to the encampment of Israel, dreading the consequences of such an example, and desirous of revenge, to attack the Gibeonites, separately and in haste, that they might crush them, and intimidate others from imitating them; and that so they might be afterwards the more at liberty to attack

the Israelites: but they only accelerated and facilitated their own destruction.—Jericho and Ai seem to have been the key of the land; but Gibeon was a larger city, and its inhabitants far more numerous and powerful.—The Gibeonites were *among* the Israelites, as allied to them, and under their protection; but not as living in their camp or quarters.

V. 6. The Gibeonites confided in Joshua and Israel, that they would come to the defence of those, whom they had admitted to be their servants; for subjection entitles to protection: and they so confided in the God of Israel, that they did not doubt of their success in the expedition. But they informed Joshua that no time was to be lost.—The Amorites were the most powerful of the distinct tribes inhabiting Canaan; and therefore all the inhabitants are sometimes called by that general name. For Hebron was occupied by Hittites, and Jerusalem by Jebusites; and even the people of Gibeon, who are generally called Hivites, are also said to be "of the remnant of the Amorites." (2 Sam. xxi. 2.)

V. 7. The head-quarters of Israel were still at Gilgal. (43. Note, v. 10.) There Joshua left the unarmed multitude, doubtless with a sufficient guard; and marched, with the men of the most approved valour, to defend the Gibeonites against the kings of Canaan.

V. 8. The enemies hitherto encountered were of small force, compared with the troops of these combined kings; and therefore the Lord encouraged Joshua by the assurance of a complete victory.

V. 9, 10. Joshua was an able commander; his army consisted of "mighty men of valour;" his measures were concerted with prudence, and executed with vigour and

before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter" at Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up to Beth-horon, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah.

11 And it came to pass as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: *they were* more which died with hail-stones, than *they* whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.

12 Then spake Joshua to the LORD, in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites, before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.

13 And the sun stood still, and the

moon stayed, "until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.

14 And there was no day like that, before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel.

15 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the camp to Gilgal.

16 ¶ But these five kings fled, and hid themselves in a cave at Makkedah.

17 And it was told Joshua, saying, The five kings are found hid in a cave at Makkedah.

18 And Joshua said, Roll great stones upon the mouth of the cave, and set men by it for to keep them;

dispatch; he marched all night, attacked the enemy at unawares, and doubtless his troops behaved well: yet the whole victory is ascribed to the Lord. (*Notes*, Ps. xlv. 1—3. cxliv. 1. 10.)—Their prudence, courage, and strength were his gift; he intimidated and confounded their enemies, and he rendered their measures successful.

V. 11. Hailstones of an enormous size were showered down from above, and directed in so extraordinary a manner by the Lord himself, that they smote and slew the fugitive Canaanites in great multitudes, but did not fall upon any of their pursuers! (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, Ex. ix. 33. Rev. xvi. 17—21.)

V. 12—14. Joshua doubtless acted, on this occasion, by an immediate impulse upon his mind from the Spirit of God. He first "spake to the LORD" in earnest prayer; and then to the sun and moon, as by authority from him, commanding those luminaries to stay their course. This he did publicly before all Israel, that they might hear the charge which he gave, and observe the obedience of these heavenly bodies. It would have been improper either that he should speak, or that the miracle should be recorded, according to the terms of modern astronomy. The sun appeared to the Israelites over Gibeon, and the moon over the valley of Ajalon, which is supposed to have been situated in a different direction: and there they appeared to be stayed in their course for "a whole day;" either for the space of about twelve or fourteen hours, or for the time of one diurnal revolution.—Many enquiries have been made concerning the way in which this miracle was wrought, and many difficulties and objections have been urged against understanding it *literally*. But the fact, as far as we are concerned about it, is authenticated by the divine testimony; and the manner, in which it was accomplished, lies entirely out of our province, because beyond our discovery and comprehension. "Is any thing too hard for the LORD?" This question forms a sufficient answer to ten thousand difficulties, which puny objectors, under

the assumed title of philosophers, have in every age been starting against the truth of God in his written word. (*Note*, Gen. vii. 10—12.)—As there are no records of profane history so ancient as this event, it cannot be any cause for wonder, that Pagan authors have not mentioned it. Yet some intimation of it seems given, in the fable of Phaeton driving the chariot of the Sun, and throwing all things into disorder, so that there was one day wholly unlike all before or after it.—This extraordinary miracle not only gave Israel an opportunity of completing their victory, but rendered Joshua honourable in the eyes of all the people; and both him and them terrible to the surrounding nations. It was also a public attestation, that the God of Israel was the Lord of the whole earth, and of the heavens: and a protest against idolatry; whilst the sun and moon, the worship of which formed the most ancient and plausible kind of idolatry, were obedient to the commands of the servants of JEHOVAH, the God of Israel. (*Note*, Deut. iv. 19.)—The book of Jasher seems to have been a collection of records or poems, concerning the chief events of the wars of Israel. In this collection, it is probable, there were further particulars concerning this miracle; or a poem on the occasion, well known among the Israelites. (*Notes*, Num. xxi. 11—15. 2 Sam. i. 18.)

V. 15. It cannot be supposed that Joshua would march his army twenty or thirty miles in the midst of victory, just after the above-mentioned miracle had been wrought to give them time to complete the destruction of their enemies (19). This verse therefore forms an evident interruption of the narrative; it is not found in some versions; it is *verbatim* the same as the last verse of the chapter; and probably was inserted here by the error of some ancient transcribers.

V. 16—18. The kings escaped the hail-stones and the sword, only to be reserved to a more ignominious death. For the cave, in which they took shelter, became first their

u Is. xlviii. 21.

x xvi. 3. 5. xxi. 22.  
1 Sam. xiii. 18.  
v 11. xv. 26. Jer.  
xxxiv. 7.  
z 28. xii. 16. xv.  
41.

c Gen. xix. 24.  
Judg. v. 20. Ps.  
xi 8. xlviii. 12.  
13. lxxvii. 17, 18.  
Is. xxxviii. 2. xxx.  
30. Ez. xlii. 11.  
Rev. xi. 19. xvi.  
21.

b See on 13.—  
Deut. iv. 19.  
xvii. 8. Job ix.  
7. xxi. 26, 27.  
Ps. xix. 4. lxxiv.  
16. cxlviii. 3. Is.  
xxxviii. 91.  
xxxviii. 8. Is.  
20. Am. viii. 9.  
Hab. iii. 11.  
• Heb. be silent.  
Hab. ii. 20. marg.  
Zech. ii. 13.  
c xix. 42. Judg.  
xii. 12. Ajalon.

d Num. xxxd. 2  
Judg. v. 2. xvi.  
28. Eath. viii. 13.  
Luke xviii. 7.  
Rev. vi. 10.

t Or, the upright  
Num. xxi. 14  
2 Sam. i. 18.  
e 11. 14. Ps. xix  
4. lxxiv. 16, 17  
cxlviii. 7—9  
cxlviii. 8. Is.  
xxiv. 23. Joel ii.  
10. 31. iii. 15.  
Matt. v. 45. xxiv.  
29. Acts ii. 20.  
Rev. vi. 12. viii.  
12. xvi. 8, 9.  
xxi. 23.

f 2 Kings xx. 10,  
11. Is. xxxviii. 8.  
g Zech. iv. 6, 7.  
Matt. xxi. 21, 22.  
Mark xi. 22—  
24. Luke xvi. 6.  
h 42. xxiii. 8.  
Deut. i. 30.  
i 6. 43.

k Ps. xlviii. 4—6  
cxxxix. 7—10.  
Is. ii. 10—12.  
Am. ix. 2, 8.  
Rev. vi. 15—17.  
Judg. vi. 2.  
1 Sam. xiii. 6.  
Is. ii. 19—22.  
xxiv. 21, 22. Mic.  
vii. 17.  
m 22. Judg. ix. 46  
—29. Job xxi.  
30. Am. v. 19. Is.  
1. Matt. xxvii. 66.



THE VALLEY OF AJALON.

JOSHUA x. 12.



<sup>n</sup> Ps. xviii. 37—41. <sup>Jer.</sup> xlviii. 16. <sup>•</sup> Heb. *cut off the tail*. <sup>1s.</sup> ix. 14, 15. <sup>o</sup> 20. 2 Sam. xvii. 13. <sup>xx.</sup> 6. <sup>Jer.</sup> viii. 14. **19** And <sup>a</sup> stay ye not, *but* pursue after your enemies. and <sup>b</sup> smite the hindmost of them; <sup>c</sup> suffer them not to enter into their cities: for the LORD your God hath delivered them into your hand.

<sup>p</sup> 10. viii. 24. 2 Chr. xiii. 17. **20** And it came to pass, when Joshua, and the children of Israel <sup>q</sup> had made an end of slaying them with a very great slaughter, till they were consumed, that the rest *which* remained of them entered into fenced cities.

<sup>q</sup> 15—17. **21** And all the people returned <sup>r</sup> to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah in peace; <sup>s</sup> none moved his tongue against any of the children of Israel.

<sup>t</sup> See on 16—18. **22** Then said Joshua, <sup>u</sup> Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings unto me out of the cave.

<sup>u</sup> See on 1. 3. 5. **23** And they did so, and brought forth those five kings unto him out of the cave, <sup>v</sup> the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, *and* the king of Eglon.

**24** And it came to pass, when they brought out those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of

the men of war which went with him, Come near, <sup>w</sup> put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them.

**25** And Joshua said unto them, <sup>x</sup> Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage: for <sup>y</sup> thus shall the LORD do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.

**26** And afterward <sup>z</sup> Joshua smote them, and <sup>a</sup> slew them, and <sup>b</sup> hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening.

**27** And it came to pass, at the time of the going down of the sun, *that* Joshua commanded, and <sup>c</sup> they took them down off the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had been hid, and laid great stones in the cave's mouth, *which remain* <sup>d</sup> until this very day.

**28** ¶ And that day Joshua took Makkedah, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof he utterly destroyed, <sup>e</sup> them, and all the souls that *were* therein; he let none remain: <sup>f</sup> and he did to the king of Makkedah as he did unto the king of Jericho.

<sup>u</sup> Deut. xxxiii. 20. <sup>v</sup> Judg. viii. 20. <sup>w</sup> Ps. ii. 8—12. xci. 13. cvii. 40. cx. 1. 5. cxlix. 2. 2. 1s. xxvi. 5, 6. ix. 11, 12. Mai. iv. 3. Rom. xv. 20. Rev. ii. 26, 27.

<sup>x</sup> See on i. 9. Deut. xxxi. 6—8. 1 Sam. xvii. 37. Ps. lxxiii. 9. lxxvii. 11. 2 Cor. i. 10. 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18. <sup>y</sup> See on Deut. iii. 21, 22. vii. 19.

<sup>z</sup> Judg. viii. 21. 1 Sam. xv. 33. <sup>a</sup> viii. 29. Num. xxv. 4. Deut. xxi. 22, 23. 2 Sam. xxi. 6. 9. Eath. ii. 23. vii. 9, 10. Matt. xxvii. 5. Gal. iii. 13.

<sup>b</sup> 2 Sam. xviii. 7.

<sup>c</sup> See on iv. 9. vii. 26.

<sup>d</sup> 32. 35. 37. 39. vi. 21. Deut. vii. 2. 16. xx. 16, 17. Ps. xxi. 8, 9. cx. 1. Luke xix. 27. 1 Cor. xv. 26. <sup>e</sup> 30. viii. 2.

prison and then their grave. (27. Notes, viii. 29. 2 Kings xix. 36, 37.)

V. 20. A few stragglers escaped the general carnage, and got refuge in the fenced cities, but were soon followed thither and destroyed. Some, however, might flee to fenced cities farther to the north of the land, and at length to Tyre or Zidon; and so finally escape the slaughter. It is probable that numbers, in the more northern regions, thus fled from the sword of Israel; and produced a superabundance of inhabitants in those ancient cities, which made way for the colonies being sent into Africa, which ancient history records; and from which Carthage especially arose, the powerful but unsuccessful rival of Rome. (Note, Gen. ix. 24, 25.)

V. 21. Probably, a camp was prepared at Makkedah, for the reception and accommodation of the army after the victory, in consequence of the kings being imprisoned in the cave near to it.—No mention is made of any Israelite having been killed, missing, or wounded; though we are particularly informed of the thirty-six men who were slain before Ai: but *all* are said to have returned in peace to the camp. (Notes, vii. 3—5. Num. xxxi. 48—54.) It may therefore be concluded, that every one was preserved: and the victory was so complete, that there was none, who

dared so much as to speak a word in contempt or reproach of the Israelites. (Note, Ex. xi. 7.)

V. 24, 25. This action of the captains was not intended as a personal insult to the kings; but they subscribed, as it were, their condemnation as the hardened enemies of God, and doomed by him to ignominy and destruction; as rejoicing in his victory and triumph over them, and as taking encouragement respecting the remaining kings of Canaan. (Marg. Ref. u, x.)—The transaction was evidently typical of the conquests of the Redeemer, as rejoiced in by his people; who, in overcoming their spiritual enemies by his help, anticipate that glorious season, when all his and their foes shall be put under his feet. (Notes, Gen. iii. 14, 15. Ps. cx. 5, 6. Rom. xvi. 17—20.)

V. 26, 27. Marg. Ref.—Note, viii. 29.

V. 28. Makkedah seems to have been taken by a sudden onset, the very day on which the other victory was obtained, and which had been lengthened out by the sun standing still; and while the five kings were ignominiously suspended before the city.—Some learned men however think, that nothing more is meant by the words *that day*, than that Makkedah was taken on the same day on which it was assaulted.—We are not expressly told, how the king of Jericho was slain: but probably he was hanged up, as

29 Then Joshua passed from Makedah, and all Israel with him, unto Libnah, and fought against Libnah:

f xii. 15. xv. 42.  
xvi. 13. 2 Kings  
vii. 22. xix. 8.  
Jer. lxi. 1.

30 And the LORD delivered it also, and the king thereof, into the hand of Israel; and he smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that *were* therein: he let none remain in it; but did unto the king thereof <sup>as</sup> he did unto the king of Jericho.

28. vi. 21. viii  
2. 29.

31 And Joshua passed from Libnah, and all Israel with him, unto <sup>h</sup>Lachish, and encamped against it, and fought against it:

h e. 6. i. 11. xv  
30. 2 Kings xix.  
v. 2 Chr. xi. 9  
Mic. i. 13

32 And the LORD delivered Lachish into the hand of Israel, which took it on the second day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that *were* therein, according to all that he had done to Libnah.

i xii. 12. xvi. 3.  
10. xxi. 21. Judg.  
i. 29. 1 Kings xix.  
16. 17. 1 Chr. vi.  
67. xx. 4.

33 Then Horam king of <sup>i</sup>Gezer came up to help Lachish: and Joshua smote him and his people, until he had left him none remaining.

34 And from Lachish Joshua passed unto <sup>k</sup>Eglon, and all Israel with him, and they encamped against it, and fought against it:

k 3. xii. 12. xv. 30.

35 And they took it <sup>l</sup>on that day, and smote it with the edge of the sword; and all the souls that *were* therein he <sup>m</sup>utterly destroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish.

l 32.

m 37. Lev. xxvi  
44 Job xix. 10.

36 And Joshua went up from Eglon, and all Israel with him, unto <sup>n</sup>Hebron, and they fought against it:

n 3. 5. xiv. 13. 1a.  
xv. 64. xxi. 13.  
Gen. xxi. 18.  
Num. xxi. 22.  
Judg. i. 10.  
2 Sam. v. 1—5.  
xv. 9. 10. 1 Chr.  
xii. 23

37 And they took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and all the souls that *were* therein: he left none remaining, (according to all that he had done to Eglon,) but destroyed it utterly, and all the souls that *were* therein.

38 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, to <sup>o</sup>Debir: and fought against it:

o xii. 13. xv. 15  
49. xxi. 15. Judg.  
i. 11—15.

39 And he took it, and the king thereof, and all the cities thereof, and they smote them with the edge of the sword, and utterly destroyed all the souls that *were* therein; <sup>p</sup>he left none remaining: as he had done to Hebron, so he did to Debir, and to the king thereof; as he had done also to Libnah, and to her king.

p 33. 37. 40. xi. 8.  
Deut. iii. 3  
2 Kings x. 11.  
Ob. 16.

40 So Joshua smote <sup>q</sup>all the country of the hills, and of the south, and of the vale, and of the springs, and all their kings: he left none remaining, but <sup>r</sup>utterly destroyed all that breathed, <sup>s</sup>as the LORD God of Israel commanded.

q xv. 21—63. xviii.  
21—28. xix. 1—  
8. 40—48.

41 And Joshua smote them from <sup>t</sup>Kadesh-barnea even unto <sup>u</sup>Gaza, and <sup>v</sup>all the country of Goshen even unto Gibeon.

r 35. 37. 1 Kings  
xv. 29. Ps. ix. 17.  
2 Thes. i. 7—9.  
s vi. 17. viii. 2.  
27. ix. 24. Ex.  
xxxiii. 31—33.  
xxxiv. 12. Deut.  
vii. 2. 16. xx. 16.  
17.

42 And all these kings, and their land, did Joshua take at one time; <sup>w</sup>because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel.

t xiv. 6. 7. Num.  
xiii. 26. xxxii. 8.  
xxxiv. 4. Deut.  
ix. 23.  
u Gen. x. 19. Judg.  
xvi. 1. 21. 1 Sam.  
vi. 17. Zech. ix.  
5. Acts viii. 26.  
x xi. 16. xv. 51

43 And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, <sup>y</sup>unto the camp to Gilgal.

y 14. Ex. xiv. 14.  
25. Deut. xx. 4.  
Ps. xlv. 3—8  
xvi. 1. 7. 11.  
Isa. 3. cxviii.  
6. Is. viii. 9. 10.  
xiii. 4. Rom.  
viii. 31—37.  
z 15. iv. 19. 1 Sam.  
xi. 14.

the king of Ai was, and as these five kings were. (Note, viii. 29.)

V. 31—33. The king of Lachish had been before put to death. (23. 26.)—Probably a detachment vanquished the king of Gezer, and destroyed his people, while Joshua and the main body took Lachish.

V. 36, 37. The king of Hebron was one of the five before hanged: (23. 26;) but, as some time had now elapsed, probably his successor had been appointed. This might be deemed the more necessary, as it was a considerable place, having other cities dependent upon it.—It is not agreed, whether Caleb at this time conquered the Anakims, or whether some of them now escaped to Gaza; (Note, xi. 21—23;) and afterwards returning got possession of Hebron, and were destroyed by Caleb when the land had been divided. The latter opinion seems more

consonant with the history. (Notes, xiv. 6—15. xv. 13, 14. Judg. i. 10—15.)

V. 40—43. When the Israelites had first passed Jordan, they made but slow progress. Jericho was taken by miracle; but the city was desolated, and all the spoil was destroyed, or dedicated to sacred uses. (Notes, vi. 17—19. 26.) They shared the spoil of Ai, but the city was burnt and made a heap. (Note, viii. 28.) Gibeon surrendered, and was spared. (Notes, ix.) But when their faith, patience, and obedience had been properly proved, their success was more rapid; and they were enriched by the spoil of all these cities, and by the houses both of the cities and villages, which were preserved for their use; and by the acquisition of all the adjacent country, and its flocks, and herds, and crops, and stores; while the inhabitants were either destroyed or driven away. Thus God gave them "great and

## CHAP. XI.

The remaining kings of Canaan confederate against Israel, 1—5. God encourages Joshua, who attacks and conquers them, 6—9. He burns Hazor, and

takes the cities of the other kings, and destroys the inhabitants in obedience to the Lord, 10—15. A general account of his conquests, 16—18. The hearts of the Canaanites hardened, 19, 20. The Anakims destroyed, 21, 22. The land rests from war, 23.

“goodly cities, which they built not; houses full of good things, which they filled not; and wells digged, which they digged not.” (*Deut. vi. 10, 11.*)—The Israelites, however, still continued in a body at Gilgal, and did not as yet inhabit their cities.—They had now conquered almost all the southern part of the land.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

## V. 1—15.

When sinners renounce the service of Satan and the friendship of the world, that they may make peace with God and join interests with Israel; they must not “marvel if the world hate them,” if their former friends become their most rancorous foes, and if they meet with unexpected opposition and temptations. For thus Satan, the god of this world, discourages many who are convinced of their danger, and almost persuaded to be Christians; but are so afraid of the cross, that they dare not venture to act according to the dictates of their consciences. Yet indeed these trials should excite new converts to greater diligence, in seeking the comfortable assurance that the covenant of peace is ratified with them by a merciful God; in surrendering themselves the more unreservedly to his service; and in applying to him for protection and deliverance. For the meanest and most feeble of those who have just begun to serve the Lord, notwithstanding former crimes and present infirmities, are equally entitled to his defence, with those who have long and faithfully been his servants.—They, who are enemies to the Lord’s people because they belong to him, are adjudged his enemies: nor do any sinners more hasten and augment their own condemnation, than such as combine to impede the progress of true religion, by persecuting and intimidating those who seem disposed to serve God.—No difficulties or dangers need dismay the believer, when in the path of duty and confiding in the Lord: and it is peculiarly incumbent upon us to defend and rescue the oppressed and afflicted, who have exposed themselves to trouble for our sake or the gospel’s, and who look to us for help. In such a cause we ought not to be backward to endure hardship and fatigue, and expose ourselves to loss or inconvenience, rather than grieve, by needless delays, those who depend on our aid.—The assurance of divine assistance should animate us to action, and to devise and execute every proper plan to ensure success: and when we trust in the Lord, and give him the praise, we shall experience assistance in some measure proportioned to our boldness and diligence.—The sun, moon, and stars in their courses, (*Note, Judg. v. 20.*) yea, the whole creation, will fight for the Lord’s people against his enemies, though not so miraculously, yet as effectually, as in the days of Joshua; for all things combine to promote the salvation of the righteous, and the destruction of the wicked. How infatuated then are they who harden their hearts against that God, whose mandate can arm all the universe to execute vengeance on his enemies!

## V. 16—43.

“Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished:” their wisest counsels prove a snare to entangle them; their most valiant and vigorous exertions expose their weakness, and end in disgrace and dismay; their choicest blessings are changed into a curse; and their secure retreats become their prisons, or their graves!—Kings and mighty captains, who are disobedient to God, will at last be treated as arch-rebels, to be distinguished only by the deepest infamy and the heaviest vengeance: and all the Israel of God will join the triumph of the Captain of their salvation, in trampling upon the necks of their proudest opposers, and exclaiming, “So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD.” (*Notes, Ps. cxlix. 6—9.*) This will be the final event of all the conflicts between the church of God and its persecutors: but at present we are called, not to avenge ourselves, but to forgive, love, and pray for our enemies; and endeavour to conquer their hearts with persevering patience and kindness. The Christian’s warfare is of another nature: our most dangerous enemies are our own lusts, as in a league with the powers of darkness; and our sharpest conflicts and most glorious victories consist in resisting the devil, subduing the flesh, and striving against sin. In this war we must form no alliance, and give no quarter: and our once domineering sin, whether covetousness, pride, sensuality, or malice, must be marked as the object of our peculiar enmity and opposition; this, this especially, must be crucified. (*P. O. 1 Sam. xv. 22—35, conclusion. Notes, 2 Sam. xxii. 21—28. Heb. xii. 1.*) The activity, vigilance, courage, and wisdom, which this warfare requires, must be sought in earnest prayer; and thus we must “put on the whole armour of God:” yet in trusting him, we must by no means abate our diligence and self-denial. Nor must we be satisfied with obtaining some important victory, but push our advantages, and pursue our scattered enemies, searching out the remains of sin; and thus aspire at further conquests, till we have set our feet upon the neck of every lust, and completed its entire destruction. In so doing we may confidently expect the Lord’s assistance; he will slay our indwelling sin, and yet spare us, though the union seem inseparable: he will afford us light during our whole conflict, until the warfare be accomplished; he will make one victory the forerunner and earnest of another; he will encourage us, and lead us on from strength to strength, until he has made us more than conquerors. “The LORD God of Israel fighteth for Israel;” and when he has exercised our faith, patience, and submission, he will bring us to the mansions above, enriched with the spoils of our conquered enemies, to join in songs of everlasting triumph and joyful praise.—But let every Israelite remember, that he is a soldier belonging to a great army, whom he is to assist with all his power. Beside those particular advantages which he obtains for his own soul, the whole company are trying to gain advantages against the common enemy, by daily in-

**AND** it came to pass, when <sup>a</sup>Jabin king of Hazor had heard *those things*, that <sup>b</sup>he sent to Jobab king of <sup>c</sup>Madon, and to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Achshaph.

<sup>2</sup> And to the kings that *were* <sup>d</sup>on the north of the mountains, and of the plains south of <sup>e</sup>Chinneroth, and in the valley, and in the borders of <sup>f</sup>'Dor on the west;

<sup>3</sup> And to the Canaanite on the east and on the west, and to the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and <sup>g</sup>the Jebusite in the mountains, and to <sup>h</sup>the Hivite under <sup>i</sup>'Hermon, in <sup>k</sup>the land of Mizpeh.

<sup>4</sup> And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even <sup>l</sup>as the sand that *is* upon the sea-shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many.

<sup>5</sup> And when <sup>m</sup>all these kings were <sup>n</sup>met together, they came and pitched

together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.

<sup>6</sup> And the Lord said unto Joshua, <sup>o</sup>Be not afraid because of them; for <sup>p</sup>to-morrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel: thou shalt <sup>q</sup>hough their <sup>r</sup>'horses, and burn their chariots with fire.

<sup>7</sup> So Joshua came, and all the people of war with him, against them by the waters of Merom <sup>s</sup>suddenly, and they fell upon them.

<sup>8</sup> And the Lord delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them, and chased them unto <sup>t</sup>'great Zidon, and unto <sup>u</sup>'Misrephoth-maim, and unto the valley of Mizpeh eastward: and they smote them, until they left them none remaining.

<sup>9</sup> And Joshua did unto them as the Lord bade him: <sup>v</sup>'be houghed their horses, and burnt their chariots with fire.

<sup>10</sup> And Joshua at that time turned

creasing the numbers of true believers. The endeavours indeed of an individual must appear inconsiderable; but the combined efforts of the whole multitude may produce vast effects. And oh! that God would incline the hearts of all who love Jesus Christ, and his cause of truth and righteousness, to lay aside their petty disputes and self-seeking, with their zeal for the interests of a party, that they might all concur in this glorious warfare; "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;" boldly professing their attachment to the crucified Saviour; and striving to "let their light shine before men, that they may see their good works, and glorify their Father which is in heaven."

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1—3. All the kings between Jordan and the Mediterranean sea, from north to south, had confederated against Israel; (Notes, ix. 1, 2. x. 1—5;) but it seems, that the events recorded in the two preceding chapters had disconcerted their measures: so that for a time the kings, who possessed the northern parts of the land, remained inactive; and as Joshua did not attack them, they might have concluded that Israel, satisfied with their present acquisitions, would push their conquests no further, if not molested. But their enmity, resentment, and apprehensions would not permit them to be quiet; and when their courage revived, they renewed their confederacy. (Notes, Ex. xiv. 1—9.) Thus it was doubtless ordered by a divine interposition, that, except in Israel's crossing over Jordan into Canaan, and in the destruction of Jericho and Ai, the Canaanites rushed forward upon their own ruin. (Note, 19, 20.)—The regions here mentioned seem to include the whole country, from Jerusalem on the south, to the utmost borders of the land on the north. The different

tribes, descended from Canaan, appear to have been settled in every part of it. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 4. Josephus states this army at three hundred thousand foot, with cavalry and chariots in proportion. We may with certainty infer the populousness and fertility of the promised land, from the text itself; and also perceive the occasion which Joshua had of encouragement: for he had neither chariots nor horsemen in his army (6).—It is generally thought, that the horses, both for the cavalry and the chariots, were brought out of Egypt, and not bred in Canaan. (Notes, Deut. xvii. 16. 1 Kings x. 28, 29.)

V. 6. By cutting some sinews of the legs, the horses were rendered incapable of service, except perhaps in agriculture, and other common employments.—Joshua, and the princes of Israel, might have thought this a good opportunity of furnishing themselves with cavalry for future use; but they were not permitted to trust in chariots and horses, and were therefore commanded to disable or destroy the whole. This command formed a proper trial of their faith and obedience; and their prompt compliance implied a confidence in God, and a contempt and defiance of the most formidable enemies and preparations of war, which was becoming *their* character, and honourable to *his* name. (9. Notes, xvii. 16. Judg. i. 19. iv. 14, 15. v. 15, 16.)

V. 7, 8. Though the armament of these kings was so exceedingly formidable, Joshua, relying on the Lord, marched directly to attack them; and his success was so complete, that the whole company was entirely extirpated or dispersed, and driven out of the land. Probably, a considerable number of fugitives escaped to Zidon and Tyre. (Note, x. 20.)

V. 10, 11. Joshua had now carried the war to the northern extremities of the land, even to the great and

<sup>u</sup> See on i. —Judg. iv. 2. back and took <sup>a</sup> Hazor, and smote the king thereof with the sword: for Hazor before-time was the head of all those kingdoms.

11 And they smote all the souls that were therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them: there was not <sup>a</sup> any left to breathe; and he burnt Hazor with fire.

<sup>x</sup> x. 28, 30, 32, 35. 37, 39, 40. 12 And <sup>a</sup> all the cities of those kings, and all the kings of them, did Joshua take and smote them with the edge of the sword, and he utterly destroyed them, <sup>a</sup> as Moses the servant of the LORD commanded.

<sup>y</sup> 15. viii. 9, 31. ix. 24. x. 40. Num. xxxiii. 52. 53. Deut. vii. 2. xx. 16, 17. 13 But *as for* the cities that stood still <sup>a</sup> in their strength, Israel burned none of them, save Hazor only; *that* did Joshua burn.

<sup>z</sup> viii. 27. Num. xxxi. 9. Deut. vi. 10, 11. xx. 14. 14 And all <sup>a</sup> the spoil of these cities, and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves: but every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, <sup>a</sup> neither left they any to breathe.

<sup>a</sup> 11. x. 40. <sup>b</sup> See on v. 12.—Ex. xxxiv. 11—13. <sup>c</sup> Deut. vii. 2 xxxi. 7. 15 As <sup>b</sup> the LORD commanded Moses his servant, <sup>a</sup> so did Moses command

Joshua, <sup>a</sup> and so did Joshua: <sup>a</sup> he <sup>a</sup> left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.

16 ¶ So Joshua took <sup>a</sup> all that land, the <sup>a</sup> hills, and all the south country, and all <sup>b</sup> the land of Goshen, and the valley, and the plain, and the <sup>a</sup> mountain of Israel, and the valley of the same;

17 *Even* from <sup>a</sup> the mount Halak, <sup>a</sup> that goeth up to <sup>a</sup> Seir, even unto Baal-gad, in the valley of Lebanon, under mount Hermon: and <sup>a</sup> all their kings he took, and smote them, and slew them.

18 Joshua made war <sup>a</sup> a long time with all those kings.

19 There was not a city that made peace with the children of Israel, save <sup>a</sup> the Hivites, the inhabitants of Gibeon; all *other* they took in battle.

20 For <sup>a</sup> it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them; <sup>a</sup> as the LORD commanded Moses.

ancient city of Zidon: he then turned back to destroy Hazor, and its king who had taken shelter in his capital, and who was at the head of the confederacy; (Note, 1—3); and as that was not intended to be the chief city of the Israelites, it was burnt to the ground. The Canaanites, however, afterwards rebuilt it; and it became the capital of another Jabin in the time of the Judges. (Note, Judg. iv. 2, 3.)

V. 13. All the cities which were taken by assault, or surrendered before their fortifications were destroyed, were left for the use of Israel, except Hazor only.

V. 15. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xxxix. 43. Deut. vii. 3, 4. 1 Sam. xv. 8, 9. 13—15. 22.

V. 16. The land of Goshen.] (x. 41.) This district of Canaan seems to have derived its name from the land of Goshen in Egypt; (Gen. xlvii. 6;) perhaps from some similarity to that region, which was observed in it, in appearance or fertility.—Some think that “the mountain of Israel” means Beth-el; and others that it was some place where Jacob resided, which was called Israel from him.

V. 17. The length of the land from the borders of Seir, or Edom, to mount Lebanon, is here described.

V. 18. Caleb was forty years of age when he went from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and he was eighty-five when these conquests were completed. (xiv. 7—10.) Almost thirty-nine years of this time were spent, before Israel passed over Jordan; so that this calculation leaves between six and seven years for the term of Joshua’s wars.—The whole country from north to south was then sub-

jected, and all the inhabitants, with whom the Israelites had met, were destroyed. The subsequent history shews that the nations were not exterminated, but that numbers concealed themselves till they were again able to make head against Israel; and many, it is supposed, fled to Zidon and Tyre, and thence migrated into distant countries, and settled colonies in them. (Notes, 7, 8. x. 20. Gen. ix. 24, 25.)

V. 19, 20. The Lord had forbidden Israel to make any league with the idolatrous inhabitants of the land: but the examples of Rahab and of the Gibeonites shew, that individuals or cities, who would renounce idolatry, and heartily come into the interests of Israel, might be spared. The Canaanites in general, however, were not in the least disposed to do this; and they never so much as proposed any terms of accommodation. “For it was of the LORD to “harden their hearts:” they had filled up the measure of their iniquity; and were *judicially* left to blindness, pride, and obstinate enmity, and to the power of Satan: and the dispensations of Providence were appointed in that manner, which most tended to render them pertinacious in resisting, and to drive them to desperation; in order that they might bring upon themselves that vengeance, which they had justly merited, and of which the Lord had constituted the Israelites his executioners, by the commandment given to Moses. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. iv. 21. ix. 12—16. xiv. 3, 4. Deut. ii. 30.) This last reason is added, and repeatedly mentioned (15), to shew that Joshua and Israel did not act out of cruelty, revenge, or avarice; but simply in

21 And at that time came Joshua, and cut off \* the Anakims from the mountains; from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the mountains of Judah, and from all the mountains of Israel: \* Joshua destroyed them utterly with their cities.

22 There was none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel;

\* only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod, there remained.

23 So Joshua took the whole land, \* according to all that the LORD said unto Moses, and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel, \* according to their divisions by their tribes. \* And the land rested from war.

obedience to God, *which alone* could induce pious men to make such undistinguishing slaughter of their fellow-creatures: and doubtless, many of them did very great violence to their own feelings and inclinations, while engaged in that service. (*Notes*, Num. xx. 14—21. xxi. 21—25. xxxi. 14—18.)

V. 21—23. The Anakims, whose name had formerly so terrified the unbelieving Israelites, no ways distinguished themselves in this war, but were subdued and destroyed with the other inhabitants. (*Marg. Ref. r.*)—It seems evident, that Joshua conquered the Anakims, and desolated their cities, before the division of the land: yet several of the principal persons escaped into the country of the Philistines, and settled there; from whom Goliath, and the other giants afterwards mentioned, descended. But after a time some of them returned, with followers, and rebuilt the cities: and Caleb and Othniel, to whom that part of the country was assigned, vanquished and destroyed them after the division of the land, perhaps after the death of Joshua. (*Notes*, x. 36, 37. xiv. 6—15. xv. 13—17. *Judg.* i. 10—15.) The conquered cities had doubtless before this been garrisoned, and some of the people dispersed through the country to cultivate the lands; and preparation was now making for the regular partition of it among their tribes and families. New occupations, with which the nation had hitherto been entirely unacquainted, now called for their attention: but the Lord, who gave them the land, was able to teach them to cultivate it; and they would soon make proficiency under such an Instructor. (*Note*, Is. xxviii. 23—29.)—Great numbers of the ancient inhabitants still continued in the land, or waited in the adjacent countries for an opportunity of regaining their possessions: but, for the present, they lay concealed, or remained quiet; so that the Israelites were not molested by their assaults or incursions.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The believer must never put off his armour, or expect durable peace, till he closes his eyes in death; nay, as his strength, consolations, and usefulness are increased, he may expect more heavy trials and severe conflicts: but while he continues watching and praying, he may confidently trust, that none of his enemies shall be permitted to assail him, till he is prepared for the battle.—The strongest faith would naturally grow weak, if we were left to ourselves; and whenever we view difficulties or dangers with an eye of sense, our hearts are overwhelmed with discouragement. But Jesus ever liveth to intercede for his people, and their faith shall not fail however Satan may assault them. (*Note*, Luke xxii. 31—34.) By waiting upon the Lord they renew their strength; and their hopes re-

vive, and their hearts rejoice, even in the midst of tribulation. Perplexing trials render their dependence on God more simple, their prayers more fervent, and in the event their gratitude more lively: and without exception, every cross and temptation, which the believer is enabled properly to endure, enriches his soul with increasing holiness, and will enlarge his everlasting inheritance.—The possession of those things on which the carnal heart is prone to depend, is unfavourable to the life of faith and the walk with God; and it is immensely better to be without secular advantages, than to have our everlasting interests endangered.—They who prosper in the ways of the Lord, attend to the precepts and directions of his word, as well as to the promises; while simplicity of faith is shewn by unreserved obedience. (*Notes*, Heb. xi. 8—10. 13—16.)—The servants of God have different employments allotted them: but every service requires *self-denial*, in respect of some or other of our natural inclinations; and therefore, without the habit of submitting our will to his command, we cannot implicitly follow him. Nay frequently in pleasing God, we must expose ourselves to the censure and reproach of our fellow-creatures; and our best actions may by ill-judging men be supposed to result from the worst of principles: but the testimony of our conscience, and the approbation of our Judge, will compensate all consequences.—Would we approve ourselves upright, we must “leave nothing undone which the LORD has commanded;” for though *omissions* are not so scandalous, either in the world or in the church, as *commissions*, they are as certainly acts of disobedience, and effects of a will unsubjected to the divine authority.—However tedious, sharp, and difficult the believer’s warfare is, his patience in tribulation may be encouraged by the joyfulness of hope; for he will, ere long, rest from sin and sorrow in the Canaan above.—But how dreadful is the case of the obstinate unbeliever, who is not moved, either by promises, warnings, judgments, or mercies, to seek reconciliation to his offended God!—When transgressors have provoked Him to leave them to themselves, they soon, by increasing presumption and hardness of heart, make way for the execution of this purposed vengeance, and for the display of his righteousness in their eternal destruction: (*Note*, Rom. ii. 4—6:) nor will numbers, strength, or carnal confidences avail, when God shall arise to execute judgment on his enemies.—Those trials and perils, the prospect of which deter many from a life of godliness, and often excite the apprehensions of the true believer, are frequently in experience too inconsiderable for notice, and only excite shame and surprise, upon the recollection of the alarms which they occasioned. Let sinners then take warning not to harden their own hearts, lest God should give them up to

## CHAP. XII.

A list of the kings subdued by Moses, eastward of Jordan, 1—6: and of the one and thirty kings conquered by Joshua, westward of that river, 7—24.

NOW these *are* the kings of the land which the children of Israel smote and possessed their land <sup>a</sup> on the other side Jordan, towards the rising of the sun; <sup>b</sup> from the river Arnon <sup>c</sup> unto mount Hermon, and all the plain on the east; 2 <sup>d</sup> Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and ruled from Arcer, which is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and from the middle of the river, and from half Gilead, even unto the river <sup>e</sup> Jabbok, which is the border of the children of Ammon:

3 And from the plain to the <sup>f</sup> sea of Chinneroth on the east, and unto <sup>g</sup> the sea of the plain, even the salt sea on the east, the way to <sup>h</sup> Beth-jeshimoth: and from <sup>i</sup> the south under <sup>j</sup> Ashdath-pisgah.

4 And <sup>k</sup> the coast of Og king of Bashan, which was of <sup>l</sup> the remnant of the giants, that <sup>m</sup> dwelt at Ashtaroth and at Edrei;

5 And reigned in <sup>n</sup> mount Hermon, and in <sup>o</sup> Salcah, and in all Bashan, <sup>p</sup> unto the border of the Geshurites, and the Maachathites, and half Gilead, the border of Sihon king of Heshbon;

6 Them <sup>q</sup> did Moses the servant of the LORD, and the children of Israel, smite: and Moses the servant of the LORD <sup>r</sup> gave it for a possession unto the Reubenites, and Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh.

7 ¶ And these *are* the kings of the country, which Joshua and the children of Israel smote <sup>s</sup> on this side Jordan on the west, <sup>t</sup> from Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon, even unto the mount Halak, that goeth up to <sup>u</sup> Seir; which <sup>v</sup> Joshua gave unto the tribes of Israel for a possession, according to their divisions:

8 In <sup>w</sup> the mountains, and in the valleys, and in the plains, and in the springs, and in the wilderness, and in the south country; <sup>x</sup> the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

9 The king of <sup>y</sup> Jericho, one; the king of <sup>z</sup> Ai, which is beside Beth-el, one;

10 The king of <sup>a</sup> Jerusalem, one; the king of <sup>b</sup> Hebron, one;

11 The king of <sup>c</sup> Jarmuth, one; the king of <sup>d</sup> Lachish, one;

12 The king of <sup>e</sup> Eglon, one; the king of <sup>f</sup> Gezer, one;

13 The king of <sup>g</sup> Debir, one; the king of <sup>h</sup> Geder, one;

14 The king of <sup>i</sup> Hormah, one; the king of <sup>j</sup> Arad, one;

15 The king of <sup>k</sup> Libnah, one; the king of <sup>l</sup> Adullam, one;

16 The king of <sup>m</sup> Makkedah, one; the king of <sup>n</sup> Beth-el, one;

17 The king of <sup>o</sup> Tappuah, one; the king of <sup>p</sup> Hopher, one;

18 The king of <sup>q</sup> Aphek, one; the king of <sup>r</sup> Lasharon, one;

19 The king of <sup>s</sup> Madon, one; the king of <sup>t</sup> Hazer, one;

20 The king of <sup>u</sup> Shimron-meron, one; the king of <sup>x</sup> Achshaph, one;

<sup>a</sup> 15. xxii. 4.

<sup>b</sup> Num. xxi. 13. 24. Deut. ii. 24. Judg. xi. 18. Is. xvi. 2.

<sup>c</sup> xi. 3. 17. Deut. iii. 8. 9. iv. 48. Ps. cxxxviii. 3.

<sup>d</sup> Num. xxi. 23—30. Deut. ii. 24—37. iii. 6—16. Neh. ix. 22. Ps. cxxxv. 11. cxxxvi. 19, 20.

<sup>e</sup> Gen. xxxii. 22. Judg. xi. 13. 22.

<sup>f</sup> See on xi. 2—John vi. 1. See of Tiberias.

<sup>g</sup> iii. 16. xv. 2. Gen. xiv. 3. xix. 26. Deut. iii. 17.

<sup>h</sup> xiii. 20.

<sup>i</sup> Or, Teman.

<sup>j</sup> Or, the springs of Puzah, or, the hill. Num. xxi. 20. Deut. iii. 17. marg. iv. 40. See on Num. xxi. 33—36.

<sup>k</sup> Deut. iii. 1—7. xiii. 12. Deut. iii. 11.

<sup>l</sup> See on Deut. i. 4.

<sup>m</sup> See on i. xi. 3. —Deut. iii. 8, 9. iv. 4, 48.

<sup>n</sup> xiii. 11. Deut. iii. 10.

<sup>o</sup> Deut. iii. 14. 1 Sam. xxvii. 8. 2 Sam. iii. 3. xvi. 37. xv. 9. xxii. 34. 2 Kings xxv. 23.

<sup>p</sup> Num. xxi. 24—35.

<sup>q</sup> xiii. 8—32. Num. xxxi. 28—42. Deut. iii. 12—17.

<sup>q</sup> 1. iii. 17. ix. 1. r See on xi. 17—xiii. 5.

<sup>s</sup> Gen. xiv. 6. xxxii. 3. xxxvi. 8. 20. 30. Deut. ii. 1, 4. t i. 8. 4. xi. 23. xiii. —xix. Deut. xi. 23, 24.

<sup>u</sup> x. 40. xi. 16.

<sup>x</sup> Gen. xv. 18—21. Ex. iii. 8. xxxiii. 23, 28—31. Deut. vii. 1. ix. 1. B. C. 1450.

<sup>y</sup> vi. 2—21.

<sup>z</sup> viii. 1. &c.

<sup>a</sup> See on x. 25.

<sup>b</sup> See on x. 8. 23. 36, 37.

<sup>c</sup> x. 3. 23.

<sup>d</sup> x. 3. 23. 31, 32.

<sup>e</sup> x. 3. 23. xv. 39.

<sup>f</sup> x. 33.

<sup>g</sup> x. 3. 38.

<sup>h</sup> xv. 36.

<sup>i</sup> Num. xiv. 45.

<sup>j</sup> xxi. 3.

<sup>k</sup> Num. xxi. 1.

<sup>l</sup> x. 29, 30.

<sup>m</sup> 1 Sam. xxii. 1.

<sup>n</sup> x. 28.

<sup>o</sup> viii. 17. Gen. xii. 8. xxviii. 19.

<sup>p</sup> Judg. i. 22.

<sup>q</sup> xv. 34.

<sup>r</sup> xix. 18. 1 Kings iv. 10.

<sup>s</sup> xix. 30. 1 Sam. iv. 1.

<sup>t</sup> Or, Sharon. Is. xxxiii. 9.

<sup>u</sup> xi. 1.

<sup>v</sup> xl. 1. 10. 11.

<sup>w</sup> Judg. iv. 2.

<sup>x</sup> xi. 1. xix. 15.

<sup>y</sup> xi. 1. xix. 25.

judicial hardness: let them lay down their arms of rebellion, and humbly sue for "peace, and they shall make "peace;" the effect of which shall be "quietness and "assurance for ever." And let none of us dread anything in comparison of the wrath of God, which is more tremendous than we can possibly conceive. (Note, Ps. xc. 11.)

## NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1—6. This chapter connects the history of the conquest of Canaan with the subsequent account of its division to the tribes of Israel. The passages referred to in the margin, seem to give all the useful information that can be collected concerning the narrative.

(Notes, Num. xxi. 21—34. xxxii. 29—41. Deut. ii. 24—37. iii. 1—11.)

V. 7. "Halak" signifies either *division*, or *smooth*. Perhaps this mountain divided the land of Judah from Idumea. (xi. 17. marg.)

V. 14. The Israelites utterly destroyed king Arad and his cities, in the life-time of Moses, and called the name of them *Hormah*. (Note, Num. xxi. 1—3.) Probably "the king of Arad," here mentioned, is the same person. As his kingdom was on the *southern* border of Canaan, and not *east* of Jordan, it came into the possession of Israel under Joshua; and therefore he is numbered in that division of kings. Yet Hormah is here mentioned as a distinct kingdom from that of Arad; and perhaps there was another place of that name. (Num. xiv. 45.)

- g xxi. 11. Judg. v. 18.  
 f 1 Kings iv. 12. 2 Kings xxiii. 29, 30.  
 a xv. 23. xix. 37. xxi. 32. xix. 11.  
 b xv. 55. 1 Sam. xxv. 2. Is. xxxv. 2.  
 e xi. 2. xvii. 11. Gen. xiv. 1, 2. Is. ix. 1.  
 c See on iv. 19. v. 9, 10.  
 f 1 Kings xvi. 23. 2 Kings xv. 14.
- 21 The king of <sup>a</sup>Taanach, one; the king of <sup>a</sup>Megiddo, one;  
 22 The king of <sup>a</sup>Kedesh, one; the king of <sup>b</sup>Jokneam of <sup>c</sup>Carmel, one;  
 23 The king of <sup>d</sup>Dor, in the coast of Dor, one; the king of <sup>e</sup>the nations of <sup>f</sup>Gilgal, one;  
 24 The king of <sup>g</sup>Tirzah, one: all the kings thirty and one.

## CHAP. XIII.

What parts of the land were still unsubdued, 1—6. Joshua is directed to divide the whole by lot, 7. The inheritance of the two tribes and a half, 8—13. The borders of Reuben, 15—23; of Gad, 24—28; of the half tribe of Manasseh, 29—32. No inheritance assigned to Levi, 14. 33.

o civ. 10. xxiii. 1. 2. xxiv. 29. Gen. xxi. 11. 1 Kings i. 1. Luke i. 7.

NOW Joshua <sup>a</sup>was old *and* stricken in years; *and* the LORD said unto him, Thou art old *and* stricken in years,

V. 24. Every considerable town or city was under the government of a king, who possessed the adjacent fields and villages, and ruled, as it is generally supposed, with despotick sway: and though the Canaanites doubtless waged frequent wars, and gained advantages over each other; yet no one had acquired the sovereignty of the whole.—When Julius Cæsar landed in Britain, he found four kings in the single county of Kent: how many then must there have been in the whole Island!—A single view of a good map of ancient Canaan will shew the reader all that learned men have conjectured or determined concerning the relative situation of the several places, which are mentioned in this and the following chapters. And indeed that is the only method of obtaining a *clear* idea of the subject.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The enjoyment of present blessings should revive the grateful remembrance of former mercies: and the benefit derived from the labours of the living servants of the Lord should remind us to respect the memories of those who have heretofore served Him and their generation. The national covenant, mediated by Moses, engaged many temporal advantages to Israel; but Jesus alone brings the whole multitude of believers to the promised rest and inheritance: and though his true people enjoy many blessings from him in this world; yet they do not enter upon the possession of their complete felicity, till they pass over the Jordan of death to the mansions above.—The vengeance of a righteous God, inflicted upon all these kings and their numerous subjects for their wickedness, should impress our minds with reverential awe of his majesty and purity, and with dread and hatred of sin: while the fruitful land, which he bestowed upon his chosen people, and thus prepared for their reception, should inspire our hearts with humble gratitude, and with hope and confidence in his mercy. In both instances the final event of all things is represented; when the wicked “shall go away into ever-

and there remaineth yet very much land <sup>a</sup>to be possessed.

2 This *is* <sup>b</sup>the land that yet remaineth: all <sup>c</sup>the borders of the Philistines, and all <sup>d</sup>Geshuri,

3 From <sup>e</sup>Sihor, which *is* before Egypt, even unto the borders of Ekron northward, <sup>f</sup>which is counted to the Canaanite: <sup>g</sup>five lords of the Philistines; the Gazathites, and the Ashdothites, the Eshkalonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also the <sup>h</sup>Avites:

4 From the south, all <sup>i</sup>the land of the Canaanites, and <sup>j</sup>Mearah that *is* beside the Sidonians, unto <sup>k</sup>Aphek, to the borders of <sup>l</sup>the Amorites:

5 And the land of the <sup>m</sup>Giblites, and all <sup>n</sup>Lebanon toward the sun-rising, from <sup>o</sup>Baal-gad <sup>p</sup>under mount Hermon, <sup>q</sup>unto the entering into Hamath.

\* Heb. to possess it. Deut. xxx. 3.  
 b Ex. xxiii. 29. 31.  
 c Deut. xi. 23, 24.  
 d Judg. iii. 1.  
 e Gen. x. 14. xxvi. 1. Joel iii. 4.  
 f 11. 13. xii. 5.  
 g 1 Sam. xxv. 1. 8.  
 h 2 Sam. iii. 3.  
 i xiii. 37, 38. xv. 8.  
 j Jer. ii. 18.  
 k Gen. x. 15—19.  
 l Num. xxxiv. 2—14.  
 m Judg. iii. 8.  
 n 1 Sam. vi. 4. 16, 17. Zeph. ii. 5.

h Deut. ii. 22. Avites.  
 i x. 40. xi. 3. xii. 7, 8.  
 j Or, the cane.

k xix. 30.  
 l Judg. i. 34, 35.  
 m 1 Kings v. 18. Marg. Pal. xxviii. 7. Ez. xxvii. 9.  
 n Deut. i. 7. iii. 25.  
 o xii. 7.  
 p xi. 17.  
 q Num. xxxiv. 8. Is. x. 9. Amos vi. 2.

“lasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal.” Let us then “flee from the wrath to come,” and seek and pray to be numbered with the saints here, that we may be numbered with them in glory everlasting!

## NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1—5. Joshua is supposed to have been about one hundred years of age at this time; though not being informed how old he was when Israel left Egypt, we can only conjecture what time passed between that event and his death, at the age of one hundred and ten years. (xxiv. 29.) It is probable, however, that he found himself less capable of military services, than he had formerly been. (xiv. 10, 11.) A large proportion of the land yet remained in the possession of the ancient inhabitants; and perhaps he supposed, that the division was not to take place till the whole was actually subdued. But the Lord was pleased graciously to remove his anxiety, and to direct his conduct, by commanding him, whilst he was able, and without further delay, to make preparation for dividing the land among those tribes which had not received their inheritance. The whole country, not excepting the parts possessed by the ancient inhabitants, was ordered to be thus allotted to Israel; which tended to remind them of the extent and certainty of the divine promises, and to encourage them to seek the more complete performance of them. It was also a caution, not to enter into any alliance with the remains of the devoted nations: and the leaders of each tribe were thus excited to levy war against those Canaanites, who kept them out of their inheritance.—Sihor was “the river of Egypt,” and some think a branch of the Nile; but this is not likely: it was rather some small rivulet just at the entrance of Egypt.—The Philistines were not descended from Canaan, but from Mizraim the son of Ham: (Gen. x. 6. 13—20:) yet they were numbered with the Canaanites in this distribution. (Marg. Ref. d, g, m—q.)

6 All the inhabitants of the hill-country, from Lebanon unto 'Misrephoth-maim, and all the Sidonians; them will I drive out from before the children of Israel: 'only divide thou it by lot unto the Israelites for an inheritance, as I have commanded thee.

7 Now therefore divide 'this land for an inheritance unto the nine tribes, and the half-tribe of Manasseh,

8 With whom the Reubenites and the Gadites have received their inheritance, which 'Moses gave them, beyond Jordan eastward, even as Moses the servant of the Lord gave them:

9 From 'Aroer, that is upon the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river, and 'all the plain of Medeba unto Dibon;

10 And 'all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, unto the border of the children of Ammon;

11 And 'Gilead, and the border of the Geshurites and Maachathites, and all mount Hermon, and all Bashan unto Saleah:

12 All the kingdom of 'Og in Bashan, which reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei, who remained of the remnant of the giants: for 'these did Moses smite, and cast them out.

13 Nevertheless, the children of Israel 'expelled not the Geshurites, nor the Maachathites: but the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwell among the Israelites until this day.

14 Only 'unto the tribe of Levi he gave none inheritance; the sacrifices of the Lord God of Israel made by fire are their inheritance, as he said unto them.

15 ¶ And Moses gave unto the tribe of the children of Reuben, inheritance according to their families:

16 And their coast was 'from Aroer, that is on the bank of the river Arnon, and the city that is in the midst of the river, and all the plain by Medeba:

17 Heshbon, and all her cities that are in the plain; Dibon, and 'Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon,

18 And 'Jahaza, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath,

19 And Kirjathaim, and Sibmah, and Zareth-shahar in the mount of the valley,

20 And 'Beth-peor, and 'Ashdodispigah, and 'Beth-jeshimoth,

21 And 'all the cities of the plain; and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, 'whom Moses smote 'with the princes of Midian, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, which were dukes of Sihon dwelling in the country

22 'Balaam also the son of Beor, the 'sooth-sayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword, among them that were slain by them.

23 And the border of the children of Reuben was Jordan, and the border thereof. This was the inheritance of

—With whom. (8) That is, with the other half tribe of Manasseh.

V. 14. "The sacrifices made by fire" included all the oblations, of which any portion was burnt on the altar (35).

V. 15—20. (Marg. Ref.)—Dibon. (17) Dibon seems to have been situated in the confines of Reuben and Gad, and inhabited by some of each tribe. (Num. xxxii. 34.) The same may perhaps be said of Heshbon. (26. xxi. 36—39. 1 Chr. vi. 80, 81.)

V. 21, 22. Dukes of Sihon.] (Num. xxxi. 8. Note, Num. xxii. 4.) These princes of Midian are here called Dukes of Sihon, probably because they had been his tributaries. (Deut. ii. 30—37.)—These authenticated records, concerning the boundaries of the inheritances belonging to each tribe, were intended to prevent litigations, or decide differences, in future ages.—Balaam. (22) Notes, Num. xxii. 5. xxxi. 8.

4 Q

V. 6. The Israelites had acquired the land by conquest; but they were neither allowed to seize upon what they could, nor to have it all in common, nor to share it out by consent or arbitration; but, with a solemn appeal to God himself, to divide it by casting lots: for Canaan was his land, and Israel was his people. This was likewise the readiest way of satisfying all parties, and preventing discontent and discord; and it most aptly typified the Lord's choosing, in his infinite wisdom and love, the temporal provision and eternal inheritance of his true people.—As every tribe had its inheritance determined by lot; so it is probable, that afterwards the subdivisions to every family and each individual were regulated in the same manner: and thus their estates would descend to posterity, not so much as the inheritance of their fathers, as that which the Lord had immediately assigned them. (Note, Prov. xvi. 33.)

V. 7—13. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Num. xxxii. 29—42.)

vol. 1.

the children of Reuben after their families, the cities and the villages thereof.

24 ¶ And Moses gave inheritance <sup>p Num. xxxii. 34</sup> unto the tribe of Gad, *even* unto the children of Gad, according to their families:

25 And their coast was Jazer, and <sup>q Num. xxi. 26</sup> all the cities of Gilead, and <sup>20. Deut. ii. 19.</sup> half the land of the children of Ammon, unto Aroer, that is before 'Rabbah:

26 And from Heshbon unto 'Ramath-mizpeh, and Betonim; and from <sup>r Deut. iii. 11.</sup> 'Mahanaim unto the border of <sup>2 Sam. xi. 1.</sup> 'Debir;

27 And in the valley, Beth-aram, and <sup>xx. 8. Gen. xxxi. 49.</sup> 'Beth-nimrah, and <sup>Judg. x. 17.</sup> 'Succoth, and <sup>xi. 11. 29. 1 Kings xxxi. 3.</sup> Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, Jordan and <sup>t xxi. 38. Gen. xxxii. 1, 2. 2 Sam. ii. 8. xvii. 27.</sup> his border, *even* unto the edge of the sea of <sup>u 2 Sam. ix. 5.</sup> 'Chinnereth, on the other side Jordan, eastward.

28 This is the inheritance of the children of Gad, after their families, the cities, and their villages.

29 ¶ And Moses gave inheritance unto the half-tribe of Manasseh: and this was the possession of the half-tribe of the children of Manasseh by their families.

30 And <sup>a 26. Num. xxxiii. 39—41. Deut. iii. 13—15. 1 Chr. ii. 21—23.</sup> their coast was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, threescore cities;

31 And half Gilead, and <sup>b See on xii. 4.</sup> 'Ashtaroth, and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, were pertaining unto the children of Machir the son of Manasseh, *even* to the one half of the children of Machir by their families.

32 These are the countries which Moses did distribute for inheritance in the plains of Moab, on the other side Jordan by Jericho eastward.

33 But unto <sup>c 14. xviii. 7. Num. xviii. 20. Deut. x. 9. xviii. 1, 2.</sup> the tribe of Levi Moses gave not *any* inheritance; the LORD God of Israel was their inheritance, as he said unto them.

V. 24—28. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 29—32. *Num. xxxii. 39—42. Deut. iii. 13—17.*

V. 33. As Moses was himself of the tribe of Levi, he gave a special proof that he acted by divine authority, in thus overlooking his own family and his own tribe: for though the Levites were well provided for, yet the security of that provision was so interwoven with Israel's adherence to the worship of God, that, had they universally apostatized, the Levites would have been left destitute, whilst all the other tribes would have had possession of their estates; that is, without some immediate divine interposition.—Had Moses acted according to the natural bias of the human mind, he would probably have first provided for his own tribe; but on the contrary, he expressly appointed that they should have no inheritance in Israel. And his sons appear to have entered fully into the disinterested and unambitious spirit of their father; though in no respect distinguished from the rest of the Levites. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. xlviii. 5. Num. iii. 1—3. xviii. 20.*) The way in which this subject is uniformly mentioned, implies that the Levites had as good a title to their tithes and perquisites, as their brethren had to their estates.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Old age, gradually and almost insensibly, creeps upon mankind: and though their infirmities might, one would think, suffice to remind aged persons of their time of life; yet, they generally need to be put in remembrance of it, and excited to prepare for approaching dissolution.—“Whatever our hand findeth to do,” respecting the glory of God, the salvation of our souls, or the good of our fellow-creatures, we should “do it with our might:” and the expectation of death, as well as the calamities of life,

should warn us to redeem our time, and seize upon present opportunities of usefulness. (*Note, Ec. ix. 10.*) Our season of labour and of service will soon expire, and we shall shortly be at rest: we ought not therefore *now* to indulge sloth, or shrink from hardship; yet if it be the Lord's will to lay us aside, we should be willing to leave our designs unfinished, or to be completed by other hands. He knoweth all our infirmities, and will not forsake his servants, when old and incapable of work: when however the heart is zealous, they who cannot perform one service, will devise to be useful in some other way, though not equally splendid and honourable.—But one succession after another of godly persons and able ministers dies, and leaves an immense proportion of the earth in the possession of the great enemy of God and man; though the promise assures us, that it will all in due time be wrenched out of his hands, and become entirely the kingdom of the Lord Jesus. Indeed none of us in this world live up to our privileges and spiritual blessings, as delineated in the word of promise; being kept out of possession by our foes, and especially by “sin that dwelleth in us:” but this consideration should animate us to be active and courageous, and to expect and seek for still greater and richer acquisitions of knowledge, holiness, and heavenly consolations.—In the present state of human nature, it is the Lord's will that there should be distinctions of property, that every one may know and be contented with his own.—Wherever our habitation is placed, and in whatever honest way our portion is assigned us, we should consider them as allotted us by God, and acquiesce and be thankful: and every prudent method should be devised to prevent litigations about property.—The mercies of the Lord to his people, and his judgments upon his enemies, especially those who have

## CHAP. XIV.

The country west of Jordan to be divided by lot, to the nine tribes and a half, 1—5. Caleb demands Hebron and obtains it, 6—15

AND these *are the countries* which the children of Israel inherited in the land of Canaan, <sup>a</sup> which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua the son of Nun, and the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel, distributed for inheritance to them.

2 By <sup>b</sup> lot *was* their inheritance, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses, for the nine tribes, and for the half-tribe.

3 For Moses <sup>c</sup> had given the inheritance of two tribes and an half-tribe on the other side Jordan: <sup>d</sup> but unto the Levites he gave none inheritance among them.

4 For <sup>e</sup> the children of Joseph were two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim: therefore they gave no part unto the Levites in the land, <sup>f</sup> save cities to dwell in, with their suburbs for their cattle, and for their substance.

5 As the LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did, and they divided the land.

6 ¶ Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in <sup>g</sup> Gilgal; and <sup>h</sup> Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, <sup>i</sup> the Kenezite, said unto him, <sup>k</sup> Thou knowest the thing that the LORD said unto Moses <sup>l</sup> the man of God, concerning me and thee in <sup>m</sup> Kadesh-barnea.

7 Forty years old *was* I when Moses the servant of the LORD <sup>n</sup> sent me from Kadesh-barnea to espy out the land; and <sup>o</sup> I brought him word again, as it *was* in mine heart.

8 Nevertheless, my brethren that went up with me, made the heart of the people melt: but I <sup>p</sup> wholly followed the LORD my God.

9 And Moses sware on that day, saying, <sup>q</sup> Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever; because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God.

10 And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these <sup>r</sup> forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel <sup>s</sup> wandered in the wilderness; and now, lo, I *am* this day fourscore and five years old.

11 As <sup>t</sup> yet I *am as* strong this day, as *I was* in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength *was* then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out and to come in.

12 Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; (for thou heardest in that day how <sup>u</sup> the Anakims *were* there, and *that* the cities *were* great and fenced:)

<sup>v</sup> if so be the LORD *will be* with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said.

13 And Joshua <sup>w</sup> blessed him, and <sup>x</sup> gave unto Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, Hebron for an inheritance.

14 Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, the Kenezite, unto this day; <sup>y</sup> because that he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel.

15 And <sup>z</sup> the name of Hebron before *was* Kirjath-arba, *which Arba was* a great man among the Anakims. <sup>a</sup> And the land had rest from war.

“and those pleasures, which are at his right hand for ever—more.”

## NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 3—5. (Notes, xiii. 14—33. xxi. Num. xxxv. 2—8.) As the descendants of Joseph formed two tribes, the nation consisted of twelve tribes, according to the number of Jacob's sons, without reckoning the tribe of Levi: and as Joseph was allowed a double portion, Levi was otherwise provided for.

V. 6—15. Before the persons, appointed for that service, (Note, Num. xxxiv. 16—29,) had begun to divide the land by lot, Caleb came to Joshua at Gilgal, (where

<sup>a</sup> See on Num. xxxiv. 17—29.

<sup>b</sup> Num. xvi. 56, 56. xxxiii. 54. xxxiv. 18. Ps. xvi. 5, 6. Prov. xvi. 33. xviii. 18. Matt. xxv. 34.

<sup>c</sup> xiii. 8. Num. xxxii. 29—42. Deut. iii. 12—17.

<sup>d</sup> See on xiii. 14. 33.

<sup>e</sup> Gen. xlviii. 5. 1 Chr. v. 1, 2.

<sup>f</sup> xxi. 2—42. Num. xxxv. 2—8. 1 Chr. vi. 54—81.

<sup>g</sup> iv. 19. x. 43.

<sup>h</sup> Num. xiii. 6.

<sup>i</sup> xv. 6.

<sup>j</sup> 14. xv. 17. Num. xxxii. 12.

<sup>k</sup> Num. xiv. 24.

<sup>l</sup> 30. Deut. i. 36—38.

<sup>m</sup> Num. xii. 7, 8.

<sup>n</sup> Deut. xxxiii. 1.

<sup>o</sup> xxxiv. 5. 10.

<sup>p</sup> Judg. xiii. 6—8.

<sup>q</sup> 1 Kings xiii. 1.

<sup>r</sup> 14. 2 Kings iv.

<sup>s</sup> 9. 16. 42. viii. 7.

<sup>t</sup> 11. Ps. xc. iude.

<sup>u</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 11.

<sup>v</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 17.

<sup>w</sup> Num. xii. 26.

<sup>x</sup> Num. xii. 16—20.

<sup>y</sup> Num. xiii. 26—33.

<sup>z</sup> xiv. 6—10.

<sup>p</sup> 14. Num. xiv. 24. Deut. i. 36. Rev. xiv. 4.

<sup>q</sup> i. 3. Num. xiv. 22—24.

<sup>r</sup> xi. 18. Num. xiv. 33, 34.

<sup>s</sup> Heb. walked.

<sup>t</sup> Deut. xxxi. 2. xxxiv. 7. Ps. xc. 10.

<sup>u</sup> xi. 21, 22. Num. xiii. 28, 33.

<sup>v</sup> Num. xiv. 8, 9.

<sup>w</sup> xxi. 34. 1 Sam. xiv. 6. 2 Chr. xiv. 11. Ps. xviii. 32—34. xxvii. 1—3. xlv. 3. lx. 12. cxviii. 10—12. Rom. viii. 31. Phil. iv. 13.

<sup>x</sup> xxii. 6. Gen. xlvii. 7. 10.

<sup>y</sup> 1 Sam. i. 17.

<sup>z</sup> Cant. vi. 9.

<sup>a</sup> x. 36, 37. xv. 13.

<sup>b</sup> xxi. 11, 12. Judg. i. 20. 1 Chr. vi. 45, 46.

<sup>c</sup> 8. 9. 1 Cor. xv. 58.

<sup>d</sup> xv. 18. Gen. xxxii. 2.

<sup>e</sup> xi. 23. Judg. iii. 11. 30. v. 31.

<sup>f</sup> viii. 28.

## CHAP. XV.

The boundaries of the lot of Judah, 1—12. Caleb takes Hebron, 13, 14. Othniel having taken Debir, receives Caleb's daughter in marriage; who obtains a

probably the tabernacle and ark of the Lord still remained,) to require that Hebron and the lands adjacent might be assigned to him; and his brethren of the tribe of Judah attended him, as supporting his claim. It is probable, that when the other spies terrified the people about the Anakims who dwelt in Hebron, Caleb proposed to take that place for his inheritance, and to wait for it till the Anakims were dispossessed: and that by divine direction Moses had engaged by oath that it should be so, at the time when the LORD declared that Joshua and Caleb alone should live to enter the promised land. (*Notes, Num. xiv. 24. 27—30.*) Caleb therefore solicited the performance of this engagement, and spake of it as well known to Joshua and all concerned. He likewise took occasion to rejoice in the testimony of the Lord, that he had "followed him wholly;" and in that of his conscience, that he had given "his report, as it was in his heart:" and having intimated how the other spies discouraged the people to their own destruction, he thankfully mentioned the goodness of God, in keeping him alive for forty-five years, whilst all that generation were wasted in the wilderness, and amidst all the perils of the wars in Canaan; and that he, at eighty-five years of age, was as strong, and as capable of war, as he had been at forty. All this became one, who was so eminent a character and venerable for age: being more than twenty years older than any man in Israel, except Joshua and some of the Levites.—It seems from the narration, that the Anakims had again possessed themselves of Hebron, after it was taken by Joshua, and that Caleb undertook to drive them out. (*Note, xi. 21—23.*) This he was ready to attempt, confiding, not in his own strength or valour, or in the assistance of his brethren, but in the almighty God: and, in order to mark this more strongly, though it does not appear that he doubted the event, he thus expressed his confidence: "If the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out."—Joshua and the princes, without hesitation, consented to his proposal: and "Joshua blessed him;" he prayed that he might have success in his intended expedition, and comfort in his inheritance.—In the next chapter we read of his driving out the Anakims: (*Notes, xv. 13—19:*) and when the lots were cast, Hebron fell within the portion of Judah, so that he was not separated from his brethren. (*xv. 54.*)

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They who desire to prosper and be comfortable in their undertakings and possessions, must "acknowledge the LORD in all their ways," refer every matter to his decision, and regulate their whole conduct by his commands.—The continuance of our lives, notwithstanding internal decays and diseases, and external perils and injuries, and while numbers are dying around us, ought thankfully to be acknowledged as the Lord's doing: and if health and vigour are enjoyed, at that time of life which to others is labour and sorrow, this demands peculiar gratitude. But old age, even when exempt from infirmity and pain, is neither honourable nor comfortable, except it be found in

blessing from her father, 15—19. The cities in the lot of Judah, 20—62. The Jebusites retain Jerusalem, 63.

*THIS* then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah by their fami- *a. xiv. 2. Num. xxvi. 55, 56.*

the way of righteousness; for a long life, spent in increasing guilt, diffusing wretchedness and wickedness, and "treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath," will prove the occasion of proportionably deeper condemnation. But they who seek the Lord early, and "follow him wholly," and stand immoveably firm in times of general apostasy and prevailing ungodliness, or in seasons of sharp temptation and imminent danger; if afterwards favoured with long life, and enabled to spend it in glorifying God and doing good, are the most distinguished and honourable of the human species. They may look back upon their lives past, spent, by the grace of God, in some measure usefully; and they may look forward to dissolution as speedily approaching, with holy consolation. (*Notes, 2 Tim. iv. 6—8. 2 Pet. i. 12—15.*) They have a testimony to their characters in the hearts of others, and may rejoice in the testimony of their own consciences. They have much to be thankful for: and it will become *them*, and *they* will know how, with modesty and humility, to speak of all that God has done for them and by them; which will encourage others, and redound in many thanksgivings to his name. Though "the outward man decay," they will feel themselves as strong for their spiritual warfare as ever; and not fear by the help of God to drive out every enemy, which prevents their possession of the promised inheritance. Such eminent believers sometimes survive envy, calumny, and prejudice; their sun, which has long been obscured by intervening clouds of slanderous reports, groundless jealousies, and rancorous enmity, breaks through and shines with bright serenity before it sets. God himself blesses them: all around perceive it and call them blessed, and concur in shewing them distinguishing respect: and great usefulness awaits their latter days, their closing scene, and dying testimony; while they declare to all around them, that the Lord, in performing his promises, has exceeded their largest expectations.—Let then young persons be persuaded to seek the Lord early: let tried and tempted Christians be encouraged to endure and wait patiently; and let those, who meet with opposition, calumny, neglect, or ill success, in their well-meant endeavours to do good, stand their ground stedfastly. Let us all trust in the faithful and merciful promises of God without wavering; and aim so to walk with him, that if we are taken away more early in life, we may be found ready; and if spared till old age, may close it honourably, usefully, and comfortably.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1—12. (*Num. xxxiv. 3—6.*) After some general survey of the land, Joshua proceeded to allot to Judah, Ephraim, and the half of Manasseh, their situations and inheritances, before they left Gilgal: and afterwards, removing to Shiloh, a more extensive and accurate survey seems to have been made, and the other tribes had their portions assigned them by lot also. (*Notes, xviii. 1—10.*)—The inheritance, which Judah actually possessed, was large; for it was intended that this tribe should have the

<sup>b</sup> Num. xxxiv. 37. lies: <sup>b</sup> *even* to the border of Edom; the wilderness of Zin southward *was* the uttermost part of the south coast.

<sup>c</sup> iii. 16 Gen. xiv. 3. Num. xxxiv. 3. Ex. xlvii. 8. 18. 2 And their south border was from the shore of the <sup>c</sup> salt sea, from the <sup>c</sup> bay that looketh southward:

<sup>d</sup> Heb. tongue. 1a. xi. 15. 3 And it went out to the south side to <sup>d</sup> Maaleh-acrabbim, and passed along to <sup>d</sup> Zin, and ascended up on the south side unto Kadesh-barnea, and passed along to Hezron, and went up to Adar, and fetched a compass to Karkaa:

<sup>e</sup> Num. xxxiv. 5. 4 *From thence* it passed towards <sup>e</sup> Azmon, and went out unto <sup>e</sup> the river of Egypt; and the goings out of that coast were at the sea. This shall be your south coast.

<sup>f</sup> Num. xxxiv. 12. 5 And <sup>f</sup> the east border *was* the salt sea, *even* unto the end of Jordan: and *their* border in the north quarter *was* from the bay of the sea, at the uttermost part of Jordan.

<sup>g</sup> xviii. 19, 20. 6 And the border went up to <sup>g</sup> Beth-hogla, and passed along by the north of Beth-arabah; and the border went up to <sup>g</sup> the stone of Bohan, the son of Reuben.

<sup>h</sup> 15. x. 38, 39. 7 And the border went up toward <sup>h</sup> Debir from <sup>h</sup> the valley of Achor, and so northward, looking toward <sup>h</sup> Gilgal, that *is* before the going up to Adummim, which *is* on the south side of the river: and the border passed toward the waters of En-shemesh, and the goings out thereof were at <sup>h</sup> En-rogel.

<sup>i</sup> xviii. 17. 8 And the border went up by the <sup>i</sup> valley of the son of Hinnom, unto the south side of <sup>i</sup> the Jebusite, the same *is* Jerusalem: and the border went up

to the top of the mountain that *lieth* before the valley of Hinnom westward, which *is* at the end of <sup>q</sup> the valley of the giants northward.

9 And the border was drawn from the top of the hill unto the fountain of the water of <sup>r</sup> Nephtoah, and went out to the cities of mount Ephron; and the border was drawn to <sup>r</sup> Baalah, which *is* <sup>r</sup> Kirjath-jearim.

10 And the border compassed from Baalah westward unto mount Seir, and passed along unto the side of mount Jearim, (which *is* Chesalon,) on the north side, and went down to <sup>u</sup> Beth-shemesh, and passed on to <sup>u</sup> Timnah:

11 And the border went out unto the side of <sup>y</sup> Ekron northward: and the border was drawn to Shicron, and passed along to <sup>y</sup> mount Baalah, and went out unto Jabneel: and the goings out of the border were at the sea.

12 And the west border *was* to <sup>a</sup> the great sea, and the coast *thereof*. This *is* the coast of the children of Judah round about according to their families.

13 ¶ And unto <sup>b</sup> Caleb, the son of Jephunneh, he gave a part among the children of Judah, according to the commandment of the LORD to Joshua, *even* <sup>b</sup> the city of Arba, the father of Anak, which *city* *is* Hebron.

14 And Caleb drove thence <sup>c</sup> the three sons of Anak, Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmi, the children of Anak.

15 And he went <sup>d</sup> up thence to the inhabitants of Debir: and the name of Debir before *was* Kirjath-sepher.

precedency, and it was the most numerous of all the tribes. But that which was at first allotted to them, contained half the southern part of Canaan, and was found too extensive: so that some deductions were afterwards made. (Note, xix. 1—9.)—The relative situation of the tribes seems to have been decided by lot; but the proportion of land for each, to have been determined, in some measure, by the discretion of the persons appointed for that service.—“Bohan the son of Reuben” (6), was either one of Reuben’s sons, who died before Jacob left Canaan, and had been buried in the place here mentioned; or some eminent person that had lately died there.—Several of the places spoken of must have been different from those called elsewhere by the same names. (Marg. Ref.) The portion, here marked out, was bounded, on the south, by the wilderness of Zin, and the southern coast of the salt sea; on

the east by that sea, reaching to the place, at which it receives the waters of Jordan; on the north, by a line drawn nearly parallel to Jerusalem, across from the northern extremity of the salt sea, to the south boundary of the Philistines and to the Mediterranean sea; which sea was its boundary, as far as the river of Egypt.

V. 13. Gave.] Or, had given. (Note, xiv. 6—15.)—Hebron.] Note, Num. xiii. 21, 22.

V. 14. Caleb, “the LORD being with him,” drove out the Anakims. It is not said that he slew them; but probably they retired again to the Philistines to the west of Hebron. (Note, xi. 21—23.)

V. 15. Debir—Kirjath-sepher.] These names, the former signifying a word, or oracle, the latter, the city of a book, have induced the opinion that this city was a sort of academy, or a repository of the records of the ancient inha-

16 And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife.

17 And °Othniel the son of 'Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it: and he gave him °Achsah his daughter to wife.

18 And it came to pass, as she came unto him, that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and °she lighted off her ass; and Caleb said unto her, What wouldest thou?

19 Who answered, 'Give me a °blessing; for thou hast given me a south land, give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs, and the nether springs.

20 This is °the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Judah, according to their families.

21 ¶ And the uttermost cities of the tribe of the children of Judah, toward the coast of Edom southward, were °Kabzeel, and °Eder, and Jagur,

22 And Kinah, and Dimonah, and Adadah,

23 And °Kedesh, and Hazor, and Ithnan,

24 °Ziph, and °Telem, and Bealoth, <sup>p 1 Sam. xxiii. 14.</sup>

25 And Hazor, Hadattah, and Kerioth, and Hezron, which is Hazor, <sup>19. 24. Ps. liv. Title.</sup>

26 Aman, and Shema, and °Moladah, <sup>q 1 Sam. xv. 4.</sup>

27 And Hazar-gaddah, and Heshmon, and °Beth-palet, <sup>r 1 Chr. iv. 28.</sup>

28 And °Hazar-shual, and °Beer-sheba, and Bizjothjah, <sup>s Neh. xi. 26.</sup>

29 °Baalah, and Iim, and °Azem, <sup>t xix. 3. 1 Chr. iv. 29.</sup>

30 And Eltolad, and Chesil, and °Hormah, <sup>u xix. 2. Gen. xxi. 14. 51—53. xxv. 35.</sup>

31 And °Ziklag, and Madmannah, and Sansannah, <sup>x 10. 11. xix. 3. y 1 Chr. iv. 29.</sup>

32 And Lebaoth, and Shilhim, and °Ain, and °Rimmon; all the cities are twenty and nine, with their villages. <sup>z xix. 4. Num. xiv. 45. Deut. i. 44. Judg. i. 17. s xix. 5. 1 Sam. xxvii. 6. xxx. 1. 1 Chr. xii. 1.</sup>

33 And in the valley, °Eshtaol, and Zoreah, and Ashnah, <sup>b Num. xxxiv. 11. c Neh. xi. 29.</sup>

34 And Zanoah, and En-gannim, °Tappuah, and Enam, <sup>d xix. 41. Judg. xiii. 23. xvi. 31.</sup>

35 °Jarmuth, and °Adullam, Socoh, and °Azekah, <sup>e xii. 17.</sup>

36 And °Sharaim, and Adithaim, and Gederah, °and Gederothaim; fourteen cities with their villages. <sup>f x. 3. 23. xii. 11. Neh. xi. 29. g xii. 15. 1 Sam. xxii. 1. Mic. i. 15. h x. 10. 1 Sam. xvii. 1. i 1 Sam. xvii. 52. \* Or, or.</sup>

e Judg. iii. 9. 11. f xiv. 6. Num. xxxii. 12.

g 1 Chr. ii. 49.

h Gen. xxiv. 64. i Sam. xxv. 23.

i Judg. i. 14, 15.

k Gen. xxxiii. 11. l Sam. xxv. 27. 2 Cor. ix. 5. Marg.

l Gen. xlix. 8—12. Deut. xxxiii. 7.

m Neh. xi. 25. n Gen. xxxv. 21.

o xii. 22. Num. xxxiii. 37. Deut. i. 19.

bitants. It is not indeed probable that writing and books, in our sense of the words, were very common among the Canaanites: but some method of recording remarkable events or federal transactions, and a sort of learning, was doubtless cultivated in those regions. (*Acts* vii. 22.)

V. 16, 17. This transaction seems here introduced by anticipation, and it is recorded elsewhere. (*Note*, *Judg.* i. 10—15.)—Caleb was doubtless desirous to excite the Israelites to obtain possession of their inheritance: but this proposal was also well calculated to secure the marriage of his daughter with a worthy man, who perhaps might have previously entertained an affection for her, and knew the value of an alliance with a person so eminent for faith and piety, as Caleb was. Probably, Debir was also promised as her dower.—Fathers, among the Israelites, (and indeed among all the ancients,) seem to have exercised a more absolute authority, in disposing of their daughters in marriage, than is customary among us; and these generally acquiesced in the choice made for them. The case is the same in many countries at present. It seems the Canaanites had recovered the possession of Debir, after Joshua had taken it; but it was in this manner again taken out of their hands.

*Kenaz.* (17) Probably, the term "the Kenezite," used of Caleb, or of his father Jephunneh, was taken from Kenaz. (*Note*, *Num.* xxxii. 6—15. v. 12.)

V. 18, 19. Caleb had his inheritance assigned him, in a different way from the other Israelites; and his case being thus singular, his daughter, when married to a near rela-

tion, was allowed to inherit, though he had sons. (*Notes*, *Num.* xxvii. 1—11.)—As Caleb had given her a portion of land much exposed to the sun, and not well supplied with water; having obtained the approbation of Othniel, she petitioned her father to give her another field, in which were springs of water. This she called a *blessing*, both as a token of his paternal affection, and as conducing to the comfort of her situation. Accordingly Caleb "gave her the "upper springs and the nether springs;" both higher and lower ground well watered.

V. 32. *Twenty and nine.*] Thirty-eight cities are enumerated, but nine of them were afterwards allotted to Simeon. (*Note*, *xix.* 1—9.)

V. 36. *Fourteen.*] Fifteen names are mentioned, but probably the last two names belonged to the same place, or the latter was a kind of suburb to the former. (*Marg.*) Thus *Ramah* is also called *Ramathaim*. (1 *Sam.* i. 1. 19.)—The chief use of these catalogues to us, consists in helping us to understand some passages in the subsequent history. Several cities of the same name are here enumerated, and different names are given in some instances to the same place: this occasions difficulty to us, but it would be plain enough to the Israelites; and something of the same kind takes place in the history and geography of other countries.—The lot of Judah contained one hundred and fourteen cities besides country villages, without including those which were afterwards given to the Simeonites. The land must have been immensely populous, even though the most of these cities were no larger than our small towns.

37 Zenan, and Hadashah, and Migdalgad,

38 And Dilean, and <sup>b</sup> Mizpeh, and <sup>h</sup> Joktheel,

39 <sup>m</sup> Lachish, and <sup>n</sup> Bozkath, and <sup>o</sup> Eglon,

40 And Cabbon, and Lahmas, and Kithlish,

41 And Gedereth, Beth-dagon, and Naamah, and <sup>p</sup> Makkedah; sixteen cities with their villages:

42 <sup>q</sup> Libnah, and <sup>r</sup> Ether, and Ashan,

43 And Jiphtah, and Ashnah, and Nezib,

44 And <sup>s</sup> Keilah, and <sup>t</sup> Achzib, and <sup>u</sup> Mareshah; nine cities with their villages:

45 <sup>x</sup> Ekron, with her towns and her villages:

46 From Ekron even unto the sea, all that *lay* <sup>y</sup> near <sup>z</sup> Ashdod, with their villages:

47 Ashdod with her towns and her villages, <sup>a</sup> Gaza with her towns and her villages, unto <sup>b</sup> the river of Egypt, and the great sea, and the border *thereof*:

48 And in the mountains, Shamir, and <sup>c</sup> Jattir, and Socoh,

49 And Dannah, and <sup>d</sup> Kirjath-sannah, which *is* Debir,

50 And Anab, and Eshtemoh, and Anim,

51 And <sup>e</sup> Goshen, and Holon, and <sup>f</sup> Giloh; eleven cities with their villages:

52 Arab, and Dumah, and Eshean, 53 And <sup>g</sup> Janum, and Beth-tappuah, <sup>h</sup> Or, <sup>i</sup> Jazua, and Aphekah,

54 And Humtah, and <sup>j</sup> Kirjath-arba, (which *is* Hebron,) and Zior; nine cities with their villages:

55 <sup>k</sup> Maon, Carmel, and <sup>l</sup> Ziph, and Juttah,

56 And Jezreel, and Jokdeam, and Zanoah,

57 Cain, Gibeah, and <sup>m</sup> Timnah; ten cities with their villages:

58 Halhul, Beth-zur, and <sup>n</sup> Gedor,

59 And Maarah, and Beth-anoth, and Eltekon; six cities with their villages:

60 <sup>o</sup> Kirjath-baal, (which *is* Kirjath-jearim,) and Rabbah; two cities with their villages:

61 In the wilderness, <sup>p</sup> Beth-arabah, Middin, and Secacah,

62 And Nibshan, and the city of salt, and <sup>q</sup> En-gedi; six cities with their villages.

63 As for <sup>r</sup> the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the children of Judah could not drive them out: but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah at Jerusalem unto this day.

V. 63. Joshua had taken the king of Jerusalem, but not the city. (x. 22, 23.) Part of Jerusalem was in the lot of Judah, and part in that of Benjamin; (xviii. 28. *Note, Deut. xxxiii. 12*;) but, the Jebusites possessed a part of it, till conquered by David. (*Notes, Judg. i. 8. 21. 2 Sam. v. 6—8.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

God delights to honour and bless those who honour and obey him, and to answer the expectations of such as confide in him: and wise and good parents will humbly endeavour to copy his example, in their conduct towards dutiful and obedient children.—It is a very valuable privilege to be closely united with families distinguished for faith and piety; and to contract marriage with those, who have been “trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”—When the character of parents, the education of their children, and the children’s consequent prudent and pious conduct combine; there is the fairest prospect that they will be settled in life, to the mutual comfort and advantage of all the parties concerned.—Nature teaches us to desire temporal benefits for our children: but *grace* will teach us to be far more desirous and earnest, in using means that they may be partakers of spiritual blessings.—

When persons in the married state consult each other’s comfort and advantage, and study to order all their concerns with mutual confidence and agreement, domestick felicity will be their recompence.—But, if affection to a creature animates men to such strenuous efforts and perilous adventures, what will the love of God our Saviour do, if it bear rule in our hearts? (*Note, 2 Cor. v. 13—15.*) The desire of enjoying his favour, of expressing our gratitude to him, and of promoting his glory, will prove a principle of self-denying obedience and patient suffering for his sake, even “stronger than death” itself. (*Cant. viii. 6, 7. Phil. i. 19—26.*) And if earthly parents, “being evil, “know how to give good gifts to their children; how “much more will our heavenly Father give good things to “those who ask him!”—Husbands and wives commonly concur in seeking accessions to their temporal riches, and under certain limitations it may be allowable: but it is much better when they concur heartily in seeking “those “things which are above,” and praying for these spiritual blessings, in behalf of each other, of their children, and all around them. Indeed, all the blessings of both “the “upper and the nether springs” belong to the children of God; and, as related to Christ, they have the first or the largest portion for his sake, freely given them by the

## CHAP. XVI.

The borders of Joseph's posterity, west of Jordan, 1—4. The lot of Ephraim, 5—9; who does not drive out the Canaanites from Gezer, 10.

AND the lot of the children of Joseph \* fell from Jordan by Jericho, unto \* the water of Jericho on the east, to the wilderness that goeth up from Jericho throughout mount Beth-el,

2 And goeth out from <sup>b</sup> Beth-el to Luz, and passeth along unto the borders of <sup>c</sup> Archi to Ataroth.

3 And goeth down westward to the coast of Japhleti, unto the coast of <sup>d</sup> Beth-horon the nether, and to Gezer: and the goings out thereof are at <sup>e</sup> the sea.

4 So <sup>f</sup> the children of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim, took their inheritance.

5 ¶ And the border of the children of Ephraim, according to their families, was *thus*; even the border of their inheritance on the east side was

<sup>g</sup> Ataroth-addar, unto Beth-horon the <sup>h</sup> upper

6 And the border went out toward the sea, to <sup>i</sup> Michmethah on the north side, and the border went about eastward unto <sup>j</sup> Taanath-shiloh, and passed by it on the east to Janohah:

7 And it went down from Janohah to <sup>k</sup> Ataroth, and to Naarath, and came to <sup>l</sup> Jericho, and went out at Jordan.

8 The border went out from <sup>m</sup> Tappuah westward unto the <sup>n</sup> river Kanah; and the goings out thereof were at <sup>o</sup> the sea. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Ephraim by their families.

9 And <sup>p</sup> the separate cities for the children of Ephraim *were* among the inheritance of the children of Manasseh, all the cities with their villages.

10 And <sup>q</sup> they drave not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer: but <sup>r</sup> the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto this day, and serve under tribute.

Father, as the lot of their inheritance. But they must exert themselves vigorously to subdue those enemies within and without, which keep them out of possession of the promised blessings: and he is ever ready to assist all who call upon him to succour them in this warfare. May the Lord then excite our diligence and increase our faith, that we may "be strong in him and in the power of his might;" and then, instead of saying, "We cannot drive them out," we shall exclaim, "I can do all things, through Christ "who strengtheneth me." (*Note, Phil. iv. 10—13.*)

## NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1—8. (*Marg. Ref.*) The inheritance of Ephraim, and the half tribe of Manasseh, extended from Jordan to the Mediterranean sea, across the country. It lay north of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, Simeon, and Dan, and south of the other tribes. The southern part of this general allotment was assigned to Ephraim, and the northern to Manasseh.

V. 9. *Separate cities.*] Some cities, which fell within the lot of Manasseh, seem to have been afterwards assigned to the Ephraimites who more wanted them: the same probably was done in the case of some other tribes. (xvii. 9. 11.)

V. 10. As there is no intimation that these Canaanites renounced idolatry, and came heartily into the interests of Israel; and as the Ephraimites were strong enough to subject them and compel them to pay tribute; no excuse can be made for their conduct, in sparing those whom God commanded them to destroy, and in making a league with them. (*Notes, xvii. 11—18.*) But they consulted their present ease more than either their duty, the common good

of Israel, or their own true and durable interest. (*Note, Judg. i. 28.*)—Gezer seems to have remained in the hands of the Canaanites till the days of Solomon. (*Note, 1 Kings ix. 16.*) "The thirst of plunder, and the indulgence of licentious desires, were completely checked and defeated in the Jewish soldiery, by the very conditions on which alone they were enabled to subdue the condemned nations: and... the feelings of national hostility... were controuled and mitigated, by solemnly enjoining the exercise of as great severity in punishing idolatry among... themselves, as they were compelled to exercise against the condemned nations of Canaan: and it is evident from the event, that it was with reluctance, and only by compulsion, they exercised these severities, because, as soon as the impulse was withdrawn, they ceased to exercise any such severity, and on the contrary treated with culpable lenity, and regarded with a dangerous complacency, the remnants of those impious nations, whose total extermination, they had been warned was necessary to guard against the contagion of their vices and idolatries." *Graves on the Pentateuch*, vol. ii, pp. 101, 102.—"Contenting themselves with the tributes which were paid to them, they grew effeminate; ... but applied themselves to the cultivation of their lands, which producing them great plenty and riches, they neglected the regular disposition of their settlement, and indulged themselves in luxuries and pleasures." *Josephus, quoted by Graves*, vol. ii, p. 132.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our situation and provision in this present life, as well as our future inheritance, are appointed by the only wise and righteous God: and we should learn to acknowledge

## CHAP. XVII.

The lot of the half tribe of Manasseh, 1, 2. The case of Zelophehad's daughters, 3—6. The borders of Manasseh, 7—11. The Canaanites remain, but under tribute, 12, 13. The sons of Joseph petition for another lot; which Joshua refuses them, 14—18.

**T**HERE was also a lot for the tribe of Manasseh, for he *was* <sup>a</sup> the first-born of Joseph; *to wit*, for <sup>b</sup> Machir, the first-born of Manasseh, the father of Gilead: because he was a man of war, therefore he had <sup>c</sup> Gilead and Bashan.

2 There was also *a lot* for <sup>d</sup> the rest of the children of Manasseh by their families: for <sup>e</sup> the children of <sup>f</sup> Abiezer, and for the children of Helek, and for the children of Asriel, and for the children of Shechem, and for the children of Hephher, and for the children of Shemida: these *were* the male children of Manasseh, the son of Joseph, by their families.

3 ¶ But <sup>g</sup> Zelophehad, the son of Hephher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but daughters; and these *are* the names of his daughters, Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

4 And they came near before <sup>h</sup> Eleazar the priest, and before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the princes, saying, <sup>i</sup> The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brethren. Therefore according to the

commandment of the LORD, he gave them an inheritance among the brethren of their father.

5 And there fell <sup>j</sup> ten portions to Manasseh, <sup>k</sup> beside the land of Gilead and Bashan, which *were* on the other side Jordan;

6 Because the daughters of Manasseh had an inheritance among his sons: and the rest of Manasseh's sons had the land of Gilead.

7 ¶ And the coast of Manasseh was from Asher to <sup>l</sup> Michmethah, that *lieth* before <sup>m</sup> Shechem, and the border went along on the right hand, unto the inhabitants of En-tappuah.

8 Now Manasseh had the land of <sup>n</sup> Tappuah: but Tappuah, on the border of Manasseh, *belonged* to the children of Ephraim:

9 And the coast descended unto the <sup>o</sup> river Kanah, southward of the river: <sup>p</sup> these cities of Ephraim *are* among the cities of Manasseh; the coast of Manasseh also *was* on the north side of the river, and <sup>q</sup> the outgoings of it were at the sea.

10 Southward *it was* Ephraim's, and northward *it was* Manasseh's, and the sea is his border, and they met together in Asher on the north, and in Issachar on the east.

11 And <sup>r</sup> Manasseh had in Issachar, and in Asher, <sup>s</sup> Beth-shean and her towns, and <sup>t</sup> Ibleam and her towns, and

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xli. 51. xlii. 20. xliiii. 18. Deut. xxi. 17.  
<sup>b</sup> Gen. i. 23. Num. xxi. 29. xxvii. 1. xxxii. 39. 40. Judg. v. 14. 1 Chr. ii. 23. vii. 14, 15.  
<sup>c</sup> Num. xxvi. 29. xxxii. 33. 40. Deut. iii. 13—15.  
<sup>d</sup> Num. xxvi. 29. —32.  
<sup>e</sup> Judg. vi. 11. viii. 1. 1 Chr. vii. 18.  
<sup>f</sup> Num. xxvi. 30. Jozzer.

<sup>g</sup> Num. xxvi. 33. xxvii. 1. xxxvi. 2—11.

<sup>h</sup> xiv. 1. Num. xxvii. 17—29.

<sup>i</sup> Num. xxvii. 6. 7. Gal. iii. 28.

<sup>k</sup> xlii. 29—51. Num. xxxii. 30—42.

<sup>l</sup> xvi. 6. xx. 7. xxi. 21. xxiv. 1. 32. Gen. xxiv. 2. xxxvii. 12. 14. Judg. ix. 1. 1 Kings xii. 1. 25. 1 Chr. vi. 67.

<sup>m</sup> xii. 17. xv. 34. 53. xvi. 8.

<sup>n</sup> Or, brook of reeds. xvi. 8. o xvi. 9.

<sup>p</sup> xvi. 3. 8. xiv. 29.

<sup>q</sup> xvi. 9. 1 Chr. vii. 29.

<sup>r</sup> 1 Sam. xxxi. 10. 12. Beth-shean. 1 Kings iv. 12. 2 Kings ix. 27. 1 Chr. vi. 70. Ibleam.

his goodness with thankfulness, and be contented with our portion, whether more or less abundant; because he knows what is best for us, and we have far more than we deserve. —The distinctions of property accord to the appointment of God, and must therefore be conscientiously maintained: nay, so far from fraudulently or violently attempting to entrench on them, we must not *covet* any thing that is another's, nor envy his prosperity, but rejoice in it. Yet brotherly love is not tenacious, but freely imparts what is superfluous, for the good of those in want, saying, "What is that between me and thee?" We should indeed in all things be more happy, did we more diligently obey our God.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1. Though Manasseh was the first-born of Joseph, yet Ephraim inherited before him. (xvi. Note, Gen. xlviii. 17—20.)—Machir is supposed to have been the only son of Manasseh, at least who lived to have children; (Note, 1 Chr. vii. 14, 15;) and in some instances, an *only son* is called the *first-born*. (Note, Matt. i. 24, 25.)

He was a man of war; probably he had distinguished himself whilst in Egypt, in the assault which the Philistines made upon the Ephraimites, and had defended his brethren. (Note, 1 Chr. vii. 21, 22.) And as his posterity were supposed to inherit his valour, some of them had their inheritance east of Jordan, upon the frontiers, that they might defend them. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 2. Num. xxvi. 29—32. 1 Chr. vii. 14—19.

V. 3—6. Five portions were allotted to the half tribe of Manasseh, west of Jordan; and that of Hephher, who seems to have had no son but Zelophehad, was divided among his five daughters. So there were ten portions, though of different magnitude. (Notes, Num. xxvii. 1—11. xxxvi.)

V. 7—10. (Marg. Ref.) The lot of Manasseh had that of Ephraim on the south, and the Mediterranean sea on the west: but on the north-west it bordered on Asher; and toward the north-east, on Issachar. (Notes, xvi. 1—9. xix. 17—31.)

V. 11—13. The inhabitants of some of these cities were subject to Manasseh: at first they could not drive

the inhabitants of 'Dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of 'En dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of 'Taanach and her towns, and the inhabitants of 'Megiddo and her towns, *even* three countries.

12 Yet the children of Manasseh <sup>a</sup> could not drive out *the inhabitants of* those cities, but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.

13 Yet it came to pass when the children of Israel were <sup>a</sup> waxen strong, that they <sup>b</sup> put the Canaanites to tribute; but did not utterly drive them out.

14 ¶ And the children of Joseph spake unto Joshua, saying, Why hast thou given me *but* <sup>c</sup> one lot and one portion to inherit, seeing I *am* <sup>d</sup> a great people, forasmuch as the LORD hath blessed me hitherto?

15 And Joshua answered them, 'If thou *be* a great people, *then* get thee

up to the wood-country, and cut down for thyself there, in the land of 'the Perizzites, and of the 'giants, if mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee.

16 And the children of Joseph said, The hill is not enough for us: and all the Canaanites that dwell in the land of the valley have <sup>e</sup> chariots of iron, *both they who are of* <sup>f</sup> Beth-shean and her towns, and *they who are of* the valley of 'Jezreel.

17 And Joshua spake unto the house of Joseph, *even* to Ephraim, and to Manasseh, saying, <sup>g</sup> Thou *art* a great people, and hast great power; thou shalt not have one lot *only*:

18 But <sup>h</sup> the mountain shall be thine; for it *is* a wood, and thou shalt cut it down: and the out-goings of it shall be thine; <sup>i</sup> for thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, *and* though they *be* strong.

them out, for want of faith and courage; and when they had prevailed against them, they let them remain as tributaries, contrary to the express command of God. (Note, xvi. 10.)—*Three countries.* (11) Or, *districts.*

V. 14, 15. Joshua was of the tribe of Ephraim, and his brethren might expect some special favour on that account. Their inheritance perhaps was less valuable than that of Judah; and, as they thought, only sufficient for one tribe, and they were two: a considerable part of their land was held by the ancient inhabitants; and they supposed that if the Lord blessed and increased them in future, as he had in times past, they should be much straitened for room. These formed the grounds and encouragements of their petition. But they evidently undervalued the portion, which the Lord had assigned them by lot; and they coveted what belonged to others, while they neglected to get possession of their own land. As a great people they were better able to labour and to fight, to clear and cultivate the unimproved woodlands, and to dispossess the Canaanites. And as the Lord had blessed them hitherto, they had the more encouragement to confide in his assistance: nor would Joshua shew partiality to his kindred, any more than Moses had done.

V. 16. *Chariots of iron.*] It is supposed, that these chariots were armed with sharp scythes from the axles, on each side, underneath, and in different directions. They were drawn by swift and strong horses, and driven by expert charioteers, who were generally accompanied by warriors that fought from the chariots. They made dreadful havoc among undisciplined troops, or such as were not accustomed to them; and were exceedingly formidable in the first onset. But able commanders, by a skilful disposition of their forces; and well-disciplined troops, by regular and expeditious movements, rendered their force and fury vain: and sometimes by wounding and affrighting

the horses, they were driven back upon their own army with terrible confusion and destruction. Wherever, therefore, war became a *science*, they fell into disuse as unwieldy and dangerous.—The objection made "by the children of Joseph," to Joshua's exhortation, was evidently the result of unbelief. What were chariots of iron, to the almighty power of Israel's God? (Notes, xi. 4, 5. Num. xiii. 30, 31. Judg. iv. 10, 14.)

V. 17, 18. Joshua gently reproved the claimants for calling their portion "one lot," and pointed out the improvement of which it was capable; and the extensive tracts of land, which might be cleared, and rescued from the Canaanites: and he assured them, that if they exerted their valour, power, and industry in dependence on the Lord; the iron chariots, and the strength of the Canaanites, would prove no bar to their success and prosperity.—The mountain, or wood, here spoken of, had perhaps not before been expressly allotted to these tribes; yet it lay within, or near, the assigned limits.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Prudent foresight, and believing dependence on the Lord for the performance of his promises, inducing cheerful obedience to his commands, will ensure to us an inheritance among his people in the heavenly Canaan, and every thing truly good for us in this world.—But, alas! even professed Christians are often more disposed to murmur, envy, and covet, than to be content, thankful, and ready to distribute. Indeed we are all more prone to grasp at what belongs to others, than to manage our own to the best advantage: and many complain of poverty, and encroach upon the benevolence of others, because they rebel against the sentence of divine justice, "Thou shalt eat thy bread in the sweat of thy brow." Men excuse themselves from labour on any pretence: and nothing serves

## CHAP. XVIII.

The tabernacle is set up at Shiloh, 1. Joshua causes the remainder of the land to be described in seven parts, 2—9. He divides it by lot, 10. The lot and borders of Benjamin, 11—20. Their cities, 21—28.

AND the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at <sup>a</sup>Shiloh, and <sup>b</sup>set up the tabernacle of the congregation there: and the land was subdued before them.

2 ¶ And there remained among the children of Israel seven tribes, which had not yet received their inheritance.

3 And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, <sup>a</sup>How long *are* ye slack to go to possess the land, which the LORD God of your fathers hath given you?

4 Give out from among you <sup>a</sup>three men for *each* tribe; and I will send them, and they shall rise and go through the land, and <sup>a</sup>describe it according to the inheritance of them: and they shall come *again* to me.

5 And they shall divide it into seven parts: <sup>a</sup>Judah shall abide in their coast on the south, and <sup>a</sup>the house of Joseph shall abide in their coasts on the north.

6 Ye shall therefore describe the land *into* seven parts, and bring the *description* hither to me, <sup>a</sup>that I may cast lots for you here before the LORD our God.

7 But <sup>a</sup>the Levites have no part among you; for the priesthood of the LORD is their inheritance: <sup>a</sup>and Gad,

<sup>a</sup> xix. 51. xxi. 2.  
xxii. 9.  
<sup>b</sup> Judg. xviii. 31.  
1 Sam. i. 3. 24.  
iv. 3. 4. 1 Kings  
ii. 27. xiv. 2. 4.  
Ps. lxxviii. 69.  
Jer. vii. 12—14.  
xxvi. 6.

<sup>c</sup> Judg. xviii. 9.  
Prov. ii. 2—6.  
x. 4. xiii. 4. xv.  
Jb. Ec. ix. 10.  
Zeph. iii. 16.  
Matt. xx. 6.  
John vi. 27.  
Phil. iii. 13, 14.  
2 Pet. i. 16, 11.

<sup>d</sup> iii. 12. iv. 2.  
Num. i. 4. xiii.  
2.

<sup>f</sup> xv. 1, &c. xix. 1.  
-9.  
<sup>g</sup> xvi. xvii.

<sup>h</sup> 8. 10. xiv. 2.  
Num. xxvi. 54.  
xxxiv. 13. Ps. cv.  
11. Prov. xvi. 83.  
xviii. 18. Acts  
xiii. 19.

<sup>i</sup> xiii. 14. 33. Num.  
xviii. 20. 23.  
Deut. x. 9. xviii.  
1, 2.

<sup>k</sup> xiii. 8—31. Num.  
xxiii. 29—41.  
Deut. iii. 12—17.  
iv. 47, 48.

the purpose better, than having rich and powerful relations; though by providing for them, these are often most criminally partial and unfaithful in disposing of those funds, with which they are entrusted for the publick benefit. But there is more real kindness in pointing out to men the advantages within their reach, that they may be excited to improve them, than in gratifying their indolence and profusion. True religion gives no sanction to these evils: "We commanded," says the apostle, "that if any man *would* not work, neither should he eat:" and many of our *cannots* are only the language of sloth, which magnifies every difficulty into an impossibility, and represents every danger as inevitable destruction.—This is especially the case in our spiritual work and warfare: but even our *professed* relation to the Captain of the LORD's host will not avail us, if we be indolent and self-indulgent. Our very complaints, that comforts are withheld, frequently result from negligence and fear of the cross: and when convinced that we can do nothing, we are apt to sit still and attempt nothing. But "as many as the Lord loves, he rebukes and chastens;" and if we belong to him, he will stir us up to be diligent, bold, and persevering in well-doing; to break our league with every sin, and renounce our worldly pleasures and sinful interests; to rise superior to our fears, and to exert our best endeavours. Then our complaints will be silenced, or rather turned into joyful thanksgivings: and, if "the LORD hath blessed us hitherto," this should suffice to shame us out of our distrust and repinings.—May he teach us here to believe and obey, and give us an inheritance among his saints in glory everlasting!

## NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1. The tribes of Judah, Ephraim, and Manasseh, were settled in their possessions; and perhaps many others were dispersed in some parts of the land to cultivate it, where they could do it safely: it was therefore proper, that the tabernacle should be removed to a more central situation than Gilgal, where it had hitherto remained; and Shiloh was selected for that purpose, doubt-

less by direction from the Lord, who might be consulted on the occasion by Urim and Thummim. (Notes, *Ec.* xxix. 30. Num. xxvii. 21.) This city was in the centre of Canaan, and as convenient as possible for all the tribes: and it was proper that the ark and tabernacle, the visible symbols of *JEHOVAH's* presence, and the glory of the land, which stamped a relative holiness upon it, should be in the midst of it. Shiloh was in the lot of Ephraim, the tribe to which Joshua belonged; and it was expedient, that the sanctuary should be near the residence of the chief governor.—The name of this city is the same, as that by which Jacob predicted the Messiah; (Note, *Gen.* xlix. 10:) and some expositors suppose, that it was called Shiloh on this occasion, when selected for the resting place of the ark, and the observance of those institutions which typified our great Peace-maker, and our access to God through his atonement and intercession.—That part of the country being subdued, the Israelites could assemble without interruption: and all personal cares and employments seem to have been laid aside, while, with one consent, they attended to this solemn and joyful religious duty. No doubt those, who still continued encamped, removed and pitched around the tabernacle as they had before done, both in the wilderness and in Canaan.—In this place the sanctuary of God remained, till the ark was taken by the Philistines in the time of Eli: (1 *Sam.* iv:) but soon after it seems to have been removed to Nob; though the ark was placed at Kirjath-jearim, probably till David removed it to mount Zion. (Notes, 1 *Sam.* vii. 1, 2. xxi. 1, 2. 2 *Sam.* vi. 2.) So that the tabernacle was stationed at Shiloh between three and four hundred years. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. The dissatisfaction, which Ephraim and Manasseh had expressed respecting the inheritance allotted them, seems to have induced Joshua to stay the proceedings of the persons, employed in dividing the land, till the camp had been removed to Shiloh, and another survey had been made. (Notes, xvii. 14—18.)

V. 3—10. The people, enriched with plunder and living in plenty, were more intent on present ease and indulgence, than on obtaining possession of their permanent

and Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh, have received their inheritance beyond Jordan on the east, which Moses the servant of the Lord gave them.

8 And the men arose, and went away: and Joshua charged them that went to describe the land, saying, Go, and walk through the land, and describe it, and come again to me, <sup>1</sup>that I may here cast lots for you before the Lord in Shiloh.

9 And the men went, and passed through the land, and described it by cities into seven parts, in a book, and came *again* to Joshua, to the host at Shiloh.

10 And Joshua <sup>m</sup> cast lots for them in Shiloh <sup>n</sup>before the Lord: and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel, according to their divisions.

11 ¶ And the lot of the tribe of the children of Benjamin came up according to their families; and the coast of their lot came forth <sup>o</sup>between the children of Judah and the children of Joseph.

12 And their border on the north side was from Jordan: and the border went up to the side of <sup>p</sup>Jericho on the north side, and went up through the mountains westward; and the goings out thereof were at <sup>q</sup>the wilderness of Beth-aven.

13 And the border went over from

thence toward Luz, to the side of <sup>r</sup>Luz, which is Beth-el, southward, and the border descended to Ataroth-addar, near the hill that *lieth* on the south-side of the nether <sup>s</sup>Beth-horon.

14 And the border was drawn *thence*, and compassed the corner of the sea southward, from the hill that *lieth* before Beth-horon southward; and the goings out thereof were at <sup>t</sup>Kirjath-baal, which is Kirjath-jearim, a city of the children of Judah. This *was* the west-quarter.

15 And the south-quarter *was* from the end of Kirjath-jearim, and the border went out on the west, and went out to the well of waters of <sup>u</sup>Nephtoah;

16 And the border came down to the end of the mountain that *lieth* before <sup>x</sup>the valley of the son of Hinnom, and which is in <sup>y</sup>the valley of the giants on the north, and descended to the valley of Hinnom, to the side of <sup>z</sup>Jebusi on the south, and descended to <sup>a</sup>En-rogel,

17 And was drawn from the north, and went forth to En-shemesh, and went forth toward Geliloth, which is over against the going up of Adummim, and descended to <sup>b</sup>the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben,

18 And passed along toward the side over against <sup>c</sup>Arabah northward, and went down unto Arabah;

19 And the border passed along to

<sup>1</sup> See on 6. 10.—  
vii. 16—18 xiii.  
7. xiv. 1, 2. xv.  
1. 1 Sam. xiv.  
41. Acts i. 24—  
26. Rom. xiv.  
19.

<sup>m</sup> See on 6. 8.—  
Prov xviii. 18.  
Ex. xlvii. 22.  
xlviii. 29. Matt.  
xxvii. 35. Acts  
xiii. 19.  
<sup>n</sup> Ps. xvi. 5, 6.  
xlvii. 4. lxi. 5.  
John xvii. 2.  
Acts xxvii. 18.  
Col. i. 12.

<sup>o</sup> xv. 1—8. xvi. 1  
—10. Deut.  
x xiii. 12.

<sup>p</sup> ii. 1. iii. 16. vi.  
i. xvi. 1.

<sup>q</sup> vii. 2. Hos. iv.  
16. v. 8. x. 6.

<sup>r</sup> xvi. 2. Gen.  
xxviii. 19. Judg.  
i. 22—26.

<sup>s</sup> x. 11. xvi. 8. xxix.  
22.

<sup>t</sup> xv. 9. 60. 1 Sam.  
vii. 1, 2. 2 Sam.  
vi. 2. 1 Chr. xiii.  
6.

<sup>x</sup> xv. 8. 2 Kings  
xxiii. 10. 2 Chr.  
xxviii. 3. xxxiii.  
6. Is. xxx. 33.  
Jer. vii. 31, 32.  
-xix. 2, 6. 11.  
xxiii. 35.

<sup>y</sup> See on xv. 8.  
xviii. 16.—1 Chr.  
xiv. 9

<sup>z</sup> 28. xv. 63. Judg.  
i. 8. 21. xix. 10.  
<sup>a</sup> xv. 7. 2 Sam.  
xvii. 17. 1 Kings  
i. 9.

<sup>b</sup> xv. 6.

<sup>c</sup> Or, the plain.  
xv. 6. 61.

inheritances; which could not be done without new dangers and fatigues. (Note, xvi. 10.) In the mean time the Canaanites were recovering strength and courage, a great part of the land remained uncultivated, and the Israelites were impoverishing themselves, and contracting bad habits.—After a year or more had been spent in this manner, whilst they were but little acquainted with that part of the land, which was not yet divided; Joshua reproved their slackness, and directed them how to proceed. Some general survey indeed must have been made, previous to the allotment of portions to the aforementioned tribes; but it had not been sufficiently exact and complete. Three persons, therefore, were chosen out of every tribe concerned, that an impartial and amicable settlement might be made; and perhaps they went in three companies for expedition. These surveyors, according to the instructions given by Joshua, made as exact a measurement and description of the country as they could, both as to its extent and fertility; and divided the remains of the land into seven parts, that the seven remaining tribes might have their inheritances assigned them by lot: the situation being thus determined, and the

quantity proportioned to their numbers. While employed in this perilous work, they were, doubtless, peculiarly emboldened and protected by the Lord; and the Canaanites were intimidated and restrained from assaulting them: so that they all returned in safety to Shiloh; and Joshua with religious solemnity cast lots for them before the Lord.—On this survey it appeared, that Judah's portion had been made disproportionately large: and therefore Simeon had his taken out from it; and Dan also, at least in part. (Notes, xix. 1—9. 40—48.)

In a book. (9) The surveyors seem to have formed some kind of map of the country, as well as a description of it in writing. The Egyptians, from the situation of their fields, as annually overflowed by the Nile, acquired great skill in surveying and measuring land: and some of the Israelites had, no doubt, learned this from them: and further immediate teaching from God might be vouchsafed on this occasion. (Notes, Ex. xxxi. 1—6.)

V. 11—20. (Marg. Ref.) In the prophetic blessing of Moses, Benjamin is placed between Judah and Joseph; (for Levi had no inheritance assigned him;) and at length,

the side of Beth-hoglah, northward; and the outgoings of the border were at the north \* bay of the ° salt sea, at the south end of Jordan. This was the south-coast.

20 And Jordan was the border of it on the east side. <sup>d</sup> This was the inheritance of the children of Benjamin, by the coasts thereof round about, according to their families.

21 Now the cities of the tribe of the children of Benjamin, according to their families, were ° Jericho, and ° Beth-hoglah, and the valley of Keziz,

22 And ° Beth-arabah, and ° Zemaraim, and ° Beth-el,

23 And Avim, and Parah, and ° Ophrah,

24 And Chephar-haammonai, and

Ophni, and ° Gaba; twelve cities with their villages:

25 ° Gibeon, and ° Ramah, and Beeroth,

26 And Mizpeh, and ° Chephirah, and Mozah,

27 And Rekem, and Irpeel, and Taralah,

28 And ° Zelah, Eleph, and ° Jebusi, (which is Jerusalem,) ° Gibeath, and Kirjath: fourteen cities with their villages. This is the inheritance of the children of Benjamin according to their families.

### CHAP. XIX.

The lot of Simeon, 1—9: of Zebulun, 10—16: of Issachar, 17—23: of Asher, 24—31: of Naphtali, 32—39: of Dan, 40—48. The inheritance assigned to Joshua, 49—51.

\* Heb. tongue. xv. 2. marg. 1a. xi. 15.  
c iii. 16. xii. 3. Gen. xiv. 3. xix. 25. Num. xxxiv. 3. Deut. iii. 17.

d 11.

e 12. ii. 1. et. 1. Luke x. 30. xix. 1.  
f 19. xv. 6. g 18. xv. 6. h Gen. x. 18. 2 Chr. xiii. 4. i 1 Kings xii. 29. 32.  
k i Sam. xiii. 17.

xxi. 17. Ezra ii. 26. Neh. vii. 30.

m ix. 17. x. 2. i Kings iii. 4. 5. ix. 2. 1a. xxviii. 21.  
n i Sam. i. 1. Ramathaim-zophim vii. 17. xv. 34. Jer. xxxi. 15. Matt. xxvii. 57. Arimathea. o ix. 17. Ezra ii. 25.

p 2 Sam. xxi. 14. q 16. xv. 8. 63. 2 Sam. v. 8. r Judg. xix. 12—15. xx. 4. 5. i Sam. x. 26. xiii. 15. 16. 1a. x. 29. Hos. x. 9. Gibeath. s Num. xxvi. 54. xxxiii. 64.

by lot, the portion of Benjamin fell between them. (Notes, Deut. xxxiii. 7. 17.) The borders of this tribe on the north were the same as those of Ephraim on the south: and his southern boundaries the same as the northern borders of Judah; but drawn from west to east, instead of from east to west. (xv. 1—12. xvi.)—As the inheritance of Benjamin did not reach to the Mediterranean sea, and no other sea or lake is supposed to have been in those parts; perhaps the expression, “compassed the corner of the sea southward” (14), might be rendered, “made a circuit on the side next the sea towards the south;” for this clause seems to connect the account of the northern border, which is contained in the preceding verses, with that of the southern which follows.

V. 21—28. Marg. Ref.—Which is Jerusalem. (28) Note, xv. 63.

### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The ordinances of religion form our most important business, and must be attended to in the first place, even in preference to our worldly affairs, if we would be happy in our own souls, and prosper in our undertakings: (Note, Matt. vi. 33, 34 :) and when properly administered and attended on, by all ranks and orders of men, they form the glory and bulwark of any nation: for “them that honour God he will honour, and they who despise him shall be lightly esteemed.” We indeed have the true Tabernacle, the true Ark of the covenant, and the mercy-seat, not only in the midst of us, but every where present; and when we meet in the courts of the Lord, he is as really though not sensibly present, as he was between the cherubim in the tabernacle of Israel. (Notes, Matt. xviii. 19, 20. xxviii. 19, 20.) But what return do we render for such benefits? What improvement do we make of them? Alas! the ordinances of God are generally neglected; his sabbaths are violated; his truths are opposed, despised, or abused; and his commandments and authority are trampled upon! Few in comparison seem to value the salvation proposed to sin-

ners in the gospel: and even they who profess to accept of it, are often, through indolence, self-indulgence, and fear of difficulties, rendered very irresolute and slack in “possessing the inheritance which the LORD God hath given them.” Indeed many of them do not understand the extent of their privileges, because they have not carefully surveyed them: and when preserved from terrors and distress of conscience, and able to keep up some tolerable hope of salvation, with a little comfort from time to time in sacred ordinances; they seem to think that they possess all that can be expected in this world, and consider heaven as an estate in reversion, when they shall be ejected from their present too well beloved tenure of worldly possessions! Nor are they aware, that a close walk with God, increasing conformity to him, love of him and of one another, and a will in all things subjected to his will, form the very substance of heavenly felicity; and that much more of these blessed privileges may be enjoyed on earth, than any of us have hitherto experienced. But the Captain of our salvation will rebuke this slackness: and he commands his ministers to declare to his people, the truths which respect their present sanctification and progress in divine life, as well as their future inheritance, that they may be excited to press onward to the enjoyment of them. At his command we may boldly undertake any service, and need fear no enemies. He assigns to each of us our present and our future portion: yet in this appointment he takes into the account that diligence, vigilance, and faithfulness, which through his grace we are enabled to exercise: and as the industrious husbandman and intrepid warrior are generally, so the diligent, watchful, and courageous Christian is always, the most prosperous. “Having therefore food and raiment, let us be therewith content:” and may our wealth be laid up in the land of promise above, whither all the tribes of the redeemed will in succession shortly arrive, and receive their incorruptible inheritance. (Notes, Matt. vi. 19—21. Col. iii. 1—4.)

■ xviii. 6—7. **AND** the <sup>a</sup>second lot came forth to Simeon, *even* for the tribe of the children of Simeon, according to their families: and their inheritance was <sup>b</sup> within the inheritance of the children of Judah.

2 And they had in their inheritance,  
 ° Beer-sheba, and Sheba, and Moladah,  
 3 And ° Hazar-shual, and Balah, and  
 Azem,

4 And \* Eltolad, and Bethul, and  
 † Hormah.

g xv. 31. 1 Sam. 5 And <sup>g</sup> Ziklag, and Beth-markaboth,  
 xxvii. 6. xxx. 1.  
 h 1 Chr. iv. 31. and <sup>h</sup> Hazar-susah,

6 And <sup>1</sup>Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuhēn;  
thirteen cities and their villages:

7<sup>1</sup> Ain, <sup>k</sup> Remmon, and <sup>l</sup> Ether, and  
Ashan; four cities and their villages:

8 And all the villages that were round about these cities, to <sup>m</sup> Baalath-beer, <sup>n</sup> Ramath of the south. This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Simeon, according to their families.

9 Out of the portion of the children of Judah *was* the inheritance of the children of Simeon: for the part of the children of Judah was \* too much for them; therefore the children of Simeon had their inheritance within the inheritance of them.

10 ¶ And the third lot came up for the children of <sup>q</sup> Zebulun, according to their families: and the border of their inheritance was unto Sarid.

11. And their border went up toward the sea, and Maralah, and reached to Dabbasheth, and reached to the river that is before <sup>r</sup> Jokneam ;

12 And turned from Sarid eastward toward the sun-rising unto the border of 'Chisloth-tabor, and then goeth out to 'Daberath, and goeth up to Japhia.

13 And from thence passeth on along  
on the east to " Gittah-hepher to Ittah-  
kazin, and goeth out to Remmon-  
\* methoar to Neah;

14 And the border compasseth it on the north-side to Hannathon: and the outgoings thereof are in the valley of Jiphthah-el;

15 And \*Kattath, and Nahallal, and  
 Shimron, and Idalah, and Beth-lehem: x xxi. 34, 35. Judg.  
 i. 30. Nahalot.  
 twelve cities with their villages.

16 This is the inheritance of the children of Zebulun, according to their families, these cities with their villages.

17 ¶ And the fourth lot came out to Issachar, for the children of Issachar, according to their families.

18 And their border was toward  
\*Jezreel, and Chesulloth, and \*Shu-  
nem,

19 And Hapharaim, and Shihon, and Anaharath,

20 And Rabbith, and Kishion, and Abez.

21 And Remeth, and <sup>b</sup> En-gannim, <sup>b</sup> xxi. 29.  
and En-haddah, and Beth-pazzez;

22 And the coast reacheth to <sup>c</sup>Tabor, and Shabazimah, and <sup>d</sup>Beth-she-mesh, and the out-goings of their border were at Jordan: sixteen cities with their villages.

23 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Issachar, according to their families, the cities and their villages.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 1—9. (*Marg. Ref.*) The inheritance of the tribe of Judah was found to be more than was necessary, or than properly came to their share; a portion was therefore allotted to the tribe of Simeon, taken from the south-west part of it: and it seems that, without murmuring, Judah renounced his claim, at the instance of Joshua, and of those who had been nominated to the office of dividing the land. (*Notes*, xv. 32. *Gen.* xlix. 5—7. *Num.* xxvi. 14.)—Sheba was the same place as Beer-sheba, or a suburb of that city: otherwise there would have been fourteen cities.

V. 10-16. (*Marg. Ref.*) Zebulun was younger than Issachar; yet he was placed next before him, both in the

prophecy of Jacob, and in that of Moses : (*Gen.* xxx. 18—20. xlix. 13—15. *Deut.* xxxiii. 18, 19 :) and his inheritance was allotted to him before Issachar had his. It lay to the north of Issachar, near to the lake of Gennesaret, in the region of Galilee.—There were twelve principal cities in the lot of this tribe : but they are not here particularly enumerated ; for many of the places mentioned were merely the boundaries of the lot assigned to Zebulun. The Bethlehem, here mentioned, lay at a great distance from Bethlehem-judah. (*Note, Mic.* v. 2.)

V. 17—23. The inheritance of Issachar lay to the south of Zebulun, the south-west of Naphtali, the south-east of Asher, and the north of Manasseh; and reached almost from Jordan to the Mediterranean: yet the lots of Manasseh and Asher are supposed to have met on the sea-

24 ¶ And the fifth lot came out for the tribe of the children of Asher, according to their families.

25 And their border was ° Helkath, and Hali, and Beten, and ° Achshaph,

26 And Alammelech, and Amad, and ° Misheal; and reacheth to ° Carmel-westward, and to Shihor-libnath,

27 And turneth toward the sun-rising to Beth-dagon, and reacheth to Zebulun, and to the ° valley of Jiphthah-el toward the north side of Bethemek, and Neiel, and goeth out to ° Cabul on the left hand;

28 And Hebron, and ° Rehob, and Hammon, and ° Kanah, even unto ° great Zidon;

29 And then the coast turneth to Ramah, and to the strong city ° Tyre, and the coast turneth to Hosah; and the out-goings thereof are at the sea, from the coast to ° Achzib:

30 Ummah also, and ° Aphek, and ° Rehob: twenty and two cities with their villages.

31 This is ° the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Asher, according to their families, these cities with their villages.

32 ¶ The sixth lot came out to the children of Naphtali, even for the children of Naphtali according to their families.

33 And their coast was from Heleph,

from Allon to ° Zaanannim, and Adami, Nekeb, and Jabneel, unto Lakum; and the outgoings thereof were at Jordan:

34 And then the coast ° turneth westward to ° Aznoth-tabor, and goeth out from thence to Hukkok, and reacheth to Zebulun on the south side, and reacheth to Asher on the west side, and to Judah upon Jordan toward the sun-rising.

35 And the fenced cities are Ziddim, Zer, and ° Hammath, Rakkath, and ° Chinnereth,

36 And Adamah, and Ramah, and ° Hazor,

37 And ° Kedesh, and Edrei, and En-hazor,

38 And Iron, and Migdal-el, Horem, and Beth-anath, and ° Beth-shemesh; nineteen cities with their villages.

39 This is the inheritance of the tribe of the children of Naphtali, according to their families, the cities and their villages.

40 ¶ And the seventh lot came out for the tribe of the children of Dan according to their families.

41 And the coast of their inheritance was ° Zorah, and Eshtaol, and Irshemesh,

42 And ° Shaalabbin, and ° Ajalon, and Jethlah,

43 And Elon, and ° Thimnathah, and ° Ekron,

e 2 Sam. ii. 16.

f xi. i. xii. 20.

g xxi. 30. 1 Chr.

vi. 74. Mashal.

h 1 Kings xviii. 20.

i Cant. vii. 5. Is.

xxiii. 9. xxxv.

2. Jer. xvi. 18.

k 1 Kings ix. 13.

l See on 30.

m John ii. 1. 11.

n xi. 8. Judg. i.

31. Is. xxiii. 2.

4 12.

o Heb. Tzor.

2 Sam. v. 11. Is.

xxiii. Ez. xxvi.

xxvii, xxviii.

p Gen. xxxviii. 5.

Judg. i. 31. Mic.

i. 14.

q xii. 18. xiii. 4.

1 Sam. iv. 1.

1 Kings xx. 30.

28. xx. 31. Num.

xiii. 21.

r Gen. xlix. 20.

Deut. xxxiii. 24.

25.

Judg. iv. 11.

Zaanaim.

t Deut. xxxiii. 23.

u 12. 22.

x Gen. x. 18.

Num. xiii. 21.

xxxiv. 8. 1 Kings

vii. 65. Hamath.

xi. 2. Chinnereth.

xiii. 27. Mark vi.

53. Gennesaret.

z xi. 1. 10. xii. 19.

a xii. 22. xx. 7.

c xv. 33. Zorah.

Judg. xiii. 2. 25.

xvi. 31. xviii. 2.

1 Chr. ii. 53.

2 Chr. xi. 10.

d Judg. i. 35. Sha-

albin.

e x. 12. xxi. 24.

1 Sam. xiv. 31.

f Gen. xxxviii. 12.

Judg. xiv. 1. 2.

Timnath.

g xv. 45. 1 Sam. v.

10.

shore. (*Marg. Ref.*)—The nature of the case is sufficient to satisfy any person, upon reflection, that these accounts must to us be obscure, and particular explanations of them in great measure uncertain.

V. 24—31. (*Marg. Ref.*) The inheritance of Asher lay in the most northern part of the land; having Issachar on the south-east, the extremity of Manasseh on the south, and Zebulun and Naphtali on the east.—It seems to have formed an angle almost as far as Zidon; though Tyre, which is more to the south, was without its boundaries.—° Tyre, though not so old as Sidon, yet was of very high antiquity. It was a strong city in the time of Joshua; it is called *צִיִּר* “the city of the fortress of Sor” Josh. xix. 29. Interpreters raise difficulties in regard to this passage, and will not allow it to have been so ancient: with what good reason I do not see, for it is called by the same name, “the fortress of Sor,” in the history of David; (2 Sam. xxiv. 7;) and the circumstances of the history determine the place to be the very same. *Bp. Lowth on Is. xxiii. 7.*—Perhaps the Canaanites aided by the Zidonians, fortified Tyre, when first expelled by Joshua. (*Notes, x. 20. xi. 18. Is. xxiii. 4. 6, 7. Ez. xxvi. 3—6.*)—

Cabul seems to have been a city, and therefore distinct from the country thus called by Hiram king of Tyre: but it was in the same neighbourhood, and probably had its name for a similar reason. (1 Kings ix. 13. *marg.*)—There is a doubt, whether the Kanah, here mentioned, be the same place where Christ wrought his first miracle, or another city of the same name more to the north.

V. 32—39. (*Marg. Ref.*) The inheritance of Naphtali lay east of Asher; but it did not extend quite so far to the north. It bordered on Zebulun on the south and south-west, and reached to the lake of Gennesaret, or the sea of Tiberias.—It is not easy to determine what is meant by the clause “to Judah upon Jordan towards the sun-rising” (34); for the lot of Naphtali was far distant from Judah. But some suppose, that it communicated and traded with Judah by Jordan, the eastern border of the land.

V. 40—48. The inheritance of Dan lay on the north and north-west of Judah, as it is generally supposed; being taken, in part at least, from the country at first allotted to that tribe: for several of the cities here mentioned were numbered among those of Judah. (*Marg. Ref.*)

h xxi. 23. 1 Kings  
xv. 27. xvi. 15.  
i 1 Kings ix. 18.

44 And Eltekeh, and <sup>b</sup> Gibbethon,  
and <sup>i</sup> Baalath,

45 And Jehud, and Bene-berak, and  
<sup>i</sup> Gath-rimmon,

46 And Me-jarkon, and Rakkon,  
with the border <sup>\*</sup> before <sup>\*</sup> Japho.

\* Or, over against.  
† Or, Joppa. Jon.  
i. 3. Acts ix. 36.  
43. x. 8.  
k Judg. i. 34, 35.  
xviii. 1—29.

47 And <sup>k</sup> the coast of the children  
of Dan went out *too little* for them;  
therefore the children of Dan went up  
to fight against Leshem, and took it,  
and smote it with the edge of the  
sword, and possessed it, and dwelt  
therein, and called <sup>i</sup> Leshem, Dan, after  
the name of Dan their father.

l Judg. xviii.  
27. 29. Laish

48 This *is* the inheritance of the  
tribe of the children of Dan according  
to their families, these cities with their  
villages.

m Ez. xiv. 7, 8.

49 ¶ When they had made an end  
of dividing the land for inheritance by  
their coasts, the children of Israel <sup>m</sup> gave  
an inheritance to Joshua the son of  
Nun among them:

—It also bordered on Benjamin to the north-east, on Ephraim to the north, and on Simeon to the south. The country, possessed by the Philistines, seems in part to have belonged to the inheritance of Dan: and the clause rendered “the coast of Dan went out too little for them,” may mean, that the Danites were deprived of their country by the ancient inhabitants, and therefore had not a sufficient portion; and the following brief account of a transaction afterwards more fully recorded, was added to complete the description of the inheritance at length possessed by this tribe. Probably this occurred soon after the death of Joshua; and the addition to the narrative might be made by Phinehas. (*Judg. xx. 28. Notes, Judg. xviii.*)

V. 49, 50. Joshua waited till all the tribes were settled, before he required any provision for himself. It is probable, that the Lord had commanded the Israelites to give him an inheritance, at the time when he gave orders about Caleb: accordingly he desired to have Timnath-serah, which was not a city of great note, nor situated in the best of the land: but it lay in the lot of his own tribe, and not far from Shiloh where the ark of God was placed. Thus he closed all his great and memorable services, by an example of moderation, equity, piety, and industry in rebuilding the city assigned him, which does great honour to his character.—It does not appear that Joshua left any posterity.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If the true believer have entered into engagements, which are likely to prove injurious to him, he will not retract, nor disappoint those who confide in him: but if he have obtained an undue advantage in any contract, he will recede from it without murmuring, in compliance with the requisitions of equity and kindness. For “love seeketh not her own,” and “doth not behave unseemly.” (*Note, 1 Cor. xiii. 4—7.*)—They are most favoured in Providence,

50 According to the word of the  
LORD, they gave him the city which he  
asked, *even* <sup>n</sup> Timnath-serah in mount  
Ephraim: and he built the city, and  
dwelt therein.

n xxiv. 30. Judg.  
ii. 9. Timnath-  
heres. 1 Chr. vii.  
24.

51 <sup>\*</sup> These *are* the inheritances  
which Eleazar the priest, and Joshua  
the son of Nun, and the heads of the  
fathers of the tribes of the children of  
Israel, divided for an inheritance by  
lot, <sup>p</sup> in Shiloh before the LORD, at the  
door of the tabernacle of the congrega-  
tion. So they made an end of divid-  
ing the country.

o xiv. 1. Num.  
xxxiv. 17—29.  
Pa. xlvii. 3, 4.  
Matt. xx. 23.  
xxv. 34. John  
xiv. 2, 3. xvii. 2.  
Heb. iv. 6, 9.

p xviii. 1.

#### CHAP. XX.

God commands Joshua to appoint the cities of re-  
fuge, 1—6. Their names and situation, 7—9.

THE LORD also <sup>a</sup> spake unto Joshua,  
saying,

a v. 14. vi. 2. vil.  
10. xiii. 1—7.  
b Ez. xxi. 13, 14.  
Num. xxxv. 6  
11—14. Deut. iv.  
41—43. xix. 2—  
13. Rom. viii. 1.  
33, 34. Heb. vi.  
18, 19.

2 Speak to the children of Israel,  
saying, <sup>b</sup> Appoint out for you cities of

who are placed nearest to the sanctuary, and have most advantages, and the fewest hindrances, to the salvation of their souls; though they do not possess worldly influence or distinctions: and, as far as we have the choice referred to us, we should always decide by this rule. But a sovereign God dispenses his favours as he pleases; and one man has his habitation assigned him in “the valley of vision,” and another his “in the very region of the shadow of death;” “according to the good pleasure of his will.”—Disinterestedness and an unassuming deportment shed a peculiar lustre upon eminent characters: and they, who labour most to do good to others, will be indifferent about their own worldly interests, and willing to forego all things, rather than preclude themselves from the sweet pleasure of communicating felicity. An inheritance in the Canaan above they must and do covet; but it will be soon enough to enter upon that, when they have done all the service to their brethren, of which they are capable; nor can any thing more effectually assure them of their title to it than laying themselves out properly to bring others to desire, to seek, and to obtain possession of it. (*Note, Phil. i. 21—26.*)—But Jesus has far outdone all others, in this and in every other respect. “Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be rich.” He would not enter upon his inheritance, till by his obedience unto death, he had secured the eternal inheritance for all his people! nor will he account his own glory completed, until every ransomed sinner is put in possession of his heavenly rest.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1—6. As soon as the tribes of Israel had received their promised inheritance, they were reminded to separate the cities of refuge; the use and typical meaning of which have already been explained. (*Notes*

refuge; whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses:

3 That the slayer that killeth *any* person unawares *and* unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be <sup>c</sup> your refuge from the avenger of blood.

c Num. xxxv. 15  
—24.

d Ruth iv. 1, Job  
v. 4, xxix. 7, Jer.  
xxxviii. 7.

e Ps. xvi. 9.

4 And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities, shall stand <sup>d</sup> at the entering of the gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city; they shall <sup>e</sup> take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.

5 And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not before-time.

f Num. xxxv. 12,  
24, 25, Heb. ix.  
26.

6 And he shall dwell in that city, <sup>f</sup> until he stand before the congregation for judgment, *and* until the death of the high priest that shall be in those

days: then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.

7 ¶ And they <sup>g</sup> appointed <sup>h</sup> Kedesh in Galilee in mount Naphtali, and <sup>i</sup> Shechem in mount Ephraim, and <sup>j</sup> Kirjath-arba, (which is Hebron,) in the <sup>k</sup> mountain of Judah.

g Heb. sanctified.  
h xxi. 32. 1 Chr.  
vi. 76.

i xxi. 21. Gen  
xxxiii. 18, 19.  
2 Chr. x. 1.  
j xiv. 15 xxi. 11  
13.  
k Luke i. 39.

8 And on the other side Jordan, by Jericho eastward, they assigned <sup>l</sup> Bezer in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and <sup>m</sup> Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and <sup>n</sup> Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh.

l xxi. 36 Deut. iv.  
43. 1 Chr. vi. 78.

m xxi. 38. 1 Kings  
xxii. 3. 1 Chr. vi.  
80

n xxi. 27.

9 These were <sup>o</sup> the cities appointed for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth *any* person at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, <sup>p</sup> until he stood before the congregation.

o Num. xxxv. 15.

p See on 4. 6

Ex. xxi. 12—14. Num. xxxv. 11—34. Deut. xix. 2—10.) —When the manslayer arrived at the city of refuge, he passed a kind of trial, before he was taken under the protection of the elders; who, it seems, were allowed to exclude or apprehend him, if he were adjudged a wilful murderer. And afterwards he must stand in judgment before the congregation, or the magistrates; and if then condemned, he was to be delivered to the avenger of blood (9). This would prevent those abuses, which were generally made of sanctuaries among other nations, in which the most atrocious criminals found protection.—Few or none of those actions, which human laws punish capitally, can be done entirely without intention, except depriving a man of his life, which may be purely accidental, and not in the least criminal; and the avenger had no power, except against the man-slayer: so that the cities of refuge were appointed in this case alone.

V. 7—9. All these cities were afterwards assigned to the priests and Levites; (xxi. 11. 13. 21. 27. 32. 36. 38.) and they were most conveniently situated on each side of Jordan, and in all the different parts of the land.—As this institution was an evident type of the sinner's refuge from the deserved wrath of God, the signification of the names of these cities has been noticed by some expositors, with reference to the person, character, offices, and love of Christ. "Kedesh" signifies *holy*; and Jesus, the *Holy* One of God, is "made sanctification to us:" "Shechem," a *shoulder*; "and the government is upon his *shoulder*:" "Hebron," *fellowship*; and through him sinners have *fellowship* with God: "Bezer," a *strong-hold*; and "he is a *strong-hold* to those who trust in him:" "Ramoth," *exaltations*; and "he is *exalted* to be a Prince and Saviour:" and "Golan," *exultation*, or *joy*; and in him all believers are justified and *glory*, or *rejoice*.

701. 1.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We have cause to be thankful, that we have been preserved from the murderer's sword; and if we ourselves have not committed murder: for the violent passions of the human heart, instigated by Satan's temptations, naturally terminate in that horrid crime, if God withdraw his restraining hand. Nay, we owe it to His goodness, that we have not been deprived of life by another, even contrary to his intention; and if we have been preserved from the great calamity, of being the unwilling cause of death, even to our beloved friends and relations. The subject before us also warns us to pray, that we may be kept from sins and calamities of this distressing nature; and be made ready, if without warning we should be called into eternity.—No sanctuary should protect the wilful murderer, and no favour should on any account be shewn him: and no protection, assistance, or kindness can be too great, to be extended to the unfortunate man-slayer.—But let us again take occasion to bless our God for that Refuge, which he has prepared in his Son, for our guilty, perishing souls. They who flee to him by true and living faith, will be secured from all condemnation; yea, though they have committed the most atrocious crimes, not even excepting the worst of murders: (Notes, Acts xxvi. 9—11. 1 Tim. i. 12—16:) nor will any protection, instruction, sanctification, fellowship with God, or joy in him, be withheld from them. His power and presence will be their strong tower against all their enemies: nor will the exalted Saviour fail, in consequence of his own death, to restore all of them to their forfeited inheritance; nay, to exalt them to share his glory, in the presence of "his Father and their Father," of his God and their God." To him let sinners flee, before the sword of vengeance overtake them; for he is ever

4 S

## CHAP. XXI.

The Levites require their cities, 1, 2. Forty-eight from the other tribes are given them, 3—8. The cities of the priests, 9—19: of the other Kohathites, 20—26: of the Gershonites, 27—33: of the Merarites, 34—42. An acknowledgment, that the promise of God to Israel was fulfilled.

**THEN** came near <sup>a</sup>the heads of the fathers of the Levites unto <sup>b</sup>Eleazar the priest, and unto Joshua the son of Nun, and unto the heads of the fathers of the tribes of the children of Israel;

2 And they spake unto them at <sup>c</sup>Shiloh in the land of Canaan, saying, <sup>d</sup>The LORD commanded by the hand of Moses, to give us cities to dwell in, with the suburbs thereof for our cattle.

3 And the children of Israel gave <sup>e</sup>unto the Levites out of their inheritance, at the commandment of the LORD, these cities and their suburbs.

4 And the lot came out for the families of the Kohathites: and <sup>f</sup>the children of Aaron the priest, *which were* of the Levites, had by lot out of the tribe of Judah, and out of the tribe of Simeon, and out of the tribe of Benjamin, thirteen cities.

5 And <sup>g</sup>the rest of the children of Kohath *had* by lot out of the families of the tribe of Ephraim, and out of the

tribe of Dan, and out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, ten cities.

6 And the children of <sup>h</sup>Gershon *had* by lot out of the families of the tribe of Issachar, and out of the tribe of Asher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali, and out of the half-tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen cities.

7 The children of <sup>i</sup>Merari, by their families, *had* out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.

8 And the children of Israel gave <sup>j</sup>by lot unto the Levites these cities with their suburbs, <sup>k</sup>as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses.

9 ¶ And they gave out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, <sup>l</sup>these cities which are *here* <sup>m</sup>mentioned by name;

10 Which <sup>n</sup>the children of Aaron, *being* of the families of the Kohathites, *who were* of the children of Levi, had: for their's was the first lot.

11 And they gave them <sup>o</sup>the city of Arba, the father of Anak, (*which city* <sup>p</sup>is Hebron,) in the hill-country of Judah, with the suburbs thereof round about it.

12 But <sup>q</sup>the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, gave they to Caleb the son of Jephunneh, for his possession.

<sup>a</sup> xxx 51 Ex. vi. 14, 26.  
<sup>b</sup> xxxv. 1. xviii. 4. Num. xxxiv. 17—29.

<sup>c</sup> See on xviii. 1.

<sup>d</sup> Num. xxxv. 2—8. Ez. xlviii. 9—18. Matt x 10. Gal. vi. 6. 1 Tim. v. 17, 18

<sup>e</sup> Gen. xlix 7. Deut. xxxiii. 8—10. 1 Chr. vi. 54—81.

<sup>f</sup> 9—19. 1 Chr. vi. 54—60

<sup>g</sup> 20—26. Gen. xlii 11. Ex. vi. 16—25. Num. iii. 27. 1 Chr. vi. 18, 19. 61. 66—70.

near, and he hath said, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." In him let believers abide, hope, and rejoice; and may we all love, obey, and imitate him, more and more. (Note, Heb. vi. 16—20.)

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1, 2. The Levites had waited, till all the other tribes were provided for and were about to separate, before they preferred their claim. They had received no inheritance of land among their brethren; and they were therefore as justly entitled to the tithes, first-fruits, and holy things, and to forty-eight cities with their suburbs for their habitation, as the other Israelites were to their lands. (Note, Num. xxxv. 2—8.) The cities, however, were made conducive to the common benefit of the nation; as the Levites were thus dispersed in every part, to instruct and edify the people by their doctrine and example; and also as watchmen, to restrain idolatry, and to provide for the punishment of those who were notoriously guilty of it: and as it was their interest, as well as duty, to retain the people in the worship of JEHOVAH alone, this was a very suitable expedient. It is probable, from the subsequent history, that others lived in these cities besides

the Levites, as their tenants, for the advantage of their instructions, or to carry on trades. Thus the Levites were plentifully provided for, as long as the people adhered to the worship of God, and respected his commandments; but liable to be deprived of their provision, if the people apostatized. (Note, 2 Chr. xi. 13—17.)

V. 3—5. When the proper number of cities had been given by the several tribes, the families of the Levites cast lots for them: and the first lot fell to that of Aaron, not in the neighbourhood of Shiloh, where the ark was then placed, but in that of Jerusalem, where the temple was built above four hundred years afterwards. (Note, 1 Kings vi. 1.)—The rest of the Kohathites also had their cities not far from their brethren. (9—26.)—The family of Aaron could not at this time be very numerous, though it had greatly increased since his appointment to the priesthood; yet thirteen cities were allotted to it as a patrimony, in the divine foreknowledge of its future enlargement: for we have reason to think, that no other family increased so much in proportion, after Israel's departure from Egypt, as that of Aaron.

V. 6—8. Marg. Ref.

V. 11, 12. Either the city was not included with the

13 Thus they gave to the children of Aaron the priests, Hebron with her suburbs, *to be* <sup>a</sup> a city of refuge for the slayer, and <sup>a</sup> Libnah with her suburbs,

14 And <sup>a</sup> Jattir with her suburbs, and <sup>a</sup> Eshtemoa with her suburbs,

15 And <sup>a</sup> Holon with her suburbs, and <sup>a</sup> Debir with her suburbs,

16 And <sup>a</sup> Ain with her suburbs, and <sup>a</sup> Juttah with her suburbs, and <sup>a</sup> Bethshemesh with her suburbs: nine cities out of those two tribes.

17 And out of the tribe of Benjamin, <sup>a</sup> Gibeon with her suburbs, <sup>b</sup> Geba with her suburbs,

18 <sup>a</sup> Anathoth with her suburbs, and <sup>a</sup> Almon with her suburbs, four cities.

19 All the cities of the children of Aaron, the priests, *were* thirteen cities with their suburbs.

20 ¶ And <sup>a</sup> the families of the children of Kohath, the Levites which remained of the children of Kohath, even they had the cities of their lot out of the tribe of Ephraim.

21 For they gave them Shechem with her suburbs in mount Ephraim, *to be* a city of refuge for the slayer; and <sup>a</sup> Gezer with her suburbs.

22 And Kibzaim with her suburbs, and <sup>b</sup> Beth-horon with her suburbs: four cities.

23 And out of the tribe of Dan, <sup>a</sup> Eltekeh with her suburbs, Gibbethon with her suburbs,

24 <sup>a</sup> Aijalon with her suburbs, Gath-rimmon with her suburbs: four cities.

25 And out of the half-tribe of Manasseh, <sup>a</sup> Taanach with her suburbs, and Gath-rimmon with her suburbs: two cities.

26 All the cities *were* ten, with their suburbs, for the families of the children of Kohath that remained.

27 ¶ And unto the children of Gershon, of the families of the Levites, out of the *other* half-tribe of Manasseh, *they gave* <sup>a</sup> Golan in Bashan with her suburbs, *to be* a city of refuge for the slayer; and Beeshterah with her suburbs: two cities.

28 And out of the tribe of Issachar, Kishon with her suburbs, <sup>a</sup> Dabareh with her suburbs,

29 <sup>a</sup> Jarmuth with her suburbs, Engannim with her suburbs: four cities.

30 And out of the tribe of Asher, <sup>a</sup> Mishal with her suburbs, Abdon with her suburbs,

31 Helkath with her suburbs, and Rehob with her suburbs: four cities.

32 And out of the tribe of Naphtali, <sup>a</sup> Kedesh in Galilee with her suburbs, *to be* a city of refuge for the slayer; and <sup>a</sup> Hammoth-dor with her suburbs, and Kartan with her suburbs: three cities.

33 All the cities of the Gershonites, according to their families, *were* thirteen cities with their suburbs.

34 ¶ And unto the families of the children of Merari, the rest of the Levites, out of the tribe of Zebulun, <sup>a</sup> Jokneam with her suburbs, and Kartah with her suburbs,

35 Dimnah with her suburbs, Nahalal with her suburbs: four cities.

36 And out of the tribe of Reuben, <sup>a</sup> Bezer with her suburbs, and <sup>a</sup> Jahazah with her suburbs,

37 Kedemoth with her suburbs, and Mephaath with her suburbs: four cities.

38 And out of the tribe of Gad, <sup>a</sup> Ramoth in Gilead with her suburbs, *to be* a city of refuge for the slayer; and <sup>a</sup> Mahanaim with her suburbs,

39 <sup>a</sup> Heshbon with her suburbs,

f xx. 7. Num.  
xxxv. 6.  
q x. 29. xv. 42.  
1 Chr. vi. 57. 1a.  
xxxvii. 8.  
r xv. 48. 1 Sam.  
xxx. 27, 28.  
s xv. 50. Eshtemoa.  
t xv. 51. 1 Chr. vi.  
58. Hilem.  
u xii. 13. xv. 49.  
v xv. 42. 1 Chr. vi.  
59. Ashan.  
y xv. 55.  
z xv. 10. 1 Sam.  
i. 9, 12. 1 Chr.  
vi. 59.

a ix. 2. xviii. 25.  
1 Chr. vi. 60.  
b xviii. 24. Geba.

c 1 Kings ii. 26.  
1a x. 30. Jer. i. 4.  
d 1 Chr. vi. 60.  
diemeth.

e 5. 1 Chr. vi. 66.

f xx. 7. Gen. xxxiii.  
19. Judg. ix. 1.  
1 Kings xii. 1.

g xvi. 10. 1 Kings  
ix. 15—17. 1 Chr.  
vi. 67.

h xvi. 3. s xviii.  
13. 14. 1 Chr.  
vi. 68.

i xix. 44, 45.

k x. 12. xix. 42.  
Aijalon. 1 Chr.  
vi. 69.

l xvii. 11. Judg. v.  
19.

m xx. 8. Deut. 1.  
4. iv. 48. 1 Chr.  
vi. 71.

n xix. 12. 1 Chr.  
vi. 73, 75.

o x. 3. 23. xii. 11.

p xix. 25—28. Mf-  
sheal. 1 Chr. vi.  
74, 75. Mashal.

q xix. 37. xx. 7.  
1 Chr. vi. 76.

r xix. 35. Ham-  
math.

s xii. 22. xix. 11.  
16.

t xx. 8. Deut. iv.  
43. 1 Chr. vi. 78,  
79. Jahzah.  
u xiii. 18. Num.  
xxi. 23.

x xx. 8. 1 Kings  
xxii. 8. 1 Chr.  
vi. 80.  
y Gen. xxxii. 2.  
2 Sam. xvii. 24.  
xix. 52.  
z xii. 17, 21. Num.  
xxi. 26—30.  
xxii. 37. 1 Chr.  
vi. 81.

territory of Hebron, in the grant made to Caleb; or, as it is more probable, he willingly gave it to the priests, that he might set an example to his brethren of cheerfully contributing to the maintenance of religion. (Note, xiv. 6—15.)

V. 13—24. Marg. Ref.

V. 25. Aner and Bileam are mentioned in Chronicles, instead of Taanach and Gath-rimmon. (1 Chr. vi. 70.)—Either the cities had at this time different names, or afterwards their names were changed; or the Levites, being by some means dispossessed of the cities first assigned them,

received others from their brethren.—A careful examination of the marginal references will discover several other variations of this kind, which may be accounted for in the same manner. (1 Chr. vi. 54—81.)

V. 27—33. Marg. Ref.

V. 34, 35. Only two are mentioned in Chronicles, and they have different names. (1 Chr. vi. 77.) Probably the Levites had been deprived of those allotted to them at first, and had afterwards two others given them in their stead.

V. 36—40. Marg. Ref.

<sup>a</sup> Num. xxxii. 1. <sup>a</sup> Jazer with her suburbs: four cities in all.  
<sup>b</sup> 8b. Jazer is. xxi. 8, 9. Jer. xliii. 32.

40 So all the cities for the children of Merari, by their families, which were remaining of the families of the Levites, were by their lot, twelve cities.

41 All the cities of the Levites, <sup>b</sup> within the possession of the children of Israel were forty and eight cities with their suburbs.  
<sup>b</sup> Gen. xlix. 7. <sup>b</sup> in. xxxv. 1—<sup>c</sup> Deut. xxxiii. 10.

42 These cities were every one with their suburbs round about them; thus were all these cities.

43 ¶ And the LORD gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give unto their fathers: and they possessed it, and dwelt therein.

44 And <sup>d</sup> the LORD gave them rest round about, according to all that he swore unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hand.

45 There <sup>e</sup> failed not ought of any good thing which the LORD had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.

<sup>c</sup> Gen. xii. 7. xvi. 15. xv. 18—21. xxi. 3, 4. xxxiii. 4, 13, 14. Ex. xxi. 8. xxvii. 27—31. Ps. xlii. 3. cvi. 42—45.

<sup>d</sup> 1. 15. xl. 23. xxii. 4. 9. Deut. vii. 22, 23. xxxi. 3—5. Heb. iv. 9.

<sup>e</sup> xxiii. 14, 15. Num. xxiii. 19. 1 Kings vii. 56. 1 Cor. i. 1. 1 Thes. v. 24. Tit. i. 2. Heb. vi. 18.

V. 41, 42. 'So God ordered by Moses, Num. xxxv. 7. And it is a demonstration, that Moses was divinely inspired, to make such an appointment: before they knew whether, without straitening the other tribes, they could afford so many cities to the Levites.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 43—45. This acknowledgment of the faithfulness of God to his promises, was a very becoming conclusion to the history of the conquest and division of the land. For wise and gracious reasons, some of the Canaanites were permitted to continue among the Israelites; but at this time they gave them no molestation: nor would they have ever made head against them, but on the contrary they would soon have been exterminated, had not the people provoked the Lord to employ them for chastisement, as we shall read in the subsequent history. When, however, the several tribes and families had settled in their estates, and cultivated them without disturbance; every particular of the Lord's promises, on that head, had been punctually fulfilled.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The maintenance of the ministers of religion should be considered, as required by the command of God, and not as a matter of mere choice or discretion. They "who labour in the word and doctrine," have as good a title to a comfortable support, as other men have to their estates; and on some occasions must be allowed, without censure, to assert their claim against such as would defraud them: but this should always be done with evident reluctance as a matter of necessity; and with a willingness to refer themselves to the arbitration of impartial persons. And, in ordinary cases, it more accords to the examples of the New Testament, when they choose to "suffer all things," rather than to take any steps which may impede the success of their labours. Yet this excellent spirit in faithful ministers, is so far from excusing those who defraud them, that it greatly aggravates their sin.—It is very desirable that all the temporal concerns, relating to this sacred function, should be amicably settled, and arranged in such a manner, as to subserve its grand object; to occasion to the clergy as few avocations, temptations, or discouragements as may be; and to afford them every advantage of access to the people; that they may exhort, instruct, and reprove them, without falling under their contempt,

or dreading their displeasure.—As on this extraordinary occasion, the cities of the priests and Levites were assigned them immediately by God himself, through the casting of lots; so, in ordinary cases, every one should consider his station as determined by divine Providence, and should cheerfully continue to perform the duties of it, though he seem to have more discouragements and inconveniences than the rest of his brethren; and not venture to remove, till satisfied, after serious consideration, prayer, and consultation of his pious friends and seniors, that the Lord calls him to another place.—Happy is the land where faithful ministers of Christ are to be met with in every district! The people will not be impoverished by maintaining them: nor will they in general much complain in this respect; so long as ministers diligently apply themselves to dispel ignorance and error, and to diffuse the light of divine truth; to stop the progress of immorality, and promote the practice of universal holiness; and, by their doctrine, influence, example, and prayers, to render all within their sphere more wise, holy, and happy.—Persons of eminence should take the lead in every good work, that their examples may excite others; always remembering, that pre-eminence in real usefulness is the most valuable distinction.—In due season, all the promises of God will be accomplished to his true people: and their believing hope, and patient waiting, and self-denying obedience, will terminate in joyful songs of triumph, and thankful celebrations of his faithfulness, love, and power. Then will it be universally acknowledged that "there hath not failed ought of any good thing, which the LORD had spoken;" nay, that he has exceeded their largest expectations, and made them more than conquerors, and brought them to their delightful rest and inheritance. May none of us at that season be found among his enemies, "who shall be destroyed for ever!"—Let no true believer despond, because of delays, tribulations, and temptations; for God has confirmed his promise and covenant "with an oath," that we might have a strong consolation, who have fled "for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us." Let us then beg of him to enable us to confide in him entirely, to obey him unreservedly, and to wait for him patiently; for we have need of patience, that "after we have done the will of God, we might receive the promise." (*Note, Heb. vi. 11—20. P. O. 13—20. Jam. v. 7, 8.*)

## CHAP. XXII.

Joshua dismisses Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh, with his commendation, counsel, and blessing; and with a large booty, 1—9. They build an altar of testimony near Jordan; at which the other tribes are offended, prepare for war, and send to expostulate with them, 10—20. They explain and vindicate their conduct, to the satisfaction of their brethren, 21—33. The name of the altar, or the inscription on it, 34.

**THEN** <sup>a</sup>Joshua called the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh,

2 And <sup>b</sup>said unto them, <sup>b</sup>Ye have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, and have <sup>a</sup>obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you:

3 Ye <sup>d</sup>have not left your brethren these many days unto this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the LORD your God.

4 And now the LORD your God hath <sup>e</sup>given rest unto your brethren, as he promised them: therefore now return ye, and <sup>f</sup>get you unto your tents, and unto the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side Jordan.

5 But <sup>g</sup>take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, <sup>h</sup>to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to <sup>i</sup>cleave unto

him, and to <sup>k</sup>serve him with all your heart, and with all your soul.

6 So Joshua <sup>l</sup>blessed them, and sent them away: and they went unto their tents.

7 Now <sup>m</sup>to the *one* half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given *possession* in Bashan; but unto the *other* half thereof gave Joshua among their brethren on this side Jordan westward. And when Joshua sent them away also unto their tents, then he blessed them;

8 And he spake unto them, saying, <sup>n</sup>Return with much riches unto your tents, and with very much cattle, with silver, and with gold, and with brass, and with iron, and with very much raiment: <sup>o</sup>divide the spoil of your enemies with your brethren.

9 And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, returned, and departed from the children of Israel out of Shiloh, which *is* in the land of Canaan, to go unto <sup>p</sup>the country of Gilead, to the land of their possession, whereof they were possessed, according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses.

10 ¶ And when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that *are* in the land of Canaan, the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, <sup>q</sup>built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1—4. The detachment of the two tribes and a half had been absent from home seven years at least; except as any of them had visited their families, or been exchanged for others of their brethren. During this long war they had been very obedient to Joshua: and they did not attempt to return, till it was ended, the land divided, and their brethren settled; and then Joshua honourably dismissed them. (*Notes*, i. 12—18. iv. 12, 13.)

V. 5. The sacred writer does not record any instructions, given by Joshua to this company, concerning civil government, or military discipline, or the cultivation of their lands: for nothing was deemed worthy of insertion in the sacred volume, but what had some relation to religion.—Perfect obedience to the divine law was no more practicable in the days of Joshua, than at present: yet his exhortation takes no notice of this; for the standard of obedience cannot be too perfect, (*Note*, Matt. v. 43—48,) and our aim cannot be too high; since we are sure to fall very short of what we propose to ourselves. (*Notes*, Rom. vii. 13—25. Phil. iii. 12—14.) But the consciousness of

our imperfections subverts the purposes of humiliation; and the feeling of our insufficiency dictates fervent prayers for forgiveness and assistance.

V. 6, 7. Joshua blessed his brethren, when he parted with them: that is, he expressed his affectionate goodwill to them by earnest prayers, and by pronouncing a blessing on them; which was done by princes and others, on some occasions, and not by the priests alone, though by them most solemnly. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, Gen. xiv. 18—20. xlvii. 7. Num. vi. 23—26. 2 Chr. xxx. 26, 27.)—The separate mention made of the Manassites, (descended from Joseph, the progenitor of Joshua,) who were now leaving their brethren, induces some expositors to conclude that he blessed them apart, and gave them presents, as a token of affection and remembrance.

V. 8, 9. *Notes*, xiii. 7—33. Num. xxxii. 16—42. Deut. iii. 12—22.—*Divide*, &c. (8) *Note*, 1 Sam. xxx. 22—25.

V. 10. This altar must have been situated to the east of Jordan, in the inheritance of the two tribes and a half: as it could not otherwise have answered the end for which it was erected; (*Note*, 21—29;) or indeed have excited the suspicion of their brethren, that they meant to esta-

<sup>a</sup> See on Num. xxxii. 18—33. Deut. xxix. 7, 8.

<sup>b</sup> Num. xxxii. 20—29. Deut. iii. 18—20.

<sup>c</sup> i. 12—18.

<sup>d</sup> Phil. i. 23—27.

<sup>e</sup> See on xxi. 43. 44. Deut. xii. 9. xiii. 8. 15—33. xxi. 1—5. Num. xxxii. 33—42. Deut. iii. 1—17. xxix. 8.

<sup>f</sup> See on Deut. iv. 1, 2. 6. 9—vi. 6—9. 17. xi. 22. Ex. xv. 26. 1 Chr. xxviii. 7, 8. Ps. cvi. 3. cxix. 4—6. Prov. iv. 23. Ia. iv. 2. Jer. xii. 16. Heb. vi. 11, 12. xii. 18. 2 Pet. i. 5—10.

<sup>g</sup> Ex. xx. 6. Deut. vi. 5. x. 12, 13. xi. 1. 13. Matt. xxii. 37. John xiv. 15. 21—23. xxi. 15—17. Rom. viii. 28. Jam. i. 12. ii. 5. 1 John v. 2, 3. i. xxviii. 8. Deut. iv. 4. x. 20. xiii. 4. Acts xi. 23. Rom. xii. 9.

<sup>k</sup> xxiv. 14, 15. 1 Sam. vii. 8. xii. 20. Matt. iv. 10. vi. 24. Luke i. 74. John xii. 28. Acts xxvii. 23. Rom. i. 9. 7. 8. xiv. 13. Gen. xiv. 19. xlvii. 7. 10. Ex. xxxix. 43. 1 Sam. ii. 20. 2 Sam. vi. 18. 20. 2 Chr. xxx. 18. Luke xxiv. 50. Heb. vi. 6, 7. m xiii. 29—31. xvii. 1—12.

<sup>n</sup> Deut. viii. 9. 18. 17. 18. 2 Chr. xvii. 5. xxxii. 27. Prov. iii. 16. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Heb. xi. 28.

<sup>o</sup> Num. xxxi. 27. 1 Sam. xxx. 24. Ps. lxxviii. 12.

<sup>p</sup> xlii. 11. 25. 31. Num. xxxii. 29. 33. 40. Deut. iii. 15. 16. Ps. lx. 7.

<sup>q</sup> 25—28. iv. 6—9. xxiv. 29. 27. Gen. xxviii. 18. xxxi. 46—52.

<sup>r</sup> Lev. xvii. 8, 9.  
Deut. xii. 5-7.  
xiii. 12-14.

11 And the children of Israel 'heard say, Behold, the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, have built an altar over against the land of Canaan, in the borders of Jordan, 'at the passage of the children of Israel.

<sup>s</sup> 11. 7. iii. 14-16.  
Judg. xii. 5.  
John i. 28.

12 And when the children of Israel heard *of it*, 'the whole congregation of the children of Israel gathered themselves together at Shiloh, to go up to war against them.

<sup>v</sup> Deut. xiii. 14.  
Judg. xx. 12.  
Prov. xx. 18.  
Matt. xviii. 15.

13 And the children of Israel 'sent unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half-tribe of Manasseh, into the land of Gilead, 'Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest;

<sup>x</sup> Ex. vi. 25. Num. xxv. 7, 11. Judg. xx. 28. Ps. cvi. 30, 31. Prov. xxv. 9-13.

14 And with him ten princes, of each 'chief house a prince, throughout all the tribes of Israel, and each one *was* 'an head of the house of their fathers among the thousands of Israel.

blish a schismatical worship in their own country, instead of attending at the tabernacle with the other tribes. Yet the verse as we read it, conveys the idea, that it was erected to the west of Jordan: but the clause rendered "in the land of Canaan," may be translated, "by the land of Canaan;" and the words "over against the land of Canaan," in the next verse, shew this to be the proper rendering.—On returning home, these victorious soldiers, and faithful assistants of their brethren, did not attempt to erect any trophy, on which to record their own exploits; but they desired to form a monument, that should prove to future ages their relation to the other tribes, their interest in the sacrifices and worship of God at his sanctuary, and their right, with that of their posterity, to join in all the ordinances there administered. For these purposes they built a very large altar, which might be seen at a great distance, exactly in the shape of the altar of Shiloh.—They would have acted more prudently, if they had previously consulted the Lord, or explained their intention to Joshua, Eleazar, and the elders: but, as they approved themselves upright, we do not find their indiscretion censured. (Notes, 21-34.)

V. 12-16. The command of God was express, that no sacrifices should be offered except at the door of the tabernacle; and building another altar seemed to imply an intention of offering sacrifices, which might prove a step to apostasy and idolatry, crimes to be punished by death, without respect to affinity or to numbers. (Notes, Deut. xiii.)—Though the supposed criminals were brethren, and had been very faithful and serviceable to the other tribes; yet zeal for the honour of God and religion swallowed up all inferior regards, and they prepared to unite their arms against the offenders. But they were too precipitate; and they seem to have convened at Shiloh rather in an angry spirit, as if eager to be engaged in so horrid a warfare.

15 And they came unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the half-tribe of Manasseh, unto the land of Gilead, and they spake with them, saying,

16 Thus saith 'the whole congregation of the LORD, What 'trespass is this that ye have committed against the God of Israel, 'to turn away this day from following the LORD, in that ye have builded you an altar, that ye might 'rebel this day against the LORD?

17 'Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, 'from which we are not cleansed until this day, although there was a plague in the congregation of the LORD,

18 But that ye must turn away this day from 'following the LORD? And it will be, *seeing* ye rebel to-day against the LORD, that to-morrow 'he will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel.

Even if sacrifices had been offered, it would have been too rigorous, to punish the action as *idolatry*: and in this *extreme case*, they were commanded to make diligent search, and to proceed on nothing short of absolute certainty. (Deut. xiii. 14.)—When however the elders were assembled at Shiloh, the wisdom and authority of Joshua, Eleazar, and others, seem to have tempered their zeal; and they resolved previously to attempt the recovery of the offenders by more lenient measures. They therefore determined to send an embassy; Phinehas, whose zeal had before been so signalized, being placed at the head of it: and having obtained an audience, he and his associates delivered their embassy in very plain terms, which indeed appear rather severe; but on that very account they the more aptly denote, how much the people were engaged in the cause of God and religion; and how fully satisfied, that the law of Moses was indeed enacted by the express authority of God.

V. 17, 18. The disgrace of the crime committed by the Israelites with the Midianitish women, and in worshipping Baal-peor, still lay upon them: and the tokens of divine displeasure were yet felt among them, notwithstanding the plague which destroyed many thousands: or rather the words may imply, that there were many individuals who had never truly repented of that wickedness, but yet lay under the guilt of it, and were disposed to renew their provocation. (Notes, Num. xxv.) In short, the fire had been smothered up, but was not totally extinguished; and it was therefore very dangerous to admit of any thing, which might give it an occasion of breaking forth again, lest still wider devastation should ensue.—Baal-peor lay near the lot of these tribes.

And it will be, &c. (18) 'Their pious fear, lest God 'should be offended, made them immediately fall into this 'vehement expostulation.' Bp. Patrick.

y 12. Matt. xviii.  
17. 1 Cor. i. 10.  
v. 4. Gal. i. 1, 2.  
z Lev. v. 19. xxvi.  
40. Num. v. 6.  
1 Chr. xxi. 3.  
2 Chr. xxvi. 18.  
xxviii. 13. Ezra  
ix. 2. 15. Matt. vi.  
14, 15.  
18. Ex. xxxii. 8.  
Num. xiv. 43.  
xxii. 15. Deut.  
vii. 4. xxx. 17.  
2 Chr. x. 19.  
xxv. 27. Heb.  
xii. 25.  
1. Lev. xvii. 8, 9.  
Deut. xii. 4-6.  
13. 14. 1 Sam.  
xv. 23. Ps.  
lxxviii. 8. 1a.  
lxxix. 10.  
Num. xxv. 3, 4.  
Deut. iv. 8, 4.  
Ps. cvi. 24, 28.  
d Ezra ix. 13, 14.  
1 Cor. x. 8, 11.  
e See on 16.—  
Deut. vii. 4.  
1 Sam. xii. 14.  
20. 1 Kings ix.  
6. 2 Kings xvii.  
21. 2 Chr. xxv.  
27. xxxiv. 33.  
20. vii. 1, 11, 12.  
Num. xvi. 22.  
2 Sam. xxiv. 1.  
1 Chr. xxi. 1. 14.

19 Notwithstanding, if the land of your possession be <sup>a</sup>unclean, then pass ye over unto the land of the possession of the LORD, <sup>b</sup>wherein the LORD's tabernacle dwelleth, and take possession among us: but rebel not against the LORD, nor rebel against us, in building you an altar beside the altar of the LORD our God.

20 Did not <sup>1</sup>Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on the congregation of Israel? and that man perished not alone in his iniquity.

21 ¶ Then the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh <sup>1</sup>answered, and said unto the <sup>k</sup>heads of the thousands of Israel,

22 The <sup>1</sup>LORD God of gods, the LORD God of gods, <sup>m</sup>he knoweth, and <sup>n</sup>Israel he shall know; <sup>o</sup>if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the LORD, (save us not this day.)

23 That we have built us an altar to turn from following the LORD, or if to offer thereon burnt-offering, or meat-offering, or if to offer peace-offerings thereon, <sup>p</sup>let the LORD himself require it:

24 And if we have not *rather* done it <sup>q</sup>for fear of *this* thing; saying, "In time to come your children might speak unto our children, saying, What

have ye to do with the LORD God of Israel?"

25 For the LORD hath made Jordan a border between us and you, ye children of Reuben and children of Gad; <sup>r</sup>ye have no part in the LORD: so shall your children <sup>s</sup>make our children cease from fearing the LORD.

26 Therefore we said, Let us now prepare to build us an altar, not for burnt-offering, nor for sacrifice:

27 But *that* it may be <sup>t</sup>a witness between us and you, and our generations after us, <sup>u</sup>that we might do the service of the LORD before him with our burnt-offerings, and with our sacrifices, and with our peace-offerings; that your children may not say to our children in time to come, Ye have no part in the LORD.

28 Therefore said we, that it shall be, when they should *so* say to us, or to our generations in time to come, that we may say *again*, <sup>v</sup>Behold the pattern of the altar of the LORD, which our fathers made, not for burnt-offerings, nor for sacrifices, but it is a witness between us and you.

29 <sup>w</sup>God forbid that we should rebel against the LORD, and turn this day from following the LORD, <sup>x</sup>to build an altar for burnt-offerings, for meat-offerings, or for sacrifices, beside the altar of the LORD our God that is before his tabernacle.

g Ex. xv. 17. Lev. xviii. 25-28. Amos vii. 17. Acts x. 14, 15. xi. 8, 9.

h xviii. 1. Lev. xvii. 8, 9. Deut. xii. 5, 6. 2 Chr. xi. 13, 16, 17.

i 19. vii. 1. 5, 18. 24. 1 Cor. x. 6. 2 Pet. ii. 6. Jude 3, 6.

j Prov. xv. 1. xvi. 1. xvi. 13. xxiv. 26. Acts xi. 4. Jam. i. 19. 1 Pet. iii. 15.

k Ex. xviii. 21-25. Mic. v. 2.

l Ex. xviii. 11. Deut. x. 17. Ps. lxxxii. 1. xcv. 3. xcvi. 7. cxxxvii. 2. Dan. ii. 47. xi. 36. 1 Tim. vi. 16. Rev. xix. 16.

m 1 Kings viii. 39. Job x. 7. xxi. 10. Ps. vii. 3. xiv. 21. cxxxix. 1-4. Jer. xii. 3. xvii. 10. John ii. 26. xxi. 17. Acts i. 24. 2 Cor. xi. 11. 31. Heb. iv. 13. Rev. ii. 23.

n Ps. xxxvii. 6. Mic. vii. 9. Mal. iii. 18. Acts x. 2-18. 2 Cor. v. 11.

o Job xxxi. 5-8. 39-40. Ps. vii. 3-5. Acts xxv. 11.

p Gen. ix. 8. Deut. xviii. 19. 1 Sam. xx. 16. 2 Chr. xxiv. 22. Ps. x. 13, 14. Ez. iii. 18. xxxiii. 6, 8.

q Gen. xvi. 19. Heb. To-morrow. iv. 6. Gen. xxx. 33. Ez. xiii. 14. Deut. vi. 20. Margins.

27. 2 Sam. xx. 1. 1 Kings xii. 16. Ezra iv. 2, 3. Neh. ii. 20. Acts viii. 21.

1 Sam. xxvi. 19. 1 Kings xii. 27. —30. xiv. 16. xv. 30.

10. 34. xxiv. 27. Gen. xxxi. 48. 52. 1 Sam. vii. 12. Deut. xii. 5, 6. 11, 17, 18, 26, 27.

Ex. xxv. 40. 2 Kings xv. 10. Ez. xlii. 10. Heb. viii. 5.

xxiv. 16. Gen. xlv. 7. 17. 1 Sam. xii. 28. Rom. iii. 6. vi. 2. ix. 14.

23. 26. Deut. xii. 13, 14. 2 Kings xviii. 22. 2 Chr. xxxii. 12.

V. 19. This proposal displayed, in a very affecting manner, the piety and disinterestedness of Israel. They had reproved their brethren sharply, and were prepared to wage war against them with their whole force, if the glory of God and religion required it; yet they loved them with so generous an affection, that they would rather divide their estates with them, than be under this painful necessity! If then Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh deemed their inheritance polluted, because they had in it no altar on which to offer expiatory sacrifices, before which other sacred ordinances might be administered, as the appointed means of rendering their possessions and employments pure and holy; and on that consideration had been induced to transgress the commandment of God; the other tribes would cheerfully relinquish a proportion of their inheritances in Canaan, to make room for them, rather than leave them to persist in this ruinous expedient. (Note, 2 Chr. xi. 13-17.)

V. 20. The thirty-six men who were slain before Ai, and all the family of Achan, had perished with him in his iniquity: and wrath would have come upon the whole

congregation, had he not been punished. If then one man's sin wrought so much indignation, what would be the consequences of the apostasy of two tribes and a half? (Notes, vii.)

V. 21-29. This answer of the Reubenites, and the other tribes concerned, is well worthy of admiration. They took in good part the suspicions, reproofs, and even harshness of their brethren; and did not object to the authority of the elders at Shiloh, or even to the terms in which the ambassadors had delivered their message: but, with the utmost solemnity and meekness, they explained their intention, and gave all the satisfaction in their power. They appealed to the Lord, against whom they were supposed to have rebelled, with great propriety and reverence. The titles, by which they addressed him, "The LORD God of gods, the LORD God of gods," formed a very proper confession of their faith; as well as an act of worship to him, the eternal, almighty God, who was exalted far above all creatures however great, and even those which other nations worshipped as their gods, being sole "Lord of all." This glorious God knew, and Israel would

30 ¶ And when Phinehas the priest, and the princes of the congregation, and heads of the thousands of Israel, which *were* with him, heard the words that the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and the children of Manasseh spake, *it* pleased them.

31 And Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the priest, said unto the children of Reuben, and to the children of Gad, and to the children of Manasseh, This day we perceive that *b* the LORD is among us, because ye have not committed this trespass against the LORD: *†* now ye have delivered the children of Israel out of the hand of the LORD.

32 And Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the priest, and the princes, returned from the children of Reuben, and from the children of Gad, out of the land of Gilead, unto the land of Canaan, to the children of Israel, *c* and brought them word again.

33 And *d* the thing pleased the children of Israel; and the children of Israel *e* blessed God, and did not intend to go up against them in battle, to destroy the land wherein the children of Reuben and Gad dwelt.

34 And the children of Reuben and the children of Gad called the altar *†* Ed: for it *shall be* a witness between us that the LORD is God.

*a* 23. Judg. viii. 3.  
1 Sam. xxv. 32.  
Prov. xv. 1.  
Acts xi. 18.  
Heb. was good  
in their eyes.  
Gen. xxviii. 8.  
1 Sam. xxix. 6.  
2 Chr. xxx. 4.  
Ezra. i. 21.  
Margins.

*b* See on iii. 10.  
Lev. xxvi. 11, 12.  
Num. xiv. 41—  
43. 2 Chr. xv. 2.  
Ps. lxxviii. 17. 1a.  
xlii. 6. Zech. viii.  
23. Matt. i. 23.  
*†* Heb. then.

*c* 12—14. Prov.  
xxv. 13

*d* See on 30. Acts  
xv. 12, 31. 2 Cor.  
vii. 7. 1 Thes.  
iii. 6—8.

*e* 1 Sam. xxv. 32,  
33. 1 Chr. xxx.  
20. Neh. viii. 5,  
6. Dan. ii. 19.  
Luke ii. 28.

*†* That is, A wit-  
ness.—See on  
27.—xxiv. 27  
1 Kings xviii.  
39. Is. xliii. 10.  
Matt. iv. 10.

know by their subsequent conduct, that they were not guilty of the things with which they were charged: and indeed if they could be proved guilty, they acknowledged that they did not deserve, and therefore did not ask, to be spared. (Note, Ps. vii. 3—5.) They further declared, that their motives, in erecting this altar, were directly contrary to those which had been imputed to them. For they were anxiously afraid, lest in process of time, the other tribes should not own them as brethren, or admit them to the ordinances of the Lord, and to his sanctuary: and lest their posterity, by reason of the distance, or their slackness in attending the solemn feasts, should at length be excluded as gentiles, and thus be tempted and gradually decline to idolatry. (Note, 1 Sam. xxvi. 17—19.) And they solemnly protested that no other motive had induced them to build this altar, after the fashion of that at Shiloh; but that it might remain to succeeding generations a memorial that they were Israelites, that they were interested in all the sacrifices offered upon the altar of JEHOVAH, and had a right to join with Israel in all their publick religious solemnities.—The words rendered “The LORD God of *gods*,” may indeed be read as three names of God: EL, ELOHIM, JEHOVAH: and some expositors, both Jewish and Christian, have thought that they refer to a distinction of persons in the divine Unity.

V. 30, 31. This answer entirely removed the suspicions from the minds of the ambassadors; and they were highly pleased that their brethren were not guilty, and that they were so piously disposed.—Had they been guilty, or had they, by a disdainful answer, provoked the other tribes to war against them, they would have occasioned sin and punishment to the congregation: but their pious, frank, meek, and wise reply, led to an amicable conclusion, and prevented the fatal consequences. (Notes, Judg. xx. 8—14. xxi. 2, 3.)

V. 33. While the Israelites desisted from their purpose of waging war against their brethren, they not only rejoiced, but united in praises and thanksgivings to God, for not rendering so painful an employment their bounden duty.

V. 34. The word *Ed*, or a witness, in the first clause,

is not in the original; and the meaning seems to be, that the persons concerned inscribed these words on the altar, “It is a witness between us, that the LORD is God.” By this inscription they took effectual care, that their altar might neither occasion superstition, nor be a stumbling-block to their brethren.—Thus was this affair happily terminated; and though human infirmity is discoverable on both sides, yet the reader will thence collect the most pleasing ideas of the general and zealous regard, which was then paid to the worship and ordinances of God; and be confirmed in the sentiment, that this was indeed the very best of all the generations of Israel. No doubt seems to have existed in the minds of any of the parties concerned, respecting the reality of those miracles, by which the giving of the law was said to have been attended; or, of the special power and justice of God, by which the transgressors of that law would certainly be punished. But had not the preceding history, which has been considered, been known as indisputably true by this generation; such a full conviction of these grand principles could never have prevailed; and if this generation knew these things to be true; it would be too late afterwards for any to deny or question the truth of them; when the whole of their civil polity as well as religious observances was grounded upon them.—It is remarkable that Joshua is not once named in this transaction: but this only shews, that he did not in his old age assume any *regal* authority; but left the elders and magistrates to conduct the general business, only acting himself when great occasions made it necessary. Yet we cannot doubt, that his wisdom and piety influenced the counsels of the elders and people at this time.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—9.

The work of God and the welfare of his people should be preferred to our most important personal interests, our sweetest domestick comforts, and our most endeared affections: and all our engagements ought to be discharged with strict punctuality, without the least appearance of evasion, and, if possible, to the complete satisfaction of all parties. Nay, the believer should be so pleased with

## CHAP. XXIII.

Joshua, now grown old, convenes the elders of Israel; and exhorts them by the mercies of God, and the prospects of future blessings, to be steadfast

serving the cause of Christ on earth, as to be willing to continue yet longer, in this world of warfare, labour, and trouble, and to wait patiently till the Lord Jesus honourably dismisses him. (*Notes, Phil. i. 19—26.*) But if we are numbered among his soldiers, we must cheerfully and punctually obey his orders, that we may at last receive his commendation. Of this honour we ought to be ambitious, and of this alone.—He will bless those whom he approves; and recompense them in proportion to the self-denial, hardship, and affliction, which they have endured for his sake: nay, the power, number, and malice of our enemies, and the long continuance of our warfare, will eventually increase the riches of our gracious reward; which all our brethren will share with us, by rejoicing in our fulness of joy, as we shall also rejoice in their's.—Due commendation ought not to be withheld from those who behave properly; and gratitude to the instruments, very well consists with superior gratitude to the Author, of all our mercies. (*Notes, Ezra vii. 24—28. Phil. iv. 14—20.*) Our best counsels and fervent prayers are a debt, which we owe especially to those who have been useful to us; and the comfort of others should be regarded equally with our own.—The true interests of individuals and of nations does not consist in wealth or greatness, but in loving the LORD their God, cleaving to him, and obeying his commandments: and we should aim *very high* in this, or our attainments will be very low.—When urgent affairs have called or detained men from their families for a season, they should return home as soon as they are able, that they may instruct and rule over them in the fear of God; and all their acquisitions should be shared with them, and not spent in personal indulgence or excess.

## V. 10—34.

We should highly value the ordinances of God, and desire to perpetuate them to our posterity, that they may inherit 'the communion of saints,' and be preserved from temptations to ungodliness or false religion: and when our situation in life, or the choice which we have inadvertently made for ourselves, or for them, exposes them to peculiar danger, we should devise every prudent means of preventing the fatal effects.—We ought indeed carefully to "take heed that our good be not evil spoken of:" yet they, who are truly zealous for the honour of God, and active in promoting true godliness, must not think it strange, if their honest and proper measures be suspected or censured, even by such of their brethren as are no less zealous than they; but who, from concurring circumstances, are led to express their zeal in another way.—It is incumbent on us constantly to watch against a disposition to rash judgment, uncandid surmises, and harsh reproofs; and to cultivate and pray for the contrary spirit: but if it be our trial to be rebuked with severity, and loaded with calumny; we should be thankful for the testimony of our consciences, and for confidence in appealing to our heart-searching

in his service, 1—10. He warns them against connexions with idolaters; and protests, that the threatenings of God, in case of their disobedience, would as certainly be fulfilled, as his promises had been, 11—16.

Judge, that we are misrepresented or misunderstood. And, if the Lord knows our innocence, "Israel shall know" it in due time; for when our consciences are clear, he will at length clear our character, which we may therefore safely commit to his keeping. While exposed to this trial, we ought cautiously to avoid all recriminations, to speak with mildness and seriousness, and be ready to offer such explanations, as may obviate misconstructions, and satisfy the minds of our pious and candid brethren: (*Notes, Acts xi. 1—17:*) and whatever has been wrong or suspicious, we should be willing to alter.—But "charity hopeth all things, and rejoiceth not in iniquity;" and they, who "abound in this grace also," will be glad to find themselves mistaken, in that unfavourable opinion of their brethren, which they had reluctantly entertained: and will bless God for evidences of their faith and piety.—When boldness in opposing sin, and sharpness in reproving or punishing it, are the effects of genuine zeal and love; they will be attended with a disposition to renounce our own interests, that God may be glorified, and that temptations may be removed out of the way of our brethren: and we have learned a most important lesson, when we are brought to dread sin more than poverty or suffering.—In appeals to the Lord, we ought to have our minds possessed with a solemn, reverential awe of his majesty, authority, heart-searching knowledge, and perfections; and never to call him to witness about any thing trivial or doubtful, or in a light and rash manner. (*Note, Ex. xx. 7.*)—Happy will it be when all professed Christians shall learn, in their differences, to copy the example of Israel recorded in this chapter; and to unite zeal, and steady adherence to the cause of truth, with candour, meekness, a readiness to understand each other, to explain, and to be satisfied with the sufficient explanations and concessions of their brethren. Oh! how long shall acrimony, misrepresentation, ridicule, opprobrious epithets, and an obstinate pertinacity in defending every tittle, and carrying every sentiment to the utmost extreme;—how long, I say, shall these things disgrace the very name of religious controversy, and confirm the prejudices of thousands against those precious truths, which have often been, and still are, contended for in so odious a manner? When will Christians remember, that "by this all men shall know the disciples of Christ, when they have love one for another?" and when will they recollect that "if they bite and devour one another," they are likely to be "consumed one of another?" For the world, and "the god of this world," have no higher gratification, than to see the different denominations of professing Christians exposing, reviling, and ridiculing each other. May the Lord increase the number of those, who "endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace:" and may increasing grace and consolation "be with all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," by whatever name they are distinguished!

**AND** it came to pass, a long time after that <sup>a</sup>the LORD had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, that Joshua <sup>b</sup>waxed old and <sup>c</sup>stricken in age.

<sup>d</sup>2 And Joshua called for <sup>e</sup>all Israel, and for their elders, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers, and said unto them, I am old and stricken in age:

<sup>f</sup>3 And <sup>g</sup>ye have seen all that the LORD your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for <sup>h</sup>the LORD your God is he that hath fought for you.

<sup>i</sup>4 Behold, <sup>j</sup>I have divided unto you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the great sea <sup>k</sup>westward.

<sup>l</sup>5 And the LORD your God, <sup>m</sup>he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your sight; and ye shall possess their land, <sup>n</sup>as the LORD your God hath promised unto you.

6 Be ye therefore <sup>o</sup>very courageous to keep and to do all, that is written in the book of the law of Moses, <sup>p</sup>that ye turn not aside therefrom to the right hand or to the left:

<sup>q</sup>7 That <sup>r</sup>ye come not among these nations, these that remain among you, <sup>s</sup>neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause <sup>t</sup>to swear by them, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves unto them.

<sup>u</sup>8 <sup>v</sup>But <sup>w</sup>cleave unto the LORD your God, as ye have done unto this day.

<sup>x</sup>9 <sup>y</sup>For the LORD hath driven out from before you great nations and strong: but <sup>z</sup>as for you, <sup>aa</sup>no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day.

<sup>ab</sup>10 <sup>ac</sup>One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the <sup>ad</sup>LORD your God, he <sup>ae</sup>it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you.

<sup>af</sup>11 ¶ <sup>ag</sup>Take good heed therefore unto <sup>ah</sup>yourselves, that ye <sup>ai</sup>love the LORD your God.

<sup>aj</sup>Heb. your souls.

<sup>ak</sup>Ex. xx. 6. Rom. viii. 28. I Cor. viii. 3. xvi. 22. Jude 20, 21.

<sup>al</sup>1. 7—9. Jer. ix. 3. I Cor. xvi. 18. Eph. vi. 10—19. Heb. xii. 4. Rev. xxi. 8.  
<sup>am</sup>Deut. v. 32. xii. 32. xxvii. 14. Prov. ix. 26, 27.  
<sup>an</sup>12. Ex. xxiii. 33. Deut. vi. 2, 3. Prov. iv. 14. I Cor. xv. 33. 2 Cor. vi. 14—17. Eph. v. 11. Ex. xxiii. 13. Num. xxxii. 38. Ps. xvi. 4. Hos. ii. 17.  
<sup>ao</sup>Jer. v. 7. Zeph. i. 5.  
<sup>ap</sup>Or, For ye will cleave, &c.  
<sup>aq</sup>xvii. 5. Deut. iv. 4. x. 20. xi. 22. xiii. 4. Acts xi. 23.  
<sup>ar</sup>Or, Then the Lord will drive.  
<sup>as</sup>xxi. 43. 44. Deut. xi. 23.  
<sup>at</sup>1. 8. 9. xv. 14.  
<sup>au</sup>Lev. xxvi. 8. Deut. xxxii. 30. Judg. iii. 31. xv. 15. I Sam. xiv. 6. 12—16. 2 Sam. xxi. 8.  
<sup>av</sup>42. Ex. xiv. 14. xxiii. 27. Deut. ix. 22. xx. 4. Ps. xxxv. 1. xlv. 4, 5. xlvii. 7. Rom. viii. 31.  
<sup>aw</sup>xvii. 5. Deut. iv. 9. vi. 5—19. Prov. iv. 23. Luke xxi. 34. Eph. v. 16. Heb. xii. 15.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 1. Different opinions prevail, as to the time that elapsed between the settlement of Israel, and the death of Joshua; but perhaps it was not less than sixteen or seventeen years. (Note, xiii. 1—5.) The transaction recorded in this chapter, seems to have occurred in his last year.

V. 2. *For all Israel, and for, &c.*] Or, “For all Israel, even for their elders, &c.”—When Joshua had given the following charge to the elders and judges, and to the rulers of thousands and of hundreds; they would be enabled to communicate the substance of it in their several districts, that all Israel might hear. Probably this was done at Shiloh, on one of the solemn feasts.

V. 6. (Note, i. 7.) While the Israelites adhered strictly to the law of Moses, they would be kept entirely distinct from the Canaanites and the surrounding nations, and would in consequence be exposed to their hatred and opposition. They were likewise required to carry on unceasing war against the inhabitants of the land, avowedly aiming at their entire extirpation; which, as far as steadily adhered to, would expose them to their unabating and most rancorous enmity. Great courage would therefore be required, in order to a determinate obedience in such circumstances: and probably Joshua had observed, that the people were become more intent upon quietly enjoying their present possessions, than on boldly improving their advantages, as the Lord by Moses had commanded them. (Notes, xvi. 10. xvii. 11—13.)—It is evident that the people at this

time possessed and might read the books of Moses; otherwise there could have been no ground for an exhortation in the words here used.

V. 7. The habitual mention of the names of idols, had it been allowed, would gradually have introduced the custom of swearing by them in common discourse: and this would have abated the abhorrence of idolatry, and have prepared the way for other more express acts of idolatry. It is also generally supposed, that Israel must not put an idolater to his oath, so as to cause him to swear by his idol; or form any agreement, in which such oaths were used. This would tend exceedingly to prevent all compacts with idolaters.—The paintings, statues, and poems, exquisitely finished by human ingenuity, but replete with references to the detestable heathen mythology, which abound in Christian countries, tend exceedingly to habituate the mind, to reflect upon the Roman and Grecian idolatry without horror, nay with a kind of pleasure; to banish the language of piety from men’s lips; and thus to subserve in no small degree, the cause of scepticism, infidelity, and ungodliness. (Note, Ex. xxiii. 13.)

V. 10. After the people were dispersed in their possessions, they might not be able to bring such large armies into the field, as when encamped in one body: but that ought not to discourage them; for one Israelite should chase a thousand Canaanites, so long as they cleaved unto the Lord, seeing he himself “would fight for them.” (Marg. Ref.—Note, Deut. xxxii. 30, 31.)

V. 11—13. Marg. Ref.—*Snares and traps, &c.* (13.) The remnant of these nations would first be “snares and

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xxxvi. 3. <sup>2</sup> Else if ye do in any wise 'go back, and 'cleave unto the remnant of these nations, *even* these that remain among you, and 'shall make marriages with them, and go in unto them, and they to you:

<sup>13</sup> Know for a certainty that the LORD your God 'will no more drive out *any* of these nations from before you; but they shall be 'snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes, 'until ye perish from off this good land which the LORD your God hath given you.

<sup>14</sup> And behold this day 'I *am* going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts, and in all your souls, that 'not one thing hath failed of all the good things which

the LORD your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.

<sup>15</sup> Therefore it shall come to pass, *that* as all good things are come upon you, which the LORD your God promised you: 'so shall the LORD bring upon you all evil things, until he have destroyed you from off this good land, which the LORD your God hath given you.

<sup>16</sup> When ye have transgressed the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and have gone and served other gods, and bowed yourselves to them; then shall the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and 'ye shall perish quickly from off the good land which he hath given unto you.

"traps" to the people, and then "scourges in their sides, and thorns in their eyes." If they entered into any amicable correspondence with them, the women would allure them to form connexions and marriages with them; and by their blandishments entice them to idolatry. (Notes, Ex. xxiii. 32, 33. xxxiv. 11—17. Num. xxv. 1—5. xxxi. 14—18. Deut. vii. 1—4.) Thus they would be taken in Satan's snares and traps: for Canaanites must always be enemies to Israelites under every mask; and they would watch every opportunity of avenging themselves. So that, when Israel had provoked the Lord to withdraw his protection, these nations would be ready instruments of their chastisement; but, if that did not bring them to repentance, their cruelties would torment them as a thorn in the eye would do, and at length even drive them out of the promised land.—The subsequent history abundantly illustrates these emphatical expressions. (Marg. Ref. x, y.)

V. 14—16. The Israelites were deeply affected with the wonderful performance of the promises, which God had made to their fathers; and Joshua, almost with his last breath, (as he supposed,) most solemnly assured them, that the threatenings would be accomplished with equal certainty and exactness, whenever they transgressed their covenant by apostasy and idolatry. (Notes, Lev. xxvi. 14—29. Deut. iv. 25—28. xxviii. 15—68. xxix. 18—28. xxxii. 19—36. Dan. ix. 12—14.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

Through the deceitfulness of the human heart, we are never more in danger of forgetting the Lord, than when most favoured with temporal prosperity.—They who possess influence, from age, authority, reputation for wisdom and piety, or eminent services, should employ it all, with unwearied perseverance, to their latest breath, in promoting the practice of true godliness.—Gratitude, duty, and regard to our own best happiness, with united energy, require us to adhere to our profession of the gospel and to walk con-

sistently with it: yet we all need to be frequently reminded, exhorted, and warned concerning these things. (Note, Acts xi. 23, 24.)—As long as men *cleave* to the Lord, though they have abated somewhat of their fervour and diligence, there is good ground of hope that admonitions will have a proper effect: but the diseases of the soul, like those of the body, should be resisted before they have gathered strength.—We cannot too often be called upon, to meditate on the past and present kindness of God to us; and to reflect upon his gracious promises, and awful threatenings: and we should treasure up our experience of the exact performance of his word, to strengthen our expectation of its entire accomplishment in due season; for hope and fear, and every passion, ought to be engaged to restrain men from sin, and to keep them close to their duty.—It is true wisdom to discern and shun the temptations and inlets to sin, of which none are more dangerous than ungodly companions. Acquaintance, friendship, and marriage, with persons of no religion, or of false religion, have generally been progressive steps towards the mere professor's apostasy, and the believer's loss of all his earnestness, comfort, and usefulness. (Note, Gen. vi. 1, 2.) They, who at first are tempters, will eventually prove the scourges of those, who have listened to their seductions: and either bitter distress in this world, or utter destruction in the world to come, are the unavoidable effects of yielding to temptation. This all ought "to know for a certainty," that they "may take good heed unto themselves," and not allow the love of any creature to seduce them from the love of God, and obedience to his laws.—Our minds should be filled with an abhorrence of every kind of ungodliness, equal to that which the most conscientious persons feel of murder or adultery; for, whatever fallen man may think to the contrary, the guilt of neglecting and despising the glorious God our Creator is far greater, than that of injuring our fellow-creatures. (Note, Ps. li. 4.)—Our inward foes are the most dangerous; and they will cause us much

## CHAP. XXIV.

Joshua convenes Israel, and lays before them a brief history of the Lord's kindness to their ancestors from the days of Terah, 1—13. He engages them to choose the service of God, and renews the covenant, 14—25. He sets up a stone as a memorial, 26—28. His death, age, and burial, 29, 30. Israel serves the Lord till some time after Joshua's death, 31. Joseph's bones are buried, and Eleazar dies, 32, 33.

**AND** Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to <sup>a</sup>Shechem, and <sup>b</sup>called for the elders of Israel, and for their heads, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they <sup>c</sup>presented themselves before God.

2 And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, <sup>d</sup>Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old times, *even* Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and <sup>e</sup>they served other gods.

3 And <sup>f</sup>I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and <sup>g</sup>gave him Isaac.

4 And <sup>h</sup>I gave unto Isaac Jacob and Esau: and <sup>i</sup>I gave unto Esau mount

Seir; to possess it; but <sup>k</sup>Jacob and his children went down into Egypt.

5 I <sup>l</sup>sent Moses also and Aaron, and <sup>m</sup>I plagued Egypt, according to that which I did among them; and afterward I brought you out.

6 And <sup>n</sup>I brought your fathers out of Egypt: and ye came unto the sea; and <sup>o</sup>the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and horsemen unto the Red Sea.

7 And when they cried unto the LORD, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them; and <sup>p</sup>your eyes have seen what I have done in Egypt: and <sup>q</sup>ye dwelt in the wilderness a long season.

8 And <sup>r</sup>I brought you into the land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the other side Jordan; and they fought with you: and I gave them into your hand, that ye might possess their land; and I destroyed them from before you.

9 Then <sup>s</sup>Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, arose and warred against Israel, and sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you:

10 But <sup>t</sup>I would not hearken unto

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xii. 6. xxxiii. 18, 19. xxxv. 4. Judg. x. 1—3. 1 Kings xii. 1. c xxiii. 2. Ex. xvi. 25, 26. c 1 Sam. x. 19. Acts x. 33.

<sup>d</sup> Gen. xi. 26, 31. xii. 1. xxx. 63. Deut. xxi. 5. Is. ii. 2. Ez. xvi. 3.

<sup>e</sup> 15. Gen. xxxi. 19, 30, 32. xxxv. 4.

<sup>f</sup> Gen. xii. 1—4. Neh. ix. 7, 8. Acts vii. 2, 3.

<sup>g</sup> Gen. xxi. 2, 3. Ps. cxviii. 3.

<sup>h</sup> Gen. xxv. 24—26.

<sup>i</sup> Gen. xxxiii. 3. xxxvi. 8. Deut. ii. 5.

<sup>k</sup> Gen. xvi. 1—6. Ps. cv. 23. Acts vii. 15.

<sup>l</sup> Ex. ii. 10. iv. 12. 13. Ps. cv. 25. m Ex. vii. viii. ix. x. xli. xlii. Ps. lxxviii. 43—51. cv. 27—36. cxlvi. 8, 9. cxlvi. 10.

<sup>n</sup> Ex. xii. 37. 51. Mic. vi. 4.

<sup>o</sup> Ex. xiv. xv. Neh. ix. 11. Ps. lxxvii. 15—20. lxxviii. 13—15. Is. lxiii. 12. 13. Acts vii. 36. Heb. xii. 29.

<sup>p</sup> Ex. xiv. 21. Deut. xxix. 2.

<sup>q</sup> v. 6. Num. xiv. 33, 34. Neh. ix. 12—21. Ps. xcv. 9, 10. Acts xiii. 17, 18. Heb. iii. 17. xiii. 10. Num. xxi. 21—35. Deut. ii. 32—37. iii. 1—7. Neh. ix. 22. Ps. cxxxv. 10, 11. cxlvi. 17—22.

<sup>s</sup> Num. xxii. 5, 6. Deut. xxxiii. 4, 5. Judg. xi. 25. Mic. vi. 5.

<sup>t</sup> Num. xxii. 11, 12. 18—20. 35. xxiii. 3—12. 15—26. xxiv. 5—10. Is. liv. 17.

misery, unless we oppose and mortify them with unrelenting severity: so that this warfare will require great courage and resolution. And if we resolutely adhere to the word of God as our rule, turning aside neither to the right hand nor to the left; we shall certainly be hated, despised, and reproached, by them whose pride is affronted, or whose consciences are made uneasy, through our holy singularity and faithful reproof. We need not however fear them; "for the LORD our God will fight for us, as he hath promised," and nothing shall by any means hurt us: and though useful instruments and valued friends may be removed; yet the Lord ever liveth to protect, uphold, guide, comfort, and bless us. But sinners have cause to tremble at his indignation: for he will as surely execute his most tremendous threatenings, as perform his largest promises; and hypocrites or apostates will be as severely dealt with as open infidels and profligates. Let us then "watch and pray that we enter not into temptation;" let us trust in the faithfulness, love, and power of God; let us plead his promises and cleave to his commandments; and then we shall be happy in life, in death, and for ever!

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 1. *To Shechem.*] Shechem was nearer than Shiloh to Timnath-serah, Joshua's residence;

(*Note*, xix. 49, 50;) and he being old and infirm, convened the tribes and elders of Israel to that place. Some think, that he caused the ark and the tabernacle to be conveyed thither on this occasion, to give the greater solemnity to his last meeting with his people; for it is said, "They presented themselves before God."—Finding his life prolonged, perhaps beyond expectation, he was desirous of, once more enforcing upon them the great things of religion, in the most solemn and affecting manner possible. (*Notes*, 1 Chr. xxix. 10—19. 26—28.)

V. 2. *Of the flood.*] That is, *of the river Euphrates.*—It is said, that "they served other gods:" hence it is evident that Abraham, (as well as Terah and Nahor,) had been guilty of idolatry; and this was probably the case till he was called to the knowledge of God, when above seventy years of age. (*Note*, Gen. xi. 28—32.)

V. 3—8. *Marg. Ref.*—*Your eyes have seen.* (7) Many of those who, being under twenty years of age, had witnessed these miracles, were doubtless still living; and several of the elders, judges, and officers whom Joshua addressed, might be of this number.

V. 9, 10. Balak intended war against Israel, and previously called Balaam to curse them, which he would gladly have done: but, as the Lord refused to grant his desires or prayers, Balak being discouraged, desisted from his purpose. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, Num. xxii—xxv.)

Balaam; therefore he blessed you still: so I delivered you out of his hand.

11 And <sup>u</sup>ye went over Jordan, and came unto Jericho: and <sup>x</sup>the men of Jericho fought against you, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; and I delivered them into your hand.

12 And <sup>y</sup>I sent the hornet before you, which drave them out from before you, *even* the two kings of the Amorites; *but* <sup>z</sup>not with thy sword, nor with thy bow.

13 And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and <sup>a</sup>cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them: of the vineyards and olive-yards which ye planted not do ye eat.

14 ¶ Now therefore <sup>b</sup>fear the LORD, and <sup>c</sup>serve him in sincerity and in

truth; and <sup>d</sup>put away the gods, which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and <sup>e</sup>in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.

15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, <sup>f</sup>choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that *were* on the other side of the flood, or <sup>g</sup>the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but <sup>h</sup>as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

16 And the people answered and said, <sup>i</sup>God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods;

17 For the LORD our God, <sup>k</sup>he *it is* that brought us up, and our fathers, out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and

V. 11. *Notes*, iii—xi.

V. 12. *The hornet.*] Probably these insects so infested the armies of Sihon and Og, and afterwards of the Canaanites, when preparing for the battle, as to throw them into confusion, and give the Israelites an easy victory; which demanded the greater gratitude from them, not having been obtained by their sword or bow. (*Notes*, Ex. xxiii. 28. Ps. xlv. 1—3.)

V. 14. It seems that the Israelites still retained some relics of the idolatry of their progenitors, which from time to time some of them secretly worshipped. In this very place Jacob had “put away the strange gods” which were in his family, and buried them under an oak. (*Notes*, Gen. xxxv. 2. 4.) But his descendants had formed other images of the same supposed deities, as well as of the idols of Egypt; and had not, during all the days of Moses, been induced to destroy them all, as Joshua well knew: he therefore insisted upon it that they should put them all away together, if they meant to be sincere and entire in the service of JEHOVAH.

V. 15. The Lord has an unalienable right to the service of all his rational creatures, which cannot be withheld, without contracting the deepest guilt, and incurring the severest vengeance. But it is essential to this service, that it be performed with a willing mind; for LOVE is the very substance of it, and its only *genuine principle*: (*Notes*, Ex. xx. 2. Deut. vi. 5:) “The Father seeketh such to worship him, as worship him in Spirit, and truth.” But “the carnal mind is enmity against God,” and therefore incapable of this spiritual worship: and hence the necessity of being born again. (*Notes*, John iii. 3—8. iv. 21—24.) When, however, we discover this necessity, and the nature of the gracious change intended by that emphatical expression, we are induced to seek it in the use of appointed means; and thus at length we become *consciously* and ex-

perimentally partakers of it, and are numbered among those who worship God in truth and love. But, in the visible church, numbers have always rested in the mere form, as an *unpleasant task* to which they submit, to avoid as they hope worse consequences: and a great part of the usefulness of preaching consists, in discovering the difference betwixt the *form* and the *power* of godliness; and in stirring up the minds of men, from resting in the former, to seek after the latter. The method, which Joshua adopted in treating with the Israelites, was admirably calculated, and evidently intended, to produce this effect. Many of them were already spiritual worshippers: a much greater number might be favourably disposed toward the worship and service of God, but, through procrastination and worldly avocations, not yet fully engaged in it: and doubtless many had a secret dislike to religion, who would have been ashamed to confess it, and who would be shocked at the proposal of renouncing the worship of God, and openly professing themselves idolaters. Of this state of mind this aged believer aimed to take the advantage, and to lead them, by his proposal, to reflect upon their own inconsistency, formality, or procrastination; and to engage deliberately, seriously, and “with full purpose of heart,” in the Lord’s service. Thus he intimated, that apostasy from God to the worship of idols would not be more destructive to them, than hypocrisy or a lifeless form; that, if the service of God were worth any thing, it was worth every thing; that for his part, he had made up his mind, and had deliberately and decidedly chosen to serve the Lord fully and heartily; that he was determined to use all his authority and influence with his family, to prevail with them to follow his example; and that he greatly desired to persuade all his beloved countrymen to make the same choice, and to act in the same manner. (*Marg. Ref.* f. h.—*Notes*, Gen. xviii. 18, 19. Ruth i. 11—17. 1 Kings xviii. 21.)

among all the people through whom we passed:

18 And the LORD drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land: *therefore* <sup>1</sup> will we also serve the LORD; for he is our God.

19 And Joshua said unto the people, <sup>2</sup> Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an <sup>3</sup> holy God; he is <sup>4</sup> a jealous God; <sup>5</sup> he will not forgive your transgressions, nor your sins.

20 If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then <sup>6</sup> he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

21 And the people said unto Joshua, <sup>7</sup> Nay, but we will serve the LORD.

22 And Joshua said unto the people, <sup>8</sup> Ye are witnesses against yourselves that <sup>9</sup> ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him. And they said, *We are witnesses.*

23 Now therefore <sup>10</sup> put away (*said he*) the strange gods which *are* among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel.

24 And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.

25 So Joshua <sup>11</sup> made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

26 And Joshua <sup>12</sup> wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and <sup>13</sup> took a great stone, and <sup>14</sup> set it up there <sup>15</sup> under an oak, that *was* by the sanctuary of the LORD.

27 And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, <sup>16</sup> this stone shall be a witness unto us; for <sup>17</sup> it hath heard all the words of the LORD which he spake unto us; it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye <sup>18</sup> deny your God.

<sup>1</sup> Ex. x. 2. xv. 2.  
<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxi. 16. Mic.  
iv. 2. Zech. viii.  
23. Luke i. 78.  
<sup>3</sup> 74.  
<sup>4</sup> 23. Ruth i. 15.  
<sup>5</sup> Matt. vi. 24.  
Luke xiv. 25—  
28.  
<sup>6</sup> Lev. x. 3. xix. 2.  
1 Sam. vi. 20.  
Ps. xcix. 5. 9.  
Is. v. 16. vi. 3.  
5. xxx. 11. 15.  
Hab. i. 13.  
<sup>7</sup> Ex. xx. 5. xxxiv.  
14. 1 Cor. x. 20.  
—22.  
<sup>8</sup> Ex. xxviii. 21.  
1 Sam. iii. 14.  
2 Chr. xxxv. 16.  
Is. xxviii. 11.  
<sup>9</sup> xxiii. 12—15.  
1 Chr. xxviii. 9.  
2 Chr. xv. 2.  
Ezra viii. 22. Is.  
i. 28. lxi. 10.  
Is. 11. 12. Jer.  
xxviii. 18. Ez.  
xxviii. 24. Acts  
vii. 42. Heb. x.  
26. 27. 38.  
<sup>10</sup> Ex. xix. 8. xx.  
19. xxiv. 3. 7.  
Deut. v. 27. 28.  
xxi. 17. 1a.  
xlv. 5.  
<sup>11</sup> Job xv. 6. Luke  
xix. 22.  
<sup>12</sup> Ps. cxix. lxi. 173.  
Luke x. 42.

<sup>14</sup> Gen. xxxv.  
2—4. Ex. xx. 28.  
Jude x. 16.  
1 Sam. vii. 3. 4.  
Hos. xiv. 2. 3. 8.  
1 Cor. x. 19—21.  
2 Cor. vi. 16—18

<sup>11</sup> Ex. xv. 25. xxiv.  
3. 7. 8. Deut. v.  
2. 3. xxxix. 1. 10.  
—15. 2 Chr. xv.  
12. 15. xxiii. 16.  
xxix. 10. xxxiv.  
29—32. Neh. ix.  
38. x. 29. 32.

<sup>12</sup> Ex. xxiv. 4. Deut.  
xxxi. 24—26.

<sup>13</sup> Judg. ix. 6.  
a iv. 3—9. 20—24.  
Gen. xxviii. 18.  
—22.

<sup>14</sup> b Gen. xxxv. 4. 8.  
c xxii. 27. 28. 34.  
Gen. xxxi. 44—  
52. Deut. iv. 26.  
xxx. 19. xxxi.  
19. 21. 26. 1 Sam.  
vii. 12.

<sup>15</sup> d Deut. xxiii. 1.  
Is. i. 2. Hab. ii.  
11. Luke xix.  
40.

<sup>16</sup> e Job xxxi. 23.  
Prov. xxx. 9.  
Matt. x. 33.  
2 Tim. ii. 12. 13.  
Tit. i. 16. Rev.  
iii. 8.

V. 19. Joshua by no means intended to deter the people from the service of the Lord; but to put them upon their guard against the objections commonly made to a life of strict godliness, as if intolerably difficult, or even impracticable; and to lead them to count their cost, and to consider before-hand what they engaged to do. (*Notes, Luke xiv. 25—35.*) With great address, arising from deep knowledge of the human heart, he seized the advantage of their present impressions, to render them abiding, to increase the earnestness of the people, and to lead them solemnly to enter into a willing engagement to serve God alone.—When a certain degree of inclination towards any object has once possessed the heart, it is always increased by the prospect of difficulties; provided they appear surmountable by contrivance, exertion, and perseverance. This management of Joshua, therefore, directly tended to lead the Israelites to reflect upon the perfections of JEHOVAH, and upon the nature of his service; to advert to their own unholiness and insufficiency; and to that encouragement and hope of assistance which were given them in the books of Moses; to induce them to esteem acceptably serving God, as a prize worthy of their utmost labour and earnestness; to render them diligent, watchful, humble, and dependent in their endeavours; and to prevent the effect of subsequent difficulties and temptations, by exciting the expectation of them. Such was the tendency of this address, and such, by the blessing of God, appears to have been its effect upon many of them.—The original words, translated “He is an holy God,” are literally, *He is holy Gods*, the adjective being plural, as well as the noun; and the expression has frequently been cited in proof of the doctrine of the Trinity.—As he has no equal, he will endure no rival.—The word, rendered *forgive*, may mean *tolerate*. (*Notes, Ex. xx. 5. xxxiv. 5—7. 11—17.*)

V. 20. The longer and the more open profession the

people should make of worshipping JEHOVAH, the deeper would be their guilt and condemnation, if they should at last apostatize to idolatry. Of this Joshua reminded them; that they might duly consider the solemn engagement about to be made, and be upon their guard against subsequent temptations.

V. 21, 22. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xxiv. 3, 4. 6—8. Deut. v. 28, 29. xxvi. 17—19.*

V. 23. *Incline your heart.*] This expression shews how earnest this venerable servant of God was, to lead the people into the inward exercises of true piety, and to excite them to be spiritual and hearty, as well as entire, in their religion. (*Notes, Deut. vi. 5. 1 Kings viii. 58. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. xxix. 10—19. Prov. xxiii. 26.*)

V. 25. Thus Joshua led his auditory solemnly to renew their covenant to be the Lord's people, and to adhere to his worship, and that in the most intelligent and deliberate manner: and he formed the whole into a statute and ordinance, which was promulgated for all Israel to receive and obey. (*Notes, Deut. xxix. 10—15. 2 Kings xi. 17—20. Neh. ix. 38. x. 1.*)

V. 26. This ratification of the covenant seems to have been inscribed in that copy of the law, which was laid up by the sides of the ark, as a perpetual memorial of the transaction: (*Note, Deut. xxxi. 26:*) and probably it was also inserted in all the other copies of the law which were then extant.

V. 27. This great stone would testify, to succeeding generations, that event which it was set up to commemorate; and it would be a witness against the people, if they afterwards revolted to idolatry. (*Notes, xxii. 34. Gen. xxxi. 45, 46. Deut. xxxi. 19.*)—This idea contains a forcible charge of insensibility against mankind, as if they were more regardless of their Maker, than the inanimate creatures, which, by answering the end of their creation, seem

<sup>f</sup> Judg. ii. 6.

28 So 'Joshua let the people depart, every man to his inheritance.

<sup>g</sup> Deut. xxxiv. 5.  
Judg. ii. 6. Pa.  
cxy. 17. 2 Tim.  
v. 7. 8. Rev. xiv.  
13.

29 ¶ And it came to pass <sup>e</sup> after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, <sup>h</sup> being <sup>h</sup> an hundred and ten years old.

<sup>h</sup> Gen. i. 22. 25

30 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in <sup>i</sup> Timnath-serah, which <sup>i</sup> is in mount Ephraim, on the north side of the hill of <sup>k</sup> Gaash.

<sup>i</sup> xix. 50. Judg. i. 9.

<sup>k</sup> 2 Sam. xxiii. 30.

<sup>l</sup> Deut. xxxi. 29.

Judg. ii. 7. 2 Chr.

xxiv. 2. 17. 18.

Acts xx. 29.

Phil. ii. 12.

<sup>m</sup> Heb. prolonged their days after.

31 And Israel <sup>l</sup> served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that <sup>m</sup> overlived Joshua; and

" which had known all the works of the LORD, that he had done for Israel.

<sup>n</sup> Deut. xi. 4.  
xxx. 13.

32 And <sup>n</sup> the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, <sup>o</sup> buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for an hundred <sup>p</sup> pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.

<sup>n</sup> Gen. l. 25. Ec.  
xiii. 19. Acts vi.  
16.

<sup>o</sup> Gen. xxxiii. 19.  
xlviii. 22.

<sup>p</sup> Or, lambs.

<sup>q</sup> xiv. 1. Ex. vi. 23.  
25. Num. iii. 32.  
xx. 26—28.

<sup>r</sup> Job xxx. 23. Ps.

xliv. 10. Is. lvi.

1. 2. Zech. i. 5.

Acts xiii. 26.

Heb. vii. 24. ix.

26. 27.

<sup>r</sup> Judg. xx. 28

33 And <sup>p</sup> Eleazar the son of Aaron <sup>q</sup> died, and they buried him in a hill <sup>r</sup> that pertained to <sup>r</sup> Phinehas his son, which was given him in mount Ephraim.

to exclaim against the ingratitude and rebellion of the human species. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Luke xix. 40.*)—In this affecting manner Joshua took his leave of Israel, went home from this last and perhaps best service to God and them, and was speedily taken to his rest in heaven. (29, 30. *Notes, Deut. xxxiv. 1—5.*)

V. 29—32. It is remarkable that Joshua lived just as many years as his renowned ancestor Joseph had done: yet he was not buried in the same place with him, but in his own inheritance, which seems to have been the general practice. (30. 32.—*Note, Gen. i. 22.*) The Israelites had carried the bones of Joseph with them in all their wanderings, and never attempted to bury them, till they were peaceably settled in the land. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. i. 24—26. Ex. xiii. 19. Heb. xi. 22.*)

V. 33. As the cities assigned to the priests lay in the lots of Judah, Benjamin, and Simeon; it is probable that the people voluntarily gave to the high priest a place of residence near Shiloh, while the tabernacle continued there; and that this was called "the hill of Phinehas," because he dwelt longer there than Eleazar had done

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

##### V. 1—13.

It is beautiful and honourable, when zeal for the glory of God, and love to the souls of men, gather strength, at a time when the body is ready to drop into the grave: and while life is spared, and any measure of health afforded, if our hearts glow with love and zeal, we shall devise some method to serve the cause of godliness, and to fix salutary impressions upon the minds of those around us; nay, sometimes when the body is least capable of executing proper methods of doing good, the soul possesses most vigour for devising them. (*Note, 2 Pet. i. 12—15.*)—In repeating our exhortations, heavenly wisdom will teach us to vary the manner of reaching the conscience, and engaging the affections; but we can never with propriety omit the commemoration of the Lord's mercies: by frequent meditation on that subject, we shall recollect more and more instances of his goodness; and whatever in our experience demands our gratitude to God, will also furnish us with cause of humiliation, and of encouragement.—The largeness and freeness of the divine mercy are illustrated in so distinct a manner, even in the salvation of the most eminent saints mentioned in Scripture, that "the chief of sinners" may

thence take encouragement in returning to the Lord. (*Notes, 1 Tim. 12—16. P. O. 12—20.*)

##### V. 14—33.

The practical conclusion to be drawn from every delineation of the character of God, and from the memorial of his wondrous works and abundant mercies, is this: "Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and 'in truth.'" But without *sincerity* and *truth*, all professions of repentance, faith, fear, or love, are mere hypocrisy, and will avail us nothing.—The service of God must be our voluntary choice: if we were disposed to use our reason aright, we could not but choose it: after all our sins, we are invited to do so; and, blessed be his name, he hath promised not to reject us, if we seek him in the appointed way, and are decided in preferring his favour to the pleasures of sin, and the vanities of the world. We must, however, diligently study the nature of true religion, and what it will cost us; to what it may expose us, and in what it will employ us; that we may be prepared for temptations, tribulations, conflicts, and self-denials; be aware of our insufficiency; and seek help and comfort from on high. The LORD our God is jealous, just, and holy: he will not be trifled with, he cannot be imposed upon, he abhors a double mind, and will not accept a divided heart; he hates lukewarmness, (*Note, Rev. iii. 14—16.*) and will as certainly punish the apostate, as forgive the humble believer. Yet our only danger lies in forsaking him; for if we adhere to his service with an upright and willing mind, none of our mistakes, imperfections, or enemies can fatally injure us. But we cannot serve the Lord without renouncing other masters, and "inclining our hearts unto him;" nor can we incline our hearts without his grace, which he readily bestows on all who pray for the promised gift of his Holy Spirit. Depending upon his assistance and merciful acceptance, notwithstanding all our difficulties and impotency, we may with confidence say, "God forbid that we should forsake the LORD;" and to every objection we may answer, "Nay, but we will serve the LORD;" and close all by positively averring, "The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey:" nor need we scruple the most open and solemn ratification of his covenant, by which we avouch him to be our God, and ourselves to be his people. For though the house of God, the Lord's table, and even the very walls and trees, before

which we have uttered our solemn purposes of serving him, would obtest against us if we denied him; and all the good, which he had done us, would become an occasion of evil to us; yet we may trust his grace to enable us to fulfil our engagements, and be confident that he will "put his fear into our hearts, that we shall not depart from him." (*Note, Jer. xxxii. 38—41.*)—They who in the plainest terms have shewn the necessity and difficulty of serving God, and the danger of forsaking him; and who have pressed others most strongly to count their cost, and to prepare for temptation; should be the most forward to avow their own purpose of choosing and cleaving to his service, and of using their most earnest endeavours, and exercising all their influence and authority, along with their fervent prayers, that the blessings of true religion may be the inheritance of their children and of all connected with them. Thus, in our several stations, we should all deliberately determine, by the grace of God, to serve him ourselves, and to do the utmost in our power, that our households may serve him likewise. And though God alone can give

grace, yet he greatly approves and blesses such zealous attempts to engage and confirm men in his service: and in some instances the pious labours of one single day may produce the most important and beneficial effects for years or even for generations to come.—After a life thus spent and thus concluded, how comfortably may the believer meet the stroke of death, and retire to his rest in the realms of bliss! Thus the most useful men, having served their generation, according to the will of God, one after another fall asleep, and see corruption: but Jesus, having spent and ended his life on earth, far more assiduously and effectually than either Joshua or Joseph, arose from the dead, and saw no corruption. He not only brings his ransomed tribes to their rest, but lives with them, and reigns over them, to consummate and perpetuate their felicity to all eternity: and wherever their bodies are interred, he will shortly raise them incorruptible, and transform them into the likeness of "his own glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself." (*Note, Phil. iii. 20, 21.*)

# THE BOOK

## OF

# J U D G E S.

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**T**HE title of this book is taken from the original Hebrew ; and shews the principal subject of it, as containing the history of those Judges, whom God raised up among his people, before he placed any king over them. These were not a regular succession of governors, but occasional deliverers, of different tribes and families, who were employed to rescue the nation from oppressors, to reform religion, or to administer justice. They do not seem to have assumed any degree of regal magnificence, or to have exercised any expensive or burdensome authority : yet they were for the time the immediate vicegerents of JEHOVAH, the King of Israel. It is probable, that when there was no Judge, the Levites, elders, and ordinary magistrates, together with the high priest and the other priests, conducted the affairs of the several tribes, and administered justice, as circumstances would admit, according to the law of Moses ; and that when there was a judge, he presided over them.—It is generally supposed that the prophet Samuel, the last of the judges, wrote this book ; and indeed, it seems to have been written during the reign of Saul. For the words repeatedly used, “ In those days there was no king in Israel,” (xvii. 6. xix. 1. xxi. 25,) imply that there was a king when the history was published : yet, it appears also, that the Jebusites still kept possession of Jerusalem, from which David at length expelled them. (i. 21. 2 *Sam.* v. 6—9.)—It consists of two parts : in the first sixteen chapters, a compendious narrative is given of the affairs of Israel, from the death of Joshua to that of Samson, during the term of about three hundred years ; though the chronology is peculiarly intricate : and the remaining five chapters record some detached events, which took place in the earlier part of that period, but which would have too much interrupted the narrative, had they been inserted according to the order of time. Thus the history is brought down to the years, during which Eli judged Israel, and nearly to the birth of Samuel.—There are several references to facts recorded in this book, both in the Old and New Testaments ; (1 *Sam.* xii. 10, 11. 2 *Sam.* xi. 21. *Neh.* ix. 28. *Ps.* lxxxiii. 9—11. *Is.* ix. 4. x. 26. *Acts* xiii. 20. *Heb.* xi. 32;) and it is certain that it formed a part of that sacred volume, to which Christ and his apostles constantly appealed, as to the Oracles of God : but I do not recollect any express prophecies contained in it.

The condition of Israel does not appear so prosperous, nor the national character so religious, in this history, as from the foregoing records it might have been hoped : but it is probable, that the worship at the sanctuary was regularly maintained and attended on, and that there was a pious remnant in the land, amidst the repeated apostasies and multiplied idolatries of the nation in general. ‘ By a superficial reader of the sacred history, the whole period under the judges may be easily mistaken for an uninterrupted series of idolatries and crimes ; from his not observing, that the lapses which incurred punishment, and the divine deliverances which attended repentance, are related so fully and distinctly, as to occupy almost the whole narrative ; while long periods, when under the government of the judges, the people followed God, and the land enjoyed peace, are passed over in a single verse, as productive of no event which required a particular detail.’ *Graves*, vol. ii. pp. 146, 147.—The whole account however illustrates the character given of human nature in the Scriptures ; and shews in a most affecting manner, the consequences of attending on the worship and service of God, or of neglecting them, in respect of national prosperity or adversity.

## CHAP. I.

Judah and Simeon war against the Canaanites, defeat Adoni-bezek, and retaliate on him his cruelty to captive kings, 1—7. Jerusalem is taken, 8, 9. The sons of Anak slain, 10. Othniel takes Debir, and marries Caleb's daughter, 11—15. The Kenites dwell with Judah, 16. Hormah, Gaza, Askelon, and Ekron, are taken by Judah and Simeon: and Hebron is given to Caleb, 17—20. Benjamin is unable to drive the Jebusites from Jerusalem, 21. Ephraim and Manasseh take Bethel, 22—25. A Canaanite builds a city called Luz, 26. The Canaanites are not wholly expelled by Manasseh, 27, 28; by Ephraim, 29; by Zebulun, 30; by Asher, 31, 32; by Naphtali, 33. The Amorites force Dan into the mountain, 34—36.

<sup>a</sup> Josh. xxiv. 29, 30.

<sup>b</sup> xx. 18, 28. Ex. xxviii. 30. Num. xxvii. 21. 1 Sam. xxiii. 9, 10.

<sup>c</sup> Gen. xlix. 8—10. Num. ii. 3. vii. 12. Ps. lxxviii. 68—70. Heb. vii. 14. Rev. v. 5. xix. 11—16.

<sup>d</sup> Gen. xxix. 23. 35. Josh. xix. 1.

<sup>e</sup> 17. 2 Sam. x. 11.

**NOW** <sup>a</sup>after the death of Joshua it came to pass, that the children of Israel <sup>b</sup>asked the LORD, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?

<sup>2</sup> And the LORD said, <sup>c</sup>Judah shall go up; behold, I have delivered the land into his hand.

<sup>3</sup> And Judah said unto <sup>d</sup>Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites, and <sup>e</sup>I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him.

## NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. Joshua left no successor, as Moses had done; and therefore some time after his death, (it is not known how long,) the people, being convinced that the war against the Canaanites should be continued, were in doubt how it was to be conducted, and which tribe should take the lead in this service; and in these respects some of the principal persons enquired of the Lord, probably by Urim and Thummim. (Notes, Ex. xxviii. 30. Num. xxvii. 21.) It would have been well if they had always continued in the same mind: but sloth, cowardice, and unbelief, and perhaps a misjudged lenity, prevailed with them, to leave their work unfinished; which created them almost an infinity of trouble and misery afterwards. (Notes, Josh. xvi. 10. xvii. 11—13. xxiii. 13.)

V. 2. (Notes, Gen. xlix. 8—10.) The numerous and valiant tribe of Judah, whence the Messiah was to descend, and which was in all things to have the precedence, was directed to renew the war; and by their example to embolden their brethren, and to mark out to them the path to victory and prosperity. For it is evident, that this first expedition was intended to make way for others, being undertaken by common consent for the public benefit; and the Lord, in promising to put Judah in possession of his inheritance, intimated his purpose of rendering that event subservient to the more complete conquest of the whole country.—Probably the Israelites had rapidly increased since the divi-

<sup>4</sup> And Judah went up, and the <sup>e</sup>LORD delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand: and they slew of them in <sup>f</sup>Bezek ten thousand men.

<sup>5</sup> And they found Adoni-bezek in Bezek; and they fought against him, and they slew the Canaanites and the Perizzites.

<sup>6</sup> But Adoni-bezek fled; and they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes.

<sup>7</sup> And Adoni-bezek said, Threescore and ten kings, having <sup>g</sup>their thumbs and their great toes cut off, <sup>h</sup>gathered their meat under my table: <sup>i</sup>as I have done, <sup>j</sup>so God hath requited me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died.

<sup>8</sup> (Now <sup>k</sup>the children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and had taken it, and smitten it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire.)

<sup>9</sup> And <sup>l</sup>afterwards the children of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites that dwelt in the mountain, and in the south and in the <sup>m</sup>valley.

<sup>10</sup> And Judah went against the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron, (now

Ex. xxiii. 28, 29. Deut. vii. 2. ix. 8. Josh. x. 8—10. xi. 6—8. 1 Sam. xiv. 6. 10. xvii. 46, 47. 1 Kings xxii. 6. 15.

1 Sam. xi. 8.

Heb. the thumbs of their hands and of their feet.

<sup>†</sup> Or, gleaned.

h Ex. xxi. 23—25.

Lev. xxiv. 19—21. 1 Sam. xv. 33. 1a. xxxiii. 1.

Matt. vii. 2.

Luke vi. 37, 38.

Jam. ii. 13. Rev. xiii. 10. xvi. 6.

Rom. ii. 16.

k 21. Josh. xv. 63.

l Josh. x. 36. xk. 21. xv. 13—20.

m Or, low country.

sion; and now, wanting room, they were excited to greater activity against their enemies.

V. 3. As the lot of Simeon lay within that of Judah, it was very proper for them to assist each other against the common enemy. (Note, Josh. xix. 1—9.)—It is probable that Caleb commanded in this war (9—15).

V. 4. And the LORD delivered.] <sup>a</sup>We meet with no such religious expression, which occurs often here in these holy books, in any heathen writer. Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref. f.)

V. 5—7. Adoni-bezek signifies the lord of Bezek. This prince had, it seems, been a great warrior, and a severe tyrant over his vanquished enemies; for he had seventy of the petty princes of those times, one after another, his prisoners: and having disabled them, with great disgrace and pain, by cutting off their thumbs and great toes, he forced them to gather their food as dogs under his table. The Israelites hearing of this, probably by divine direction, retaliated upon him; and his own conscience extorted from him a confession of the justice of God in this punishment! (Marg. Ref. h.) Some have thought that he was a true penitent, and that on this account his life was spared.

V. 8. The tribe of Judah had, perhaps some time before, seized on the city of Jerusalem: though part of it lay within the lot of Benjamin, which seems to have been yielded to them. But the Jebusites still held the hill of Zion. (Notes, 21. Josh. xv. 63. 2 Sam. v. 6—8.)

V. 10—15. (Notes, Josh. xv. 13—19.) The words ren-

on Josh. xiv. 15. the name of Hebron before *was* <sup>a</sup> Kirjath-arba,) and they slew <sup>a</sup> Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai.

<sup>a</sup> 20. Num. xiii. 22, 33. Josh. xv. 13, 14. Ps. xxxiii. 16, 17. Ec. ix. 11. Jer. ix. 23. 11 And from thence he went against the inhabitants of Debir: (and the name of <sup>o</sup> Debir before *was* Kirjath-sepher:)

<sup>a</sup> Josh. x. 38, 39. xv. 15. <sup>p</sup> Josh. xv. 16, 17. 1 Sam. xvii. 26. xviii. 23. 12 And <sup>r</sup> Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife.

<sup>a</sup> iii. 9. 13 And <sup>q</sup> Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife.

14 And it came to pass, when she came to him, that she moved him to ask of her father <sup>a</sup> a field: and she lighted from off *her* ass; and Caleb said unto her, What wilt thou?

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xxxiii. 11. 1 Sam. xxv. 18. 27. 2 Cor. ix. 5. Marg. Heb. vi. 7. 15 And she said unto him, Give me <sup>r</sup> a blessing: for thou hast given me a south land, give me also springs of water. And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the nether springs.

<sup>a</sup> iv. 11, 17. Num. x. 20—32. xxiv. 21, 22. 1 Sam. xv. 6. 1 Chr. ii. 55. <sup>t</sup> Ex. iii. 1. iv. 18. xviii. 1. 7. 12. 14—17. 27. Num. x. 29. <sup>u</sup> iii. 18. Deut. xxxiv. 3. 2 Chr. xxviii. 16. <sup>x</sup> Num. xxi. 1. Josh. xii. 14. <sup>y</sup> Num. x. 32. <sup>z</sup> See on 8. 16 ¶ And the children of <sup>r</sup> the Kenite, <sup>r</sup> Moses's father-in-law, went up out of the <sup>a</sup> city of palm-trees with the children of Judah into the wilderness of Judah, <sup>r</sup> which *lieth* in the south of Arad: and <sup>r</sup> they went and dwelt among the people.

<sup>a</sup> 2 Chr. xiv. 10. Zephathah. 17 ¶ And <sup>r</sup> Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they slew the Canaanites that inhabited <sup>a</sup> Zephath, and ut-

terly destroyed it. And the name of the city was called <sup>b</sup> Hormah.

18 Also Judah took <sup>o</sup> Gaza with the coast thereof, and Askelon with the coast thereof, and Ekron with the coast thereof.

19 And <sup>d</sup> the Lord was with Judah, and <sup>r</sup> he drave out *the inhabitants of* the mountain; but <sup>o</sup> could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had <sup>r</sup> chariots of iron.

20 And <sup>r</sup> they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses said: and he expelled thence <sup>b</sup> the three sons of Anak.

21 And the children of <sup>r</sup> Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.

22 ¶ And <sup>r</sup> the house of Joseph, they also went up against Bethel: and <sup>r</sup> the Lord *was* with them.

23 And the house of Joseph <sup>m</sup> sent to descry Bethel. (Now the name of the city before *was* <sup>a</sup> Luz.)

24 And the spies saw a man come forth out of the city, and they said unto him, Shew us, we pray thee, the entrance into the city, and <sup>o</sup> we will shew thee mercy.

25 And when he shewed them the entrance into the city, <sup>r</sup> they smote the city with the edge of the sword: but they let go the man and all his family.

26 And the man went into <sup>a</sup> the land

<sup>b</sup> Num. xiv. 45. xx. 8. Josh. xix. 4.

<sup>c</sup> iii. 8. xvi. 1, 2. 21. Ex. xxxiii. 31. —See on Josh. xlii. 3. xv. 45—47. 1 Sam. vi. 17.

<sup>d</sup> 2. vi. 12, 13. Gen. xxxix. 2. 21. Josh. i. 6. 9. xiv. 12. 2 Sam. v. 10. Ps. xlv. 7. 11. 1a. vii. 14. viii. 10. xli. 10. 14. 15. Matt. i. 23. Rom. viii. 3.

<sup>e</sup> Or, he possessed the mountain.

<sup>f</sup> 27—32. Josh. vii. 12. Matt. xiv. 30, 31. xvii. 19, 20. Phil. iv. 13.

<sup>g</sup> Josh. xi. 1—9. xvii. 16—18. <sup>h</sup> Num. xiv. 24. Deut. i. 36. Josh. xiv. 9—14. xv. 13, 14. xxi. 11, 12.

<sup>i</sup> See on 10. Num. xiii. 22.

<sup>j</sup> xix. 10—12. Josh. xv. 63. xviii. 11—28. 2 Sam. v. 6—9.

<sup>k</sup> Num. i. 10. 32. Josh. xiv. 4. xvi. 1—4. 1 Chr. vii. 29. Rev. vii. 8.

<sup>l</sup> See on 19. 2 Kings xviii. 7.

<sup>m</sup> xviii. 2. Josh. ii. 1. vii. 2.

<sup>n</sup> Gen. xxviii. 19. xxxv. 6. xlviii. 3.

<sup>o</sup> Josh. ii. 12—14. 1 Sam. xxx. 15.

<sup>p</sup> Josh. vi. 22—25.

<sup>q</sup> 2 Kings vii. 6. 2 Chr. i. 17.

dered, "they slew Sheshai, &c." may be rendered, "they *smote* Sheshai." In the passage referred to it is said, "Caleb drove thence the three sons of Anak:" but it is not clear that he slew them (20).—The same expedition is evidently meant, which probably took place at this time; but the account of it was inserted in the book of Joshua, to complete the history concerning Caleb. Having been employed in the publick affairs of Israel, he seems not till this time to have obtained full possession of the inheritance granted him.

V. 16. (Note, Num. x. 31, 32.) The descendants of Hobab, the son of Jethro, (who it seems acceded to the invitation given him by Moses,) at their first entrance into Canaan, pitched their tents near Jericho, called also "The city of palm-trees," (Marg. Ref. u,) which lay in the lot of Benjamin: but afterwards they joined themselves to Judah, and settled in the borders of the wilderness, where they seem to have lived a quiet life, little interfering in publick affairs. (Notes, iv. 11. 1 Chr. ii. 55. Jer. xxxv. 1—7.)

V. 17. Marg. Ref.—Note, Josh. xii. 14.

V. 18. The Philistines, having been spared, contrary

to the divine command, when their cities were taken, in a short time recovered possession of them, and were indeed "pricks in the eyes and thorns in the sides" of Israel, during many ages. (Note, Josh. xxiii. 13.)

V. 19. The men of Judah were unable to drive out the inhabitants of the valley; not that the Lord refused to help them, but because their courage and faith failed them at the sight of the iron chariots, which were of no use in the mountain. (Note, Josh. xvii. 16.) They forgot how Joshua had attacked and destroyed the Canaanites, who had this formidable advantage: and when they lost their confidence in God, they could do nothing. (Notes, Josh. xi. 4—6. Matt. xiv. 28—32.)

V. 21. When this history was written, probably by Samuel, the Jebusites kept possession of mount Zion, which lay in the lot of Judah; and they seem also to have lived under tribute with the Benjamites, in that part of the city which belonged to them. (Note, 8.)

V. 22—26. (Marg. Ref.) The assailants of Bethel, having seized a man of the race of the Canaanites, found out, by his means, some unguarded place or private en-

of the Hittites, and built a city, and called the name thereof Luz: which is the name thereof unto this day.

<sup>r</sup> Josh. xvii. 11—13.  
<sup>s</sup> See on Josh. xvii. 11—13.  
<sup>t</sup> v. 19. Josh. xxi. 25.  
27 ¶ Neither did <sup>r</sup>Manasseh drive out the inhabitants of <sup>r</sup>Beth-shean and her towns, nor <sup>r</sup>Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns: but the Canaanites would dwell in that land.

<sup>u</sup> Ex. xxiii. 32.  
Deut. vii. 2.  
<sup>i</sup> Sam. xv. 9.  
Ps. cvi. 34, 35.  
Jer. xlviii. 10.  
28 And it came to pass <sup>u</sup>when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out.

<sup>x</sup> See on Josh. xvi. 10. 1 Kings ix. 16.  
29 Neither did <sup>r</sup>Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer: but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.

<sup>y</sup> Josh. xix. 15.  
Nahallal.  
30 Neither did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of <sup>r</sup>Nahalol: but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became tributaries.

<sup>z</sup> See on Josh. xix. 24—30.  
31 Neither did <sup>r</sup>Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho, nor the inhabi-

tants of Zidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib, nor of Helbah, nor of Aphik, nor of Rehob:

32 But the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; for they did not drive them out.

<sup>a</sup> See on Josh. xix. 32—38.  
33 Neither did <sup>a</sup>Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, nor the inhabitants of Beth-anath; but <sup>b</sup>he dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: nevertheless the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath <sup>c</sup>became tributaries unto them. <sup>b</sup> 32. <sup>c</sup> 30, 35.

<sup>d</sup> xviii. 1. Josh. xix. 47.  
34 And <sup>d</sup>the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain; for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley:

35 But the Amorites would dwell in mount Heres in <sup>e</sup>Aijalon, and in <sup>f</sup>Shaalbim: yet the hand of the house of Joseph <sup>g</sup>prevailed, so that they became tributaries. <sup>e</sup> xii. 12. Josh. x. 12. Aijalon. <sup>f</sup> Josh. xix. 42. Shaalbim. <sup>g</sup> 1 Kings iv. 9. <sup>h</sup> Heb. was heavy.

36 And the coast of the Amorites was <sup>i</sup>from <sup>j</sup>the going up to Akkrabbim, from the rock, and upward. <sup>i</sup> Num. xxxiv. 4. Josh. xv. 2, 3. <sup>j</sup> Or, Maaleh-akkrabbim.

trance, by which they took the city. He seems to have acted, not from faith in God or love to Israel, but out of fear, and to save his life: and therefore, when set at liberty, he did not unite interests with the worshippers of JEHOVAH, as Rahab had done; (*Notes*, Josh. ii. 4—11;) but retiring to his countrymen, who had sought shelter in some adjacent regions, he built a city, which he called after his own city: yet not Bethel, or the house of God; but according to its old name, Luz. (*Note*, Gen. xxviii. 19.)

*Land of the Hittites.* (26) The scripture does not any where shew, where this land of the Hittites was situated: but it was without the boundaries of the promised land. (*Note*, 2 Kings vi. 7.) This confirms the opinion, that the Israelites might spare the lives of such Canaanites, as either submitted to become slaves, and renounced idolatry, or emigrated into other regions. (*Notes*, Josh. vi. 2. ix. 3—5. xi. 19, 20.)

V. 28. The people neglected their opportunity through self-indulgence, when they had their enemies in their power; probably letting the idolaters live among them as tenants, even in the villages: and afterwards they were unable to drive them out. Thus their sin prepared its own punishment, and the love of present ease became the cause of their perpetual disquiet. (*Notes*, 1. 18. Josh. xvii. 11—15. xxiii. 13.)

V. 34, 35. In the distress of the Danites, the descendants of Joseph seem to have come to their assistance; and thus they checked the progress of the Amorites, confined them within narrow limits, and compelled them to pay tribute to the Danites. None of these tribes, mentioned in the latter part of the chapter, properly improved their

advantages, satisfying themselves with rendering those tributaries, whom the Lord had commanded them utterly to destroy, or at least to expel from the country, unless they renounced idolatry, and submitted to be bond slaves.—The power of the Amorites and Philistines soon compelled the Danites to seek possessions in a distant part of the land. (*Notes*, xviii. Josh. xix. 40—48.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No detached efforts, however judicious and spirited, without steady and constant perseverance, can effect important changes, rectify abuses in church or state, or give permanent and enlarged success to true religion. For all such attempts may be compared to raising a large weight to a great height, in which the whole labour is lost, if the exertion ceases before the object be fully accomplished.—They who have the precedency in rank or reputation, should go before others in every good work, undismayed by dangers and difficulties, that they may animate them by their example: the strongest ought not to despise, but to value, the assistance of the weakest; and it becomes the people of God to unite together and help each other against their common enemies; and especially to assist the whole ‘church militant here on earth,’ with their constant and fervent prayers.—We are sure to have all profitable success, when we engage in any enterprize according to the Lord’s direction, and in dependence on his help: and whatever labour, conduct, or courage we display, or whatever human aid we employ, to him the whole glory belongs.—What a slippery place is worldly prosperity! especially when it increases pride, insolence, or cruelty; for “a

## CHAP. II.

a vi. 12. xlii. 8.  
Gen. xvi. 7—10.  
13. xlii. 11, 12.  
xlviii. 16. Ex. iii.  
2—6. xiv. 19.  
xxiii. 20. xxxiii.  
14. Josh. v. 13.  
14. 1s. lxiii. 9.  
Hos. xii. 3—5.  
Zech. iii. 1, 2.  
Mal. iii. 1. Acts  
vii. 30—33.

• O, Messenger.

b 5.

c Ex. iii. 7, 8. xiv.  
14. xx. 2. Deut.  
iv. 34. Ps. lxxviii.  
51—53. cv. 36—  
38.

d Gen. xii. 7. xxii.  
16, 17. xxi. 3.  
4. Josh. iii. 10.  
Ps. cv. 44, 45.

e See on Gen. xvii.  
7, 8.—1s. xxvi.  
42. Num. xiv.  
34. Ps. lxxxix.  
34. Jer. xiv. 21.  
xxxiii. 20, 21.  
Zech. xi. 10.

f Ex. xxiii. 32, 33.  
xxxiv. 12—16.  
Num. xxxiii. 52.  
53. Deut. vii. 2  
—4. 16. 25, 26.  
xii. 2, 3. xx. 16  
—18. 2 Cor. vi. 14—17.

An Angel rebukes the people for disobedience; and the place is called Bochim, from their weeping, 1—5. They serve the Lord till Joshua and the elders die; but in the next generation run into shameful idolatries, 6—13. God is angry with them; yet pities their distresses, and raises up judges to deliver them, 14—18. Their ingratitude provokes him to permit the Canaanites to remain, in order to prove Israel, 19—23.

AND \*an \*Angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to \*Bochim, and said, \*I made you to go up out of Egypt, and \*have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, \*I will never break my covenant with you.

2 And 'ye shall make no league

with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: <sup>g</sup> but ye have not obeyed my voice: <sup>h</sup> why have ye done this?

3 Wherefore 'I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and <sup>i</sup> their gods shall be a snare unto you.

4 And it came to pass, when the Angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that <sup>k</sup> the people lifted up their voice, and wept.

5 And they called the name of that place <sup>j</sup> Bochim: and <sup>l</sup> they sacrificed there unto the LORD.

g Ezra ix. 1—3. 10  
—13. Ps. lxxviii.  
55—58. cvi. 34—  
40. Jer. vii. 23—  
28. 2 Thes. i. 8.  
1 Pet. iv. 17.  
h Gen. iii. 11, 12.  
iv. 10. Ex. xxxiii.  
21. Jer. ii. 5. 18.  
31—33. 36.  
i 21. Num. xxxiii.  
55. Josh. xxiii.  
13.  
j Ex. xxxiii. 33  
xxxiv. 12. Deut.  
vii. 16. 1 Kings  
xi. 1—7. Ps. cvi.  
36.

k 1 Sam. vii. 6.  
Ezra x. 1. Prov.  
xxvii. 10. Jer.  
xxxiii. 3. Zech. xii.  
19. Luke vi. 21.  
vii. 38. 2 Cor.  
vii. 10. Jam. iv.  
9.  
l That is, Weep-  
ers. Gen. xxxv.  
8. Josh. vii. 26.  
1 vi. 24. xlii. 19.  
1 Sam. vii. 9.

“haughty spirit goes before a fall.” Men often read their crimes in their punishment: and at last every mouth shall be stopped, and all sinners be constrained to admit the justice of God in their extremest miseries. Happy they, who justify him in their temporal afflictions, plead guilty before his mercy-seat, and by repentance and faith seek deliverance from the wrath to come. (Note, Rom. iii. 19, 20.)—Great things might be achieved by the professors of the gospel, if they unitedly endeavoured to promote the common cause of truth and righteousness: for then the “LORD” would be with them,” and every mountain would sink into a plain. But when outward difficulties are viewed by the eye of sense, and the almighty power of God is forgotten, our hearts grow discouraged, our expectations feeble, and our attempts timid and wavering: and then no wonder that we do not prosper; for according to our faith will be our vigour, zeal, and success. Love of ease, indulgence, and worldly advantages, both spring from and foster unbelief. Thus many an awakened sinner, who seemed to have escaped Satan’s bondage, “is entangled” again, and overcome, and his last state is worse than the “first.” Thus even many a believer, who begins well, is hindered: he grows negligent and unwatchful, and afraid of the cross; his graces languish, his evil propensities revive, Satan perceives his advantage, and plies him with suitable temptations; the world recovers its hold; he loses his peace, brings guilt into his conscience, anguish into his heart, discredit upon his character, and reproach upon the gospel; his hands are tied, his mouth is closed, and his usefulness ruined. And though, through sharp rebukes and salutary chastisements, he be so recovered, that he do not finally perish; yet he may lament through his remaining days, and groan upon his dying bed, to reflect what opportunities of glorifying God and serving his church, he has irrecoverably lost: nay, perhaps in that solemn hour, he will be distressed with perplexing doubts about the state of his own soul! (P. O. Heb. iv. 1—11.) Even the very best of Christians in this way suffer some loss, and do not live up to the extent of their privileges and usefulness. Let us then “watch and be sober,” and pursue our victory against every inbred foe; not content with supposed

delivery from the dominion of sin, but aiming continually to weaken and “crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts,” even unto entire extirpation. For we can have no fellowship with the enemies of God within us or around us, but to our hurt; and therefore our only wisdom and interest is, to declare and maintain unceasing war against them, even unto the end of our days.

## NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1—5. The language of the reproof here given, demonstrates who this Angel was. (Notes, Gen. xvi. 10, 11. xxii. 11, 12. 16—18. xlviii. 16. Ex. iii. 2.) ‘These words’ evidently shew, that it was not a created angel, but an uncreated, even that very person who appeared to Joshua hard by Jericho, (Josh. v. 13, 14,) which I have shewn there was God himself. For who but God could speak in this style, “I made you to go out of Egypt?” No prophet, nor any created angel, would have been so bold; but would have prefaced to this speech, in some such words as these, “Thus saith the LORD, I have made you to go, &c.” Supposing then this Angel to be the same with him that appeared, it was fit for him now to appear as coming from Gilgal, to put them in mind of that illustrious appearance of God near that place, and the assurance that he gave them of his presence with them in the conquest of the land, and the solemn covenant they made with him, by the renewing of circumcision in that place; which upbraided them with their base ingratitude to God, and their sloth in not endeavouring to expel the ‘Canaanites.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, Josh. v. 2—10. 13—15. vi. 3—5.)—It was then the great Angel of the covenant, the Word and Son of God, who spake as *JEHOVAH*, as *HE* who brought Israel out of Egypt, put them in possession of Canaan, entered into covenant with them, gave them commandments, and now called them to account for their disobedience; shewing that they, not he, had violated the national covenant. (Marg. Ref. f—j. Notes, 23. Ex. xxiii. 20—23. xxxiv. 11—17. Josh. xxiii. 13.) He first appeared at Gilgal, and afterwards was seen coming to Shiloh, where the people were assembled at one of their solemn feasts: for it is probable, from the sacrifice which they offered,

B. C. 1444.  
m Josh. xxii. 6.  
xxiv. 28.

6 ¶ And when <sup>m</sup> Joshua had let the people go, the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land.

n Josh. xxiv. 31.  
2 Kings xii. 2.  
2 Chr. xxiv. 2.  
14—22. Phil. ii. 12.  
\* Heb. prolonged days after Joshua.

7 And <sup>a</sup> the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that <sup>a</sup> outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD that he did for Israel.

o Josh. xxiv. 29.  
29.  
B. C. 1426.

8 And <sup>o</sup> Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *being* an hundred and ten years old.

p Josh. xix. 50.  
xxiv. 30. Timnath-herah.

9 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in <sup>p</sup> Timnath-heres in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash.

q Gen. xv. 15.  
xxv. 8. 17. xlix.  
33. Num. xxvii.  
13. Deut. xxxi.  
16. 2 Sam. vii.  
12. Acts xiii. 36.  
r Ex. v. 2. 1 Sam.  
ii. 12. 1 Chr.  
xxviii. 9. Job xli.  
14. Ps. xcii. 5, 6.  
Is. v. 12. Jer. ix.  
3. xlii. 16. xxxi.  
34. Gal. iv. 8, 9.  
2 Thes. i. 8. Tit.  
i. 16.

10 And also all that generation were <sup>a</sup> gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which <sup>r</sup> knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.

s iv. i. vi. 1. xlii.  
1. Gen. xlii. 13.  
xxxviii. 7. 2 Chr.  
xxxii. 2. 6. Ez.  
viii. 12.

11 And the children of Israel <sup>r</sup> did evil in the sight of the LORD, <sup>r</sup> and served Baalim.

t iii. 7. x. 6. 10.  
1 Sam. vii. 4.  
1 Kings xviii. 18.  
2 Chr. xxviii. 2.  
xxxiii. 3. Jer. ii.  
23. ix. 14. Hos.  
ii. 13—17.

12 And they <sup>a</sup> forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed <sup>a</sup> other gods, of the gods of the people that *were* round about them, and <sup>a</sup> bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger.

u See on Deut. xiii.  
5. xxix. 18. 25.  
xxxii. 16. 17.  
xxxiii. 16. xxxiii.  
17.

13 And they forsook the LORD, and <sup>a</sup> served Baal and Ashtaroth.

v 8. Deut. vi.  
14, 15.

14 And <sup>a</sup> the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and <sup>a</sup> he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he <sup>b</sup> sold them into

x See on Ex. xx.  
5.

y 11. 1 Sam xxxi.  
10. 1 Kings xi. 5.  
33. 2 Cor. xxi.  
13. 1 Cor. vii. 5.  
x. 20—22.

z x. 7. Lev. xxvi.  
28. Num. xxxii.  
14. Deut. xxxviii.  
20. 68. xxi. 19.  
20. xxxi. 17, 18.  
2 Chr. xxxvi. 16.  
Ps. cvi. 40—42.

a 2 Kings xvii. 20.  
2 Chr. xv. 6.  
b iii. 8. iv. 2. Ps.  
xli. 12. Is. i. 1.

that they were at Shiloh.—The spot where he appeared was called *Bochim*, or *The weepers*, because of their weeping. But though they shewed signs of deep humiliation, and many of them might be truly penitent: yet the subsequent history evinces that no general or permanent reformation took place.

V. 6—10. (*Josh. xxiv. 29—31.*) This part of the history seems here repeated, to shew the reason given for the severe reproof just before mentioned. While Joshua lived the people had served the Lord with considerable diligence; but after his death, and that of the elders, who by their authority and admonitions had kept them to the worship of God, they relapsed into idolatry. As the elders, who survived Joshua, might, some of them at least, live several years after his decease; this term should be deducted from the general account of Israel's idolatries, recorded in this book. (*See Preface.*)—The place where Joshua was buried, is here called *Timnath-heres*, instead of *Timnath-herah*: the word *heres* signifies *the sun*; and it has been thought, that

the hands of their enemies round about, so that they <sup>c</sup> could not any longer stand before their enemies.

c i. 19. 34. Lev  
xxvi. 37. Deut.  
xxxii. 30. Josh.  
vii. 12, 13. Ps.  
xlv. 9, 10. Jer.  
xxxvii. 10.

15 Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was <sup>a</sup> against them for evil, <sup>a</sup> as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had <sup>a</sup> sworn unto them: and they were <sup>c</sup> greatly distressed.

d Jer. xviii. 8.  
xxi. 10. xli. 11.  
27. Mic. ii. 3.  
e Lev. xxvi. 16, &c.  
Deut. iv. 25—28.  
xxviii. 15, &c.  
Josh. xxiii. 15,  
16.  
f Deut. xxxii. 40,  
41.

16 Nevertheless, <sup>b</sup> the LORD raised up judges, which <sup>d</sup> delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

g x. 9. 1 Sam. xiii.  
6. xiv. 24. xxx.  
6. 2 Cor. iv. 8.  
h iii. 9, 10. 15. iv.  
5. vi. 14. 1 Sam.  
xii. 11. Acts xii.  
20.

17 And yet <sup>e</sup> they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went <sup>a</sup> <sup>k</sup> whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned <sup>e</sup> quickly out of the way <sup>m</sup> which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; *but* they did not so.

i Heb. *saved*.  
Neh. ix. 27.  
j Sam. viii. 5—  
8. xli. 12. 17. 19.  
k Ex. xxxi. 15, 16.  
Lev. xxi. 7. Ps.  
lxxvii. 27. cvi. 39.  
Hos. ii. 2. Rev.  
xvii. 1—5.  
l Ex. xxxii. 8.  
Deut. ix. 12. 16.  
Gal. i. 6.  
m 7. Josh. xxiv. 24.  
31.

18 And when the LORD raised them up judges, then <sup>n</sup> the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it <sup>o</sup> repented the LORD because of <sup>p</sup> their groanings, by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.

n Ex. iii. 12. Josh.  
t. 5. Acts xviii.  
9, 10.

19 And it came to pass, <sup>a</sup> when the judge was dead, *that* they returned, and <sup>a</sup> corrupted themselves <sup>r</sup> more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them: they <sup>r</sup> ceased not from their own doings, nor from their <sup>r</sup> stubborn way.

o x. 16. Gen. vi.  
6. Deut. xxxii.  
30. Ps. xc. 13.  
cvi. 44, 45. Jer.  
xviii. 7—10. Jon.  
iii. 10.

20 And <sup>a</sup> the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and he said, Because that this people hath <sup>a</sup> transgressed my

p Ex. ii. 24. 2 Kings  
xiii. 4. 23. 28. Ps.  
xii. 5.  
q See on 7.—iii.  
11, 12. iv. 1. viii.  
33. Josh. xxiv. 31.  
2 Chr. xxiv. 17,  
18.

r Or, *were corrupt*.  
r Jer. xv. 12. Matt.  
xxiii. 32.

s Heb. *let nothing fall of their*.  
1 Sam. xv. 23.  
Ps. lxxviii. 8.  
Jer. iii. 17. xxxiii.  
17.

t 14. iii. 8. x. 7.  
Ex. xxxii. 10, 11.  
Deut. xxxii. 22.

u Ex. xxiv. 3—5.  
Deut. xxix. 10—  
16. xxiv. 21—25.  
Jer. xxxi. 32.  
Ez. xx. 37.

it was so called, because of some memorial there erected, of the Lord's miraculously retarding the course of the sun at Joshua's word. (*Note, Josh. x. 12—14.*)

V. 11—13. Baalim and Ashtaroth are both plural, the one masculine, and the other feminine; and they seem to be used generally for all the gods and goddesses, which were worshipped by the neighbouring nations. (*Note, x. 6—9.*)

V. 14. *He sold them.*] As the judge was used to sell the criminal, or the creditor the debtor, for a slave, that the injured party might be reimbursed by their price; so the Lord recovered, as it were, that glory by punishing Israel, of which they had robbed him by their sins; and he made the Canaanites the instruments of his righteous indignation. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Deut. xxxii. 30, 31. Is. i. 1—3.*)

V. 15—22. (*Marg. Ref.*) These verses contain a general account of the state of Israel, after their relapse into idolatry, (10, 11,) during the days of the judges; which

covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice;

x 3. iii. 3 Josh.  
xxiii. 13. Ez. xx.  
24—26.

7 See on iii. 1—4.

2 Gen. xxii. 1.

Deut. viii. 2. 16.

xxiii. 3. 2 Chr.

xxiii. 31. Job

xxiii. 10. Ps. lxxvi.

10. Prov. xvii. 3

Mal. iii. 2, 3.

21 I also \* will not henceforth drive out any from before them, of the nations which Joshua left when he died;

22 That \* through them I may \* prove

Israel, whether they will keep the way of the LORD, to walk therein, as their fathers did keep *it*, or not.

23 Therefore the LORD \* left those \* *Or, suffered* nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them into the hand of Joshua.

is more particularly illustrated in the subsequent chapters.

*Repented.* (18) *Note, Gen. vi. 6, 7. Deut. xxxii. 36.—‘He altered the course of his providence.’ Bp. Patrick.*

*When the judge was dead &c.* (19) While the several judges lived, religion was generally upheld.

V. 23. The Lord foresaw the future conduct of Israel, and therefore so ordered it in his Providence, that a remnant of the Canaanites should be spared; that by them the proneness of his people to idolatry might both be manifested and chastised. (*Notes, 1—4. iii. 1, 2. Josh. xxiii. 13.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—10.

The goodness of God to mankind, his faithful engagements to those who trust him, and the beneficial tendency of all his precepts, combine to enhance the evil of every transgression: yet men will often gratify their importunate lusts, though their own reason and conscience testify, that they are acting a foolish and ungrateful part! for, as no good reason can be given for disobedience, it is much more easy to convince the judgment, than to dispose the heart to renounce sinful pursuits. But if transgressors cannot endure the rebukes of God’s word, and the convictions of their own conscience; how will they be able to stand before the tribunal of the holy, heart-searching Judge, who now in the endeared character of a Saviour, and in the mild accents of love, warns and persuades them, to “repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance?”—“As many as he loves, he rebukes, and chastens:” indeed all temporal afflictions are in their tendency *castigatory*, and warn men to forsake sin, and seek forgiveness, ere it be too late: but the eternal punishment of the world to come will be entirely penal, the final vengeance of God upon his incorrigible enemies.—It is pleasing to see men weep for their sins: but though such relents attend that “godly sorrow, which worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of;” yet they frequently wear off: nay, even faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ may be professed, and the memorial of his dying love attended on, with great apparent affection yet without renovation of heart and newness of life. We have to mourn over many, whom on such grounds we supposed to be converts, and to regret “that their goodness is as a morning-cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.” (*Hos. vi. 4.*)—The worship of God is in its own nature joy, praise, and thanksgiving, and our crimes alone render weeping needful: yet considering what we are, and what we have done, it is much to be wished, that our religious assemblies were more frequently called “Bochim,” “the place of the weepers.” “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.”—Were we duly attentive to the word of God, we might foresee many of

those events which take place in his Providence. We might especially foretel severe afflictions to those godly persons, who associate and connect themselves with the openly profane; or who relax their diligence in mortifying and striving against sin, and in watching against temptation.—Alas! that prevalence of religion, which appears in times of general reformation, often arises from temporary affections and personal regards: so that when the influence and example of some respected or beloved person cease; when there is no longer any fear of grieving him, or being rebuked by him; and when the emotion of the passions subsides; men’s unmortified lusts again recover the ascendancy, and many fair appearances die away. We have need therefore to examine how matters stand with ourselves, and to pray without ceasing, “that we may be rooted and grounded in love,” and “that Christ may indeed dwell in our hearts by faith.” And pious parents should be very diligent in instructing their children, and very earnest in praying that they may inherit their faith and grace: for the speedy decline of religion, after it has been very flourishing, must generally be ascribed in great measure to their negligence in this respect; so that very often the ignorance and ungodliness of children are a disgrace to the memory of their parents.

##### V. 11—23.

The carnal mind of man is enmity against God: the tendency of our fallen nature is to apostasy; and the vilest lust, or the meanest worldly object, will be preferred to his favour and the pleasure of his service, even by those who have the benefit of his written word and the preaching of the gospel; unless his almighty power be continually exerted, his grace communicated to them, and his image renewed upon their hearts. This is the cause of all human misery, in time and to eternity: for if men rob God of his glory, he will sell them for their sins into the hands of their enemies, and satisfy his justice in their punishment: and how wretched must they be, against whom are the oath and the hand of the immutable and almighty God! Their heaviest distresses on earth, unless timely repentance intervene, are the forerunners of eternal misery.—The vilest of the profane are more likely to prosper for a time, than apostate professors: nay, backsliding and inconsistent believers are more sure to experience affliction in this world, than any other persons. Yet the Lord has long patience, and manifests great compassion to his people; he is ready to forgive and to relieve; he raises up instruments to effect their deliverance, and over-rules their chastisements for good: and in all his dealings with them, it will at length be manifest, that they are saved not for the sake of their own righteousness, but for the sake of his great name; that “it is of his mercies, that they are not consumed;” and that he saves them from, and notwith-

## CHAP. III.

The nations left to prove Israel, 1—4. The people are seduced by them into idolatry, 5—7; sold into the hand of Chushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia, but delivered by Othniel, 8—11: and into that of Eglon king of Moab, but delivered by Ehud, 12—30. Shamgar slays six hundred Philistines with an ox-goad, 31.

NOW these *are* <sup>a</sup> the nations which the LORD left, to <sup>b</sup> prove Israel by them; (*even as many of Israel* <sup>c</sup> as had not known all the wars of Canaan;

2 Only that the generations of the children of Israel <sup>d</sup> might know to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof;)

3 *Namely*, <sup>e</sup> five lords of the Philistines, and all the <sup>f</sup> Canaanites, and the <sup>g</sup> Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt <sup>h</sup> in mount Lebanon, from mount Baalhermon unto the entering in of Hamath.

4 And they were <sup>i</sup> to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of

the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.

5 ¶ And the children of Israel <sup>j</sup> dwelt among the <sup>k</sup> Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites and Jebusites:

6 And <sup>l</sup> they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods.

7 And the children of Israel <sup>m</sup> did evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgot the LORD their God, and served Baalim and <sup>n</sup> the groves.

8 Therefore the anger of the LORD <sup>o</sup> was hot against Israel, and <sup>p</sup> he sold them into the hand of <sup>q</sup> Chushan-rishathaim king of <sup>r</sup> Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years.

9 And when the children of Israel <sup>s</sup> cried unto the LORD, the LORD <sup>t</sup> raised up a <sup>u</sup> deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them, *even* <sup>v</sup> Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother.

10 And <sup>w</sup> the Spirit of the LORD

a ii. 21, 22. Deut vii. 22.  
b Deut. viii. 2. 16. 2 Chr. xxxii. 31. Job. xxiii. 10. Prov. xviii. 3. Jer. vi. 27. xvii. 9. 10. Zech. xiii. 9. John ii. 24. 1 Pet. i. 7. iv. 12. Rev. ii. 23.  
c ii. 10.  
d Gen. ii. 17. iii. 5. 7. 2 Chr. xii. 8. Matt. x. 34—29. John xvi. 33. 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27. Eph. vi. 11—18. 1 Tim. vi. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 3. iv. 7. x. 7. xiv. 4. Josh. xiii. 3. 1 Sam. iv. 1, 2. vi. 18. xiii. 5. 19—23. xxix. 2.  
e iv. 2, 23. 24. Gen. x. 15—19. Num. xiii. 29.  
f x. 12. xviii. 7. Gen. xlix. 13. Josh. xi. 8—13. xix. 28.  
g Num. xxxiv. 8. Deut. i. 7. iii. 9. Josh. xi. 3. xiii. 5.  
h See on i. —Ex. xv. 25. Deut. xxxiii. 8. 1 Cor. xi. 19. 2 Thes. ii. 9—12.

j i. 29—32. Ps. cvi. 34—38.  
k Gen. x. 15—18. xv. 10—21. Ex. iii. 8. 17. Deut. vii. 1. Josh. ix. 1. Neh. ix. 8.  
l Ex. xxxiv. 16. Deut. vii. 3, 4. 1 Kings xi. 1—5. Ezra ix. 11, 12. Neh. xiii. 23—27. Ez. xvi. 3. m 12, 13. —See on ii. 11—13.  
n vi. 25. Ex. xxxiv. 13. Deut. xvi. 21. 1 Kings xvi. 33. xviii. 19. 2 Kings xxiii. 6. 14. 2 Chr. xv. 16. xxiv. 18. xxxii. 3. 19. xxxiv. 3. 7.  
o ii. 14. 20. Ex. xxix. 24. Deut. xxxix. 20. Ps. vi. 1. lxxxv. 3.  
p ii. 14. iv. 9. Deut. xxxii. 30. 1 Sam. xii. 9. la. 1. Rom. vii. 14.  
q Hab. ii. 7. Heb. Aram-naharaim. Ps. lx. title.  
r 15. iv. 3. vi. 7. x. 10. 1 Sam. xii. 10. Neh. ix. 27. Ps. xxii. 5. lxxviii. 34. cvi. 41—44. cvii. 13. 19.  
s See on ii. 16.  
t Heb. saviour.  
u See on i. 13.  
v vi. 34. xi. 29. xiii. 25. xiv. 6. 19. Num. xi. 17. xxvii. 18. 1 Sam. x. 6. xi. 6. xvi. 13. 2 Chr. xv. 1. xx. 14. Ps. ii. 11. 1 Cor. xii. 4—11. Heb. vi. 4.

standing their manifold transgressions.—The more the human heart is proved, the worse it is manifested to be; and so long as “we cease not from our own doings,” we can only be stubborn and rebellious (19).—For his own glory the Lord tries men, as silver is tried: and while he distinguishes between those who choose his ways, and those who forsake them; he will secure to himself the whole praise of all that is good in his people.—Too late his enemies will curse their folly, in neglecting those things which were commanded them; and the reflection that their opportunity is lost for ever will complete their misery. Let us then without delay obey the call of the gospel, declare war against every sin, and follow after holiness, unto the end of our days; that we may have “an entrance ministered unto us abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

## NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1, 2. Israel was surrounded by warlike nations, and it was also a type of ‘the church militant here on earth:’ it was not therefore proper that the people should be enervated by sloth and luxury, but rather inured to hardship and conflict. This the Lord was pleased to effect by the remains of the devoted nations, who were spared when they ought to have been destroyed; and the Israelites were in consequence engaged in continual contests with them. They had moreover tasted the sweets of victory without feeling the evils of war, in their first conquest of the land: but they proved ungrateful for the mercy, and left their work unfinished; and were therefore

made to feel the evils of war without the advantages of victory, in their future conflicts. (Notes, ii. 1—5. 23.)

V. 3. The Canaanites, here mentioned, seem to have been a tribe inhabiting the northern part of the land. (Marg. Ref. h. Note, iv. 2, 3.)—Zidon or Sidon seems to have been included in the grant made to Israel. (Josh. xiii. 6. xix. 28.)

V. 4. The remnant of the devoted nations continually made trial of the Israelites, by their example, allurements, and influence. When the people, amidst these snares, firmly adhered to the Lord and his worship, the event was honourable: but in general the trial detected the hypocrisy of their hearts, and their proneness to idolatry; and then their tempters became their scourges. (Notes, Gen. xxii. 1. Deut. viii. 2. Josh. xxiii. 13.)

V. 5—7. Instead of attempting to extirpate the inhabitants of the land, the Israelites endeavoured to live amicably with them; and this induced them to intermarry with them, and then to conform to their idolatrous worship, until numbers had utterly apostatised from God, in that very land, where by his tabernacle he dwelt in the midst of them. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Josh. xvi. 10. Ps. cvi. 35—38.)—“The groves” may denote those idols, which were worshipped under the shade of thick trees, especially Ashtaroth, or goddesses, as distinguished from Baalim. (Note, ii. 11—13.)

V. 8. King of Mesopotamia.] As this prince reigned beyond the Euphrates, his oppressing the Israelites, who lived at so great a distance from him, appeared the more evidently to be the effect of God’s displeasure. (Note, ii. 14.)

V. 9, 10. The people in their prosperity had forgot the

a Heb. was. \* came upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war: and the LORD delivered Chushan-rishathaim king of † Heb. Aram Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed against Chushan-rishathaim.

x 30. v. 31. viii. 28. Josh. xi. 23. Esth. ix. 22. y 9. Josh. xv. 17. 1 Chr. iv. 13. z C. 1354. 11 And \* the land had rest forty years: and † Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

z ii. 19. Hos. vi. 4. 12 ¶ And the children of Israel \* did evil again in the sight of the LORD: and \* the LORD strengthened Eglon <sup>b</sup> the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD.

a Ex. ix. 16. 2 Kings v. 1. Is. x. 15. xxxvii. 26. xlv. 1-4. Ez. xxxviii. 16. Dan. iv. 22. v. 18. John xix. 11. b 1 Sam. xii. 9. 13 And he gathered unto him the children of ° Ammon and Amalek, and went and smote Israel, and possessed the city of palm-trees.

c v. 14 Ps. lxxxiii 6-8.

d i. 16. Deut. xxxiv. 3. Ps. lxxxiii. 7.

14 So the children of Israel \* served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years.

15 But when the children of Israel \* cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised them up a deliverer, Ehud the son of Gera, \* a Benjamite, a man \* left-handed: and by him the children of Israel \* sent a present unto Eglon the king of Moab.

16 But Ehud made him a dagger which had <sup>b</sup> two edges, of a cubit length; and he did gird it under his raiment <sup>1</sup> upon his right thigh.

17 And he brought the present unto Eglon king of Moab: and Eglon was <sup>j</sup> a very fat man.

18 And when he had made an end to offer the present, he sent away the people that bare the present.

e Lev. xvi. 28-29. Deut. xxviii. 47, 48. B. C. 1336.

f See on 9.—Ps. 1. 16. xc. 15. Jer. xxix. 12, 13. xxxiii. 3.

g Or, the son of Jemini. h Heb. shut of his right hand. xx. 16. 1 Chr. xii. 2. 1 Sam. x. 27. Prov. xviii. 16. xix. 6. xxi. 14. Is. xxxvi. 16.

i Ps. cxlii. 6. Heb. iv. 12. Rev. i. 16. ii. 12.

j 21. Ps. xlv. 3. Cant. iii. 8.

k 29. marg. 1 Sam. ii. 29. Job xv. 27. Ps. lxxiii. 7. Jer. v. 28. l. 11. Ez. xxxiv. 20.

Lord; but in their distress they found that their idols and idolatrous allies could not help them. Then they remembered the wonderful works of JEHOVAH, and began to pray unto him; though it seems not very earnestly, till they had endured correction for the space of eight years: and he, being rich in mercy, was pleased to hear their prayer notwithstanding their heinous provocations, and stirred up Othniel to effect their deliverance. Probably, there was a considerable reformation for some time afterwards. Doubtless Othniel had lamented the degeneracy and misery of his brethren; but he attempted nothing, until “the Spirit of the LORD came upon him.” Then he began “with judging Israel;” that is, with attempting to reform their manners, to repress idolatry, administer justice, and revive religion: and afterwards he went forth to war, and prevailed over their foreign enemies; “for the LORD delivered them into his hands.” (*Marg. Ref.*)

*Caleb's younger brother.* (9) ‘Caleb is constantly called ‘the son of Jephunneh, and Othniel, the son of Kenaz. ‘Therefore they had not the same father, but were very ‘near of kin.’ *Bp. Patrick.* Perhaps Kenaz was the grandfather of both Caleb and Othniel; but Othniel might descend from the younger branch.

V. 11. Some expositors compute these forty years from the death of Joshua; and consequently suppose, that many of them had passed before Chushan's oppression began: but others reckon them from Othniel's being raised up to judge Israel, which is the more natural interpretation, and probably the true one.—The chronology of this book is, however, so very intricate, that the most learned men differ exceedingly concerning it. In general, we are informed that Solomon, in the fourth year of his reign, laid the foundation of the temple, four hundred and eighty years after Israel came out of Egypt. (1 Kings vi. 1.) This was forty-four years after David's accession to the throne, which it will appear could not take place till about sixty years after the death of Eli. (*Notes*, 1 Sam. vii. 1, 2. Acts xiii. 21.) From the *Exodus* to the death of Joshua, might be sixty-six years; (though some reckon it only

fifty-seven;) and this leaves about three hundred and ten years from the death of Joshua to that of Eli.—Many schemes have been formed for allotting these years, (which some make rather more and others less,) to the time of the several judges: but none of them give entire satisfaction. It is however probable, that the years of oppression generally form a part of the time given to each judge; and that in several instances there were more judges than one, employed in different parts of the land. In this case the years assigned to each were coincident: and a few hints, of the opinions formed by learned men on the subject, will be given as we proceed.

V. 12. *Strengthened.*] The Lord had formed Eglon of a stout and valiant spirit, and had raised him to power and prosperity as a prince; and he gave him courage and success in his enterprise against Israel. (*Notes*, Ex. ix. 13—16. 2 Kings v. 1. Is. xlv. 1—6.)

V. 13. *The city of palm-trees.*] It is probable that the Moabites and their allies erected fortifications, in the place where Jericho had stood; (*Note*, i. 16;) and there stationed a garrison to curb and annoy the Israelites on each side of Jordan. Here Eglon resided.

V. 14. The guilt of the people was more aggravated than before, and their spirits were more stubborn; and therefore they suffered longer, before they began to cry unto the Lord. It was also his pleasure, that their chastisement should be more severe and of longer continuance. (*Note*, 9, 10.)

V. 15—18. Some suppose that Ehud could use both hands alike well: but if he were unable to use his right hand, as the original words evidently imply, Eglon would be the less apt to suspect him. The Israelites sent their tribute by Ehud under the name of a present, or some oblation was added, above what was exacted, in order to obtain favour; and the Lord doubtless directed Ehud to take this opportunity of executing his vengeance on the tyrant. The King of Israel raised up a deliverer or saviour who acted by commission from him: and Eglon had usurped his throne and was condemned by him to be thus put to

19 But he himself turned again from the <sup>•</sup>quarries that *were* by Gilgal, and said, I have <sup>k</sup>a secret errand unto thee, O king; who said, Keep silence. <sup>l</sup>And all that stood by him went out from him.

20 And Ehud came unto him; and he was sitting in <sup>•</sup>a summer-parlour, which he had for himself alone; and Ehud said, <sup>m</sup>I have a message from God unto thee. And <sup>n</sup>he arose out of his seat.

21 And Ehud put forth his left hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh, and <sup>o</sup>thrust it into his belly.

22 And the haft also went in after the blade; and the fat closed upon the blade, so that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly: and <sup>•</sup>the dirt came out.

23 Then Ehud went forth through the porch, and shut the doors of the parlour upon him, and locked them.

24 When he was gone out his servants came; and when they saw that behold the doors of the parlour *were* locked, they said, Surely he <sup>•</sup>covereth his feet in *his* summer-chamber.

25 And they tarried till they were ashamed; and behold he opened not

the doors of the parlour: therefore they took a key and opened *them*; and behold, their lord *was* fallen down dead on the earth.

26 And Ehud escaped while they tarried, and passed beyond <sup>p</sup>the quarries, and escaped unto Seirath.

27 And it came to pass when he was come, that <sup>q</sup>he blew a trumpet in the <sup>r</sup>mountain of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him from the mount, and he before them.

28 And he said unto them, <sup>s</sup>'Follow after me; for <sup>t</sup>the LORD hath delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand. And they went down after him, and took <sup>u</sup>the fords of Jordan towards Moab, and suffered not a man to pass over.

29 And they slew of Moab at that time about ten thousand men, all <sup>v</sup>lusty, and all men of valour; and there escaped not a man.

30 So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And <sup>x</sup>the land had rest fourscore years.

31 ¶ And after him was <sup>y</sup>'Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men with <sup>z</sup>'an ox-goad: and <sup>a</sup>he also delivered Israel.

death. But Ehud's conduct cannot possibly be drawn into precedent, or authorize the assassination of kings, however tyrannical or persecuting; unless any man were called to act by the same *evident* commission from the God of heaven.—The law of being subject to principalities and powers in all things lawful, is the rule of our conduct.

V. 19. *The quarries.*] Or *graven images*; (*marg.*) probably the idols of Moab, which were set up in contempt of the God of Israel.—Ehud had, by the present, ingratiated himself with Eglon, who had no suspicion of one whom he supposed unarmed and disabled (15): and it is likely, that he expected some information concerning state-affairs, or the secret combination of his countrymen: yet he was strangely infatuated to trust himself alone with an Israelite.

V. 20. *From God.*] The word here used is common to the true God, and the supposed deities of the Gentiles. Eglon expecting some oracle from God, rose up in reverence, and afforded Ehud the opportunity of effecting his purpose. Ehud indeed had a secret errand, a message from God, unto him; but it was of a far different nature than Eglon expected.

V. 21—25. (*Marg. Ref.*) This powerful oppressor would thus be found weltering, after the most disgraceful manner, in that very place where he had often indulged his pride, sloth, and luxury! As he fell without noise, and died without being able to cry for help, Ehud had a full

opportunity of escaping: and he departed with that circumspection and deliberation, which sprang from confidence in God, and a consciousness of having done his duty.

V. 27, 28. *Marg. Ref.*—Notes, vii. 23—25. xii. 1—7.

V. 29. *Ten thousand.*] So small an army of valiant soldiers, served to curb the whole kingdom of Israel, when once it was subjected: but they might have been easily reinforced from beyond Jordan. Ehud had therefore taken possession of the *fords*, not only that none might escape, but that no more might come to the assistance of the Moabites: and when their prince was dead, they were too much intimidated to make any effectual resistance. (*Note*, 1 Sam. xvii. 50—53.)

V. 30. The land had rest, until eighty years from the close of the aforementioned forty years were expired. This is the more general interpretation.—Yet some think, that the oppression of Jabin in the northern part of the land, coincided with some of the years of rest in the southern part, here mentioned. (iv. 2, 3.)

V. 31. Shamgar, being employed in agriculture when the Philistines invaded the land, was supernaturally animated to attack them, and miraculously assisted in making this slaughter among them, with no other weapon than an *ox-goad*. This broke their force and spirits for a considerable time. (*Note*, xv. 14—17.) Shamgar succeeded Ehud; but it is not said how long he acted as judge, or whether he did so at all, except in this one action.





MOUNT TABOR.

JUDGES<sup>iv</sup>. 6, 12, 14. 1 SAM. x. 3. PSALM lxxxix. 12. JER. xlv. 18. HOS. v. 1.

## CHAP. IV.

Israel, again revolting, is oppressed by Jabin and Sisera, 1—3. Deborah stirs up Barak for their deliverance, 4—9. Barak destroys the army of Jabin, 10—16. Sisera is slain by Jael the Kenite, 17—22. Jabin subdued and destroyed, 23, 24.

<sup>a</sup> *it.* 11. 19. 20. *iii.*  
7. 12. *vi.* 1. *x.* 6.  
*Lxxv.* 23—  
26. *Neh.* ix. 23  
—30. *Ps.* cvi. 43  
—45. *Jer.* v. 3.

AND the children of Israel again <sup>a</sup> did evil in the sight of the LORD when Ehud was dead.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

## V. 1—11.

Temptations and trials detect the wickedness of the hearts of sinners: they discover where sin, and where grace, has dominion: they tend to undeceive the self-deluded: and they manifest, exercise, and strengthen the graces of believers; who being called to be soldiers, must learn and practise war all their days; and in their conflict with Satan, sin, and this evil world, must be inured to hardships, watchfulness, and self-denial, for their future and eternal good. (*Notes*, *Eph.* vi. 10—20. *1 Tim.* vi. 11, 12. *2 Tim.* ii. 3—7. *iv.* 6—8.) They are constrained to live in the world, but they are not of the world, and are forbidden to conform to it: for the friendship of the world is more fatal than its enmity; as the latter can only kill the body, but the former murders many an immortal soul.—When the heart is not established by grace, the descent from the most plausible profession of piety is natural, and almost imperceptible. Polite attentions and civilities to ungodly people, (in which it is thought there can surely be no harm,) by an easy step introduces men to more intimate connexions; then concessions must be made, and they must be a little conformable to such kind friends or relatives. And as it is not easy to draw the line, one compliance prepares for another, till frequently a specious profession ends in apostasy. But if true believers thus backslide from God, they shall surely and speedily be corrected; and know by experience that the friendship of the wicked, and the gain of transgression, will not profit them in the day of trouble: most certainly therefore they can never profit the sinner “in the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.”—Those afflictions, however severe and tedious, which bring the Lord to remembrance, and excite men to self-examination and repentance, faith, and humble, earnest prayer, are invaluable blessings. And as “he is ready to forgive, and “plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon him;” he will not upbraid the penitent, nor fail to appear for his relief: how wonderful then is it, that men, groaning under sufferings and terrors, are so long ere they cry unto him for help! (*Note*, *Ps.* xxxii. 3—5.)—If we would get out of trouble effectually, we must begin with repentance, and seeking forgiveness; and then, in due time, deliverance, rest, and inward peace and comfort will ensue.

## V. 12—31.

Alas! how inveterate is man's propensity to ingratitude towards God!! and how readily do we relapse into our former offences! The secret history of every one of us,

2 And the LORD <sup>b</sup> sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in <sup>c</sup> Hazor; the captain of whose host was <sup>d</sup> Sisera, which dwelt in <sup>e</sup> Harosheth of the Gentiles.

3 And the children of Israel <sup>f</sup> cried unto the LORD: for he had nine hundred <sup>g</sup> chariots of iron; and twenty years he <sup>h</sup> mightily oppressed the children of Israel.

<sup>b</sup> See on *ii.* 14. 15.  
—*x.* 7 *Is.* i. 1.  
*Matt.* xviii. 26.

<sup>c</sup> *Josh.* xi. 1 10,  
11. *xix.* 36.  
<sup>d</sup> *1 Sam.* xxi. 9  
*Ps.* lxxxiii. 9.  
<sup>e</sup> *13.* 16.

<sup>f</sup> *iii.* 9. 15. *x.* 10. 16.  
*1 Sam.* vii. 8. *Ps.*  
i. 15. *lxxviii.* 34.  
*Jer.* ii. 27, 28.

<sup>g</sup> *i.* 19. *Josh.* xvii.  
16.

<sup>h</sup> *v.* 8. *Deut.* xxviii.  
29. 33. 47, 48.  
*Ps.* cii. 42.

even if kept from open scandals, or visible declensions, greatly resembles the history of Israel: “O foolish people “and unwise; do we thus requite the LORD, . . . that bought “us!” This renders repeated chastisements absolutely necessary; for so perverse are we, that the more indulgently we are treated by our heavenly Father, the more disobedient we generally prove! Yet, after our most aggravated provocations, and in our deepest distresses, if we again cry unto him, he will deliver us; and the meanest instrument, and the most unlikely method, shall be effectual, if he appoints and blesses them.—Luxury, sloth, and pride, fatten men for destruction: the Lord delights to abase those who exalt themselves against him, and oppress his people; and to render infamous, as well as to cast into the abyss of misery, those who have been the haughty and the terrible of the earth.—What message from God, but a message of vengeance, can a proud rebel expect? Such a message is evidently contained in the word of God: and though we are not commissioned, or even allowed, to be the executioners of it; yet his ministers must boldly declare it, without fearing the frown or respecting the persons of sinners. (*Notes*, *1 Kings* xxi. 17—22. *xxii.* 8. 13, 14. 16—28.) But blessed be God, they have another message to deliver, a message of mercy and free salvation; and that of vengeance only applies to those, who neglect and refuse the gracious proposal.—With reverent attention let us hear this message: in humble faith let us seek and accept of this great salvation: let us beg of God to enable us “to bring forth fruits meet for repentance:” and let us enlist under the Redeemer's banner, put on his armour, and declare determined war against his enemies. He has begun our triumphs, by his victory over the powers of darkness upon the cross, and over the king of terrors by his resurrection: the trumpet of his gospel calls us to follow after him; and, obeying that summons, the day will be ours, and we shall conquer, triumph, and reign with him in glory for evermore.

## NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 2, 3. Jabin king of Hazor had formerly confederated against Israel, with other kings in the northern part of the country, and Joshua had slain him, and burned his city. (*Notes*, *Josh.* xi. 1—3. 10, 11.) But in process of time the Canaanites had rebuilt it; and another Jabin, probably descended from him, reigned there with great power. Hazor lay in the northern part of the land, and doubtless Harosheth in that neighbourhood. The remains of the nations of Canaan having in great numbers resorted thither to assist Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, in whom he placed great confi-

<sup>i</sup> Ex. xx. 2. 2 Kings xxii. 14. Neh. vi. 14. Joel ii. 28. 29. Mic. vi. 4. Luke ii. 36. Acts xxi. 9. 1 Cor. xi. 5. Gal. iii. 28. <sup>k</sup> Gen. xxxv. 8.

4 And <sup>1</sup>Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time.

<sup>l</sup> Josh. xvi. 2. xviii. 22. 25. 1 Sam. i. 1. 19. vii. 16, 17. xiv. 1. Jer. xxxi. 15. <sup>m</sup> Ex. xviii. 13. 16. 19. 26. Deut. xvii. 8—12. 2 Sam. xv. 2—6. <sup>n</sup> v. 1. Heb. xi. 32. <sup>o</sup> Josh. xix. 32. 37. xxi. 32. <sup>p</sup> Josh. i. 9. Pa. vii. 6. Is. xlii. 2—5. Acts xiii. 47.

5 And she dwelt under <sup>1</sup>the palm-tree of Deborah, <sup>1</sup>between Ramah and Beth-el in mount Ephraim; and the children of Israel <sup>m</sup>came up to her for judgment.

<sup>q</sup> 18. 1 Sam. x. 3. Pa. lxxxix. 12. Jer. xli. 18. Hos. v. 1. <sup>r</sup> 10. v. 14—18. <sup>s</sup> Ex. xiv. 4. Josh. xi. 20. Ez. xxxviii. 10—16. Joel iii. 11—14. <sup>t</sup> v. 21. 1 Kings xviii. 40. Ps. lxxxiii. 9, 10.

6 And she sent and called <sup>a</sup>Barak the son of Abinoam out of <sup>o</sup>Kedesh-naphtali, and said unto him, <sup>p</sup>Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded, <sup>q</sup>saying, Go, and draw toward mount <sup>q</sup>Tabor, and take with thee <sup>r</sup>ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali, and of the children of Zebulun?

7 And <sup>1</sup>I will draw unto thee, to the river <sup>1</sup>Kishon, Sisera, the captain

of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and <sup>u</sup>I will deliver him into thine hand.

8 And Barak said unto her, <sup>v</sup>If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, <sup>w</sup>then I will not go.

9 And she said, I will surely go with thee: <sup>x</sup>notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the Lord shall <sup>y</sup>sell Sisera <sup>y</sup>into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh.

10 And Barak called <sup>a</sup>Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh: and he went up with ten thousand men <sup>b</sup>at his feet: and Deborah went up with him.

dence; and to obtain his protection; it was called "Haro-sheth of the Gentiles," or *nations*.—The Israelites, having relapsed into idolatry, were grievously oppressed by these enemies for twenty years, before they heartily set about reformation, or united in earnest prayers for deliverance. (Notes, iii. 9, 10, 14.)

V. 4. Deborah, notwithstanding her extraordinary call to judge Israel, could not *personally* undertake those military expeditions, which generally distinguished its deliverers; but she used her authority to repress iniquity, to reform religion, and to execute impartial justice to the people.—She is called "the wife of Lapidoth;" but the termination of the word is the feminine of the plural, and seldom used for the names of men. Some have therefore supposed it to be the name of the town in which she dwelt, and render the clause, *the woman of Lapidoth*: others refer it, according to the signification of the original word, either to her occupation, as making *lamps*; or to the inspiration of the Almighty; translating it "a woman of illuminations:" and others understand it as meaning, that she was an *illustrious* woman, and a *light* in Israel. Yet our rendering is most natural. (Note, 2 Kings xxii. 14.)

V. 5. *Under the palm-tree.*] That is, in some lowly habitation, shaded by a large palm-tree, more suited to the sanctity of a prophetess, than the dignity of a judge. Her character of a prophetess being established, the people readily referred their differences to her decision; the ordinary courts probably being shut up, and the magistrates deprived of authority by Jabin's oppression: but perhaps he feared no danger from a woman acting in this capacity. It has been thought by several learned men, that after it pleased God to raise up, from time to time, extraordinary rulers and deliverers, under the title of judges; the different tribes and cities of Israel grew more and more remiss in the appointment of "judges and officers in all their *gates*." (Note, Deut. xvi. 18, 19.) This might, perhaps, at first arise from the prevailing power of their oppressors; as well as the extraordinary authority of their judges. It seems, however, to have become very generally the case. Yet Deborah, and the other judges, might only receive appeals from inferior magistrates, in more

difficult cases. (Notes, v. 9. Ex. xviii. 17—23. Deut. xvii. 8—13.)

V. 6, 7. It is not certain, whether Barak had previously been employed by Deborah or not; for he dwelt at a distance from her. But, by direction from God, he was at this time singled out, and commanded whither to go and what troops to raise; and assured both of opportunity to attack, and assistance to subdue, the enemies of Israel. These orders were sent to him as the commandment of "the Lord God of Israel:" but, under the tyranny of a powerful and jealous oppressor, he could draw together an army only by persuasions and exhortations, and thus induce a number of men to assemble at Kedesh-naphtali, and thence to follow him to Tabor; (*Marg. Ref.*) whither the Lord engaged to draw Sisera, or influence his mind, to meet him. (Notes, Hos. xi. 3, 4. John vi. 41—46.)

V. 8, 9. The danger of this enterprize was great and manifest: and though Barak had faith, yet it was not so strong as to exclude misgivings, and to overcome all reluctance to the service. It does not appear, that he doubted whether Deborah spake by authority from God or not; but he hesitated concerning success unless she went with him. He would, no doubt, desire her presence, counsel, and prayers, as a prophetess, and the judge of Israel: but he was culpably afraid; and, not honouring God as he ought to have done, he was deprived in part of the honour, which he would otherwise have obtained. Perhaps Deborah in her answer intended, that the credit of the victory would be given to her and not to Barak: but the Spirit of God foretold the death of Sisera by Jael (21).—Barak seems to have come to Deborah, and she accompanied him back to Kedesh-naphtali.—The high priest with Urim and Thummim, the other priests with the trumpets, and the Levites, are not at all mentioned in these transactions. (Notes, xx. 18—28. Ex. xxviii. 30. Num. x. 1—10. xxvii. 21. Josh. ix. 14, 15.)

V. 10. Barak resided in the lot of Naphtali, on which Zebulun bordered: he therefore made known his purpose in that neighbourhood, and collected ten thousand foot-soldiers chiefly from these two tribes, though some others at length assisted them. (Notes, v. 14—18.) At the head

c 1. 16. Num x 29. xxiv. 21  
d Ex. ii. 18. iii 1 xviii 1.  
e Josh. xix. 33. Zaanannim.  
f 6. Josh. xix 37. which is by 'Kedesh.

11 ¶ Now <sup>c</sup>Heber the Kenite, *which was* of the children of <sup>d</sup>Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, had severed himself from the Kenites, and pitched his tent unto the plain of <sup>e</sup>Zaanaim, which is by <sup>f</sup>'Kedesh.

g 6. Josh. xix. 12. 34. Ps. lxxxix. 12. Jer. xlvii. 18.  
\* Heb. gathered by cry, or, proclamation.  
h See on 2, 3, 7.

12 And they shewed Sisera, that Barak the son of Abinoam was gone up to <sup>g</sup>mount Tabor.

13 And Sisera <sup>\*</sup>gathered together all his chariots, *even* <sup>b</sup>nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people that were with him, from Harosheth of the Gentiles unto the river of Kishon.

i xix 28 Gen. xix. 14. xlv. 4. Josh. vii. 13. 1 Sam. ix. 26.  
j Deut. ix. 3. 2 Sam. v. 24. Ps. lxxviii. 7. li. 12. Mic. ii. 13.  
k v. 20, 21. Josh. x. 10. 2 Kings vii. 6. 2 Chr. xxii. 15—17. Ps. lxxxiii. 9, 10.

14 And Deborah said unto Barak, <sup>j</sup>Up; for this *is* the day in which the LORD hath delivered Sisera into thine hand: <sup>j</sup>is not the LORD gone out before thee? So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him.

15 And <sup>k</sup>the LORD discomfited Sisera, and all *his* chariots, and all *his* host with the edge of the sword, before Barak: so that Sisera lighted down off *his* chariot, and fled away on his feet.

16 But Barak <sup>l</sup>pursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto Harosheth of the Gentiles: and all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword; and there was not <sup>†</sup>a man left.

17 ¶ Howbeit Sisera <sup>m</sup>fled away on his feet to the tent of <sup>n</sup>Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite: for *there was* <sup>o</sup>peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.

18 And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said unto him, Turn in, my lord, turn in to me; fear not: and when he had turned in unto her into the tent, she covered him with a <sup>†</sup>mantle.

19 And he said unto her, <sup>p</sup>Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink; for I am thirsty: and she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink, and covered him.

20 Again he said unto her, Stand in the door of the tent; and it shall be, when any man doth come and enquire of thee, and say, <sup>q</sup>Is there any man here; that thou shalt say, No.

Lev. xxvi. 7, 8. Josh. x. 19, 20. xi. 8. Pa. civ. 35. Rom. ii. 12. Jam. u. 18.

† Heb. unto one.

m Joh. xii. 19—21. xviii. 7—12. xl. 11, 12. Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36. cvii. 40. Prov. xxix. 23. Am. v. 19, 20. n v. 6. 24. o Pa. lxxxix. 22. Is. lvi. 21.

† Or, rug, or, blanket. p v. 25. Gen. xxiv. 43. 1 Kings xvii. 10. Is. xli. 17. John iv. 7.

q Josh. ii. 8—5. 2 Sam. xvii. 20.

of this small army, (as it appears when compared with that of Sisera, which was very great,) he marched on foot to meet the enemy, without either cavalry or war-chariots! and Deborah attended him, to encourage his faith and confidence in God. (Notes, i. 19. Deut. xx. 1—4. Josh. xvi. 10. xvii. 16—18. Ps. xx. 6—8.)

V. 11. The other Kenites dwelt upon the borders of the wilderness of Judah; (Note, i. 16;) but Heber had removed with his family to the northern part of the land, where he dwelt in tents, and found convenient pasturage for his flocks.—This is inserted to explain what follows concerning Jael.

V. 14. Barak secured his small army by the advantage of the ground, until a favourable opportunity presented itself of attacking the enemy: but Deborah assured him, that the very day was come; and that “the LORD was gone forth before him, and had delivered Sisera into his hand.” Thus encouraged, he boldly marched down into the plain, where the iron chariots had their utmost advantage; and so the victory became the more illustrious. (Note, Josh. xvii. 16.)

V. 15. Doubtless Barak and his army displayed both conduct and bravery in this battle: yet the victory is wholly ascribed to the Lord, who both gave them skill and courage, and rendered these effectual by terrifying their enemies, or throwing them into confusion. (Note, Josh. x. 9, 10.) It is to be lamented that this pious and rational language of the Scriptures should, among Christians, be so frequently changed for a phraseology which borders upon heathenism, or even atheism; by ascribing all events to fortune, luck, second causes, or human courage and policy; and

excluding the mention of the first great Cause of all things. (Note, 2 Kings v. 1.)

V. 16. Not a man left.] Note, 2 Chr. xx. 22—25.

V. 17. Sisera had quitted his chariot, probably to escape notice, and he fled away on foot like a common soldier. For the same reason he hastened to the tents of Heber, with whom Jabin had made some league or alliance; or whom Jabin had suffered, as inoffensive persons, not of the race of Israel, to live peaceably by him.—It is probable that Jael's tent was distinct from that of Heber; (Gen. xxiv. 67. xxxi. 33;) and perhaps Sisera sought refuge in it on that account, as less likely to be searched.

V. 18, 19. Probably, Jael really intended kindness to Sisera, when she invited him into the tent, and shewed him all the hospitality which it afforded; but, by a divine impulse, she was afterwards led to consider him as the determined enemy of the Lord and his people, and to avail herself of that opportunity to destroy him. (Notes, 21. v. 24.)

V. 20. Jael is not said to have promised Sisera, that she would deny his being there: she would give him shelter and refreshment, but not utter a falsehood to oblige him.—A very criminal deviation from “simplicity and godly sincerity,” is become customary among professed Christians; I mean, the instructing and requiring servants to prevaricate, (to word it no more harshly,) in order that their masters may be preserved from the inconvenience of unwelcome visitants. Surely, some more manly, candid, and Christian method might be substituted, of giving an impertinent intruder to understand that he was not welcome; and to intimate to friends, that their company would be more sea-

<sup>r</sup> iii. 21. 31 v. 28. <sup>xv. 16, 18. 18am.</sup> <sup>xviii. 43. 49. 50.</sup> <sup>1 Cor. i. 19. 27.</sup> <sup>• Heb. put.</sup> 21 Then Jael, Heber's wife, <sup>•</sup> took a nail of the tent, and <sup>•</sup> took an hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: (for he was fast asleep, and weary:) so <sup>•</sup> he died.

<sup>• v. 27</sup> 22 And behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said unto him, Come, <sup>•</sup> and I will shew thee the man whom thou seekest. And when he came into her *tent*, behold Sisera lay dead, and the nail *was* in his temples.

<sup>u</sup> 1 Chr. xxiii. 18. <sup>Neh. ix. 24. Ps. xviii. 39. 47. xlviii. 8. lxxviii. 14. 1 Cor. xv. 28. Heb. xi. 33.</sup> 23 So <sup>•</sup> God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel.

24 And the hand of the children of

Israel <sup>•</sup> prospered, and prevailed against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan. <sup>† Heb. going, went and was hard against. 1 Sam. iii. 12.</sup>

## CHAP. V.

The song of Deborah and Barak introduced, 1. A call to kings and people to consider this and other works of God for Israel, 2—5 The sin and misery of Israel shewn, 6—8. Praises rendered to God: commendations bestowed on some Israelites, and censures on others, 9—23. The conduct of Jael celebrated, 24—27: the disappointment of Sisera's mother represented, 28—30: and a prayer added for victory to the people of God, and ruin to their enemies, 31.

**THEN** <sup>•</sup> sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam, on that day, saying,

sonable at another time! And it should be considered, whether they who require their servants to disregard the truth for *their* pleasure, will not teach them an evil lesson, and habituate them to use falsehood for *their own* pleasure also. (*Note*, Eph. iv. 25.)

V. 21. When Jael saw Sisera fast asleep, and was made sensible, by some intimation from God, that she ought to destroy him; her faith overcame all reluctance, and every feminine fear: and with the hammer and a nail of the tent, which she was accustomed to handle, she speedily and effectually accomplished her purpose.—The divine mandate superseded all other obligations; but her conduct is not recorded for our imitation in ordinary circumstances. (*Notes*, iii. 15—25. *Josh.* ii. 4—6. 8—11.)

V. 24. In this instance the Israelites observed the command of God to extirpate the Canaanites, and not to make any league with them, or put them under tribute.

### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The most promising reformatations are often speedily obstructed and counteracted, when the reformer is removed.—Notwithstanding the painful effects of sin which men repeatedly experience, they readily venture again upon it; thus provoking God to punish them with increasing severity: and tempters commonly prove instruments of correction, or of vengeance. But the Lord's thoughts and ways are not as ours: when they, who have most frequently and grievously rebelled, begin to pray unto him, he is ready to hear and help them; (*Notes*, Is. lv. 6—9;) nay, he often regards the mere cry of distress, and relieves men from temporal misery, saying, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." He selects his instruments in that manner, which most tends to mortify the pride, and expose the weakness, of his haughty opposers. Yet unbelief weakens men's hands; and, being dishonourable to God, it eventually discredits those who give way to it.—The counsel and prayers of persons eminent for faith and piety are highly to be valued; but our confidence must be placed, not in them, but in the presence and protection of the Almighty. Whether it please him "to save by many or by few," he has all hearts in his hands, and can soon

procure willing and suitable persons for his work: and a variety of incidents, which originate from the voluntary conduct of men actuated by secular motives, appear by the event to form a part of his secret counsel. (*Notes*, vii. 4—15. 1 Sam. xiv. 6—10.) As courage and faith are his gifts, he so dispenses them, as most conduces to his own glory; and shews the strongest that they need to be encouraged, and that on some occasions they are surpassed, by their weaker brethren.—How wretched are they who have the Lord for their enemy! since, whatever be their number or power, they can make no resistance, and will in vain attempt to flee away and escape. Soon will they be ashamed of their present confidence and glorying. They may indeed court the friendship of the Lord's despised people, or seek refuge in obscurity: but sooner or later they must all perish, perhaps suddenly; and be hurried from the commission of daring crimes into the presence of their angry Judge!—Every natural inclination must be subordinated to the will of God; and all our connexions with his enemies must be broken off, if we would enjoy his favour, and be numbered among his people. We should indeed love, pray for, and be kind to our greatest enemies: yet there are some of his foes, to whom we must not bid God speed, nor entertain them in our houses. (*Note*, 2 John 7—11.) We should, however, persevere to the uttermost in our endeavours to reclaim them; and direct our most implacable resentment against our own evil propensities and habits, aiming at nothing less than their entire destruction.

### NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1. (*Notes*, Ex. xv. 1. *Deut.* xxxi. 19.) By means of this song of praise, the affections of love and gratitude to God would be more powerfully excited, and more deeply fixed in the hearts of believers in Israel; the events commemorated would attract more general notice, become more exactly known, and be much longer remembered, than by any prose narration; and multitudes would become acquainted with them, who had not the opportunity of reading the records of them.—Probably, this sacred poem was composed by Deborah, and sung by her and Barak, and the whole army, and multitudes of the Israelites,

<sup>b</sup> 2 Sam. xxii. 47.  
48. Ps. xlviii. 11.  
xciv. 1. xcvij. 8.  
cxxxvi. 15. 19.  
20. cxlix. 6—9.  
Rev. xvi. 5, 6.  
xviii. 20. xix.  
2.

2 Praise ye the LORD <sup>b</sup> for the aveng-  
ing of Israel, <sup>c</sup> when the people will-  
ingly offered themselves.

<sup>c</sup> 9. 2 Chr. xvii.  
16. Neh. xi. 2.  
Ps. cx. 3. 1 Cor.  
ix. 17. 2 Cor.  
viii. 12. ix. 7.  
Phil. ii. 13. Phi-  
lem. 14.

3 Hear, <sup>d</sup> O ye kings; give ear, O  
ye princes; <sup>e</sup> I, even I, will sing unto  
the LORD; I will sing praise to the  
LORD God of Israel.

<sup>d</sup> Deut. xxxii. 1  
3. Ps. ii. 10—12.  
xlix. 1, 2. cxix.  
46. cxxxviii. 4.  
5.

4 LORD, <sup>f</sup> when thou wentest out of  
Seir, when thou marchedst out of the  
field of Edom, <sup>g</sup> the earth trembled,  
and the heavens <sup>h</sup> dropped, the clouds  
also dropped water.

<sup>e</sup> 7. Gen. vi. 17.  
ix. 9. Ex. xxxvi.  
6. Lev. xxvii. 22.  
1 Kings xviii. 22.  
xix. 10. 14. Ezra  
vii. 21.

5 The <sup>i</sup> mountains <sup>j</sup> melted from be-  
fore the LORD, <sup>k</sup> even <sup>l</sup> that Sinai from  
before the LORD God of Israel.

<sup>f</sup> Deut. xxxiii. 2.  
Ps. lxxvii. 7, 8.  
Hab. iii. 3—6.  
<sup>g</sup> 2 Sam. xxii. 8.  
Job ix. 6. Ps.  
xviii. 7—15. <sup>h</sup> Ps. lxxvii. 17. <sup>i</sup> Deut. iv. 11. <sup>j</sup> Ps. xcvi. 5. cxiv. 4. Is. lxiv.  
1—8. Nah. i. 5, 6. <sup>k</sup> Hab. iii. 10. <sup>l</sup> Ex. xix. 18. xx. 18.  
Deut. iv. 11, 12. v. 22—25. <sup>m</sup> Heb. flowed. <sup>n</sup> Heb. xii. 18.

soon after the victory was completed. (Notes, Ex. xv. 20,  
21. 2 Chr. xx. 18—21. 26—28.)

V. 2. Whatever had been done by Deborah, or Barak,  
or the army, the Lord must have all the praise of this  
victory; the will, the power, and the success were all de-  
rived from him; yet it was proper that the people who had  
willingly followed Barak, when invested with no regular  
authority, should be mentioned with commendation.—  
Israel was the more bound to praise the Lord for avenging  
them upon their oppressors, as they had brought their  
miseries upon themselves by their own crimes. (Notes,  
Num. xxxi. 2. Rev. xviii. 20.)

V. 3. The kings and princes of the surrounding nations  
were contriving the ruin of Israel: the kings of the earth  
have too generally been seeking their own glory, or calling  
upon the people to worship idols; and this song was likely  
to be heard or read by many of them, through successive  
generations. The prophetess therefore calls on them to  
hear what God had wrought for Israel, and against their  
enemies, and to take warning not to copy the example of  
Jabin and Sisera. She reminds them, that praise and glory  
belong to JEHOVAH, and not to them or their idols; that  
it would be dangerous for them to rival him who poureth  
contempt upon ambitious princes, or to oppress his people;  
and that it was their true wisdom, honour, and interest to  
seek his favour, to become his servants, and to use their  
authority in promoting his glory, as she avowed that she  
did and would do. (Notes, Ps. ii. 7—12. Dan. iv. 1—3.)

V. 4, 5. (Marg. Ref.) The extraordinary displays of  
the divine Majesty, which the Israelites had witnessed at  
mount Sinai, are here described in very poetical language,  
and compared with the present interposition of the Lord  
for Israel. The presence of God had, as it were, thrown  
all nature into convulsions: the thunderings and lightnings  
were attended by impetuous showers of rain; and mount  
Sinai was in such agitation, that it seemed to be melted  
from before the Lord. (Notes, Deut. xxxiii. 2. 2 Sam. xxii.  
7—16. Ps. lxviii. 7—10. lxxvii. 16—20. Hab. iii. 3—10.)

V. 6, 7. Shamgar seems to have lived towards the close  
of the eighty years' rest before-mentioned, and he helped to  
lengthen that tranquillity. (Notes, iii. 30, 31.) But Israel  
growing more wicked, the difficulties and sufferings of the

6 In the days of <sup>a</sup> Shamgar the son  
of Anath, in the days of <sup>b</sup> Jael, <sup>c</sup> the  
high-ways were unoccupied, and the  
<sup>d</sup> travellers walked through <sup>e</sup> by-ways.

7 The inhabitants of <sup>f</sup> the villages  
ceased, they ceased in Israel, until  
that I Deborah arose, that I arose <sup>g</sup> a  
mother in Israel.

8 They chose <sup>h</sup> new gods; then was  
war in the gates: <sup>i</sup> was there a shield  
or spear seen among forty thousand in  
Israel?

9 My heart is toward the governors  
of Israel, that <sup>j</sup> offered themselves will-  
ingly among the people. Bless ye the  
LORD.

nation increased, and nothing was done effectually for their  
relief, till Jael completed Barak's victory by the slaughter  
of Sisera. This seems to be the meaning of the passage,  
which might perhaps be rendered, "from the days of  
"Shamgar to the days of Jael."—During this time the  
land was so infested by invaders, and harassed by oppres-  
sion, that none could travel in safety on the highways, but  
men went in by-paths or crooked ways: the villages also  
were deserted, and the fields left uncultivated; whilst the  
inhabitants sought refuge in the fenced cities, where they  
were in danger of perishing by famine. (Notes, 2 Chr. xv.  
1—7. Is. xxxiii. 7—9.)

A mother in Israel. (7) Deborah employed her authority  
for the real good of the people, with that disinterested as-  
siduity, which a mother shews to her beloved children.  
Kings should be fathers of their people, using their autho-  
rity as may most conduce to render them happy: and  
Deborah was indeed "a mother to Israel;" especially in  
supporting true religion, with which both their temporal  
prosperity and eternal salvation were inseparably connected.  
(Note, Is. xlix. 23.)

V. 8. Joshua had engaged the people solemnly to  
"choose the LORD for their God," and to serve him only:  
(Notes, Josh. xxiv. 14—27:) but they grew weary of his  
holy service, and "chose new gods," with new names,  
and "newly come up;" (Deut. xxxii. 17;) and probably  
after the death of Ehud, they had run into some new kinds  
of idolatry. But under all these idols Satan was virtually  
worshipped, who permitted his deluded votaries to indulge  
their sensual lusts, in order to allure them to his service.  
They soon however paid dear for their gratifications, when  
their cities were seized on, and they were subdued, dis-  
armed, and oppressed, by those enemies, over whom they  
had formerly triumphed, and whom they ought to have  
extirpated!—It is probable, that many of Barak's soldiers  
were armed, not with shields and spears, but with bows,  
slings, ox-goads, and other instruments of husbandry: but  
some had swords, and others might seize on the arms of  
the enemy, when the battle had begun. (Notes, 1 Sam. xiii.  
19—22.)

V. 9. Some of the governors or principal persons,  
especially in Naphtali and Zebulun, willingly offered their

• Or, *Meditate*. Ps. cv. 2. cxlv. 5. 11.  
 \* x. 4. xii. 14.  
 † Ps. cvii. 32. Is. xxviii. 6. Joel iii. 12.

10 \* Speak, ye that \* ride on white asses, 'ye that sit in judgment, and walk by the way.

11 *They that are delivered from* \* the noise of archers \* in the places of drawing water; there shall they rehearse the † righteous acts of the LORD, even the righteous acts *toward the inhabitants* of his 'villages in Israel: then shall the people of the LORD \* go down to the gates.

12 ¶ Awake, \* awake, Deborah; awake, awake, utter a song: arise Barak, and † lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam.

13 Then ° he made him that remaineth have dominion over the nobles among the people: the LORD made me have dominion over the mighty.

14 Out ° of Ephraim *was there a*

root of them against \* Amalek; 'after thee, Benjamin, among thy people; out of ° Machir came down governors, and out of Zebulun they that \* handle the pen of the writer.

15 And ° the princes of Issachar were with Deborah; even Issachar, and also 'Barak: he was sent on 'foot into the valley. 'For the divisions of Reuben *there were great* \* thoughts of heart.

16 Why abodest thou among the \* sheep-folds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks? 'For the divisions of Reuben *there were great* searchings of heart.

17 'Gilead abode beyond Jordan: and why did Dan remain in ships? ° Asher continued on the † sea-shore, and abode in his 'breaches.

assistance, and ventured their lives in attacking the Canaanites: of these the prophetess spake with peculiar affection and respect, and gratefully blessed the Lord for them. (Notes, 1 Chr. xii. 16—18. 2 Chr. xvii. 13—19.)

V. 10. It seems, that riding upon *white asses* was a distinction appropriated to magistrates, and principal persons in Israel; which was a proof, not so much of their poverty, as of their simplicity, in that they had not yet learned to multiply horses and chariots, in conformity to their heathen neighbours. (x. 4. xii. 14. Note, Deut. xvii. 16.) They who had this distinction were called upon, in their several districts, and while in safety and credit they travelled about, to administer justice, or upon their own concerns, to teach the people, by their example, to celebrate the praises of the Lord.

V. 11 The people could not go out of the gates of the cities to draw water, without being exposed to the arrows of the oppressors, who watched that opportunity to murder them; so that in some cases they must either perish by thirst, or seek to quench it at the peril of their lives. With the rulers, magistrates, and travellers, the common people also were exhorted to praise the Lord, every time they drew water in safety, and to "rehearse his *righteous acts*:" (or *righteousnesses*, marg.) his *justice* in the destruction of their enemies, nay in the miseries which they had endured for their sins; and his faithfulness in delivering them, and enabling them to return to their habitations and employments in peace and security.

V. 12. The governors and people having been excited to praise the Lord, Deborah here called upon her own soul, or, by way of response, instructed the people to call upon her, to shake off drowsiness, and be in earnest in this most reasonable and delightful employment; for 'he that will 'set the hearts of other men on fire with the love of Christ, 'must himself burn with love.' Hooker. (Notes, 1 Chr. xxix. 10—20.)—Barak also was excited to prosecute his victory: he had destroyed the whole army of Sisera in the field of battle; let him also gather the unarmed multitude

as his captives, and complete the destruction of the oppressors.

V. 13. Multitudes of the Israelites had been slain, or driven into other countries by oppression: yet the LORD had made the remnant of them, even under the conduct of a woman, to have dominion over their powerful and renowned enemies.

V. 14. Deborah next proceeds to enumerate those who assisted on this occasion, beginning with Ephraim. It is probable, that the Amalekites were coming to the assistance of Jabin; and that a body of men of the tribe of Ephraim, (sprung from Ephraim as their root,) opposed and prevailed against them: yet Benjamin moved first, and the Ephraimites assisted him.—The governors of Machir or Manasseh, came to the assistance of Barak, and formed useful commanders: and the Zebulunites were so much in earnest, that even their students, or artists, came to join the army, and to serve the common cause. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 15, 16. Both the princes and people of Issachar came, of their own accord, to attend on Deborah, and to accompany Barak, when he was sent down into the valley, with his small number of foot-soldiers poorly armed, to meet the army and war-chariots of Sisera. (8. Note, iv. 14.)—Yet Reuben kept at a distance, as disaffected to the common cause, or unconcerned about it; which excited much uneasiness and resentment, and occasioned many thoughts in the minds of his brethren. But he made the care of his flocks the pretence for remaining at home on this conjuncture.

V. 17. The tribe of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, inhabited mount Gilead: and Machir before-mentioned seems to have been that half of Manasseh which dwelt west of Jordan (14). It is probable, that all the Israelites, who dwelt east of Jordan, abode at home and refused their concurrence. The tribes of Dan and Asher did the same; the one being occupied in merchandize, or fishery; and the other, as some think, in repairing the

<sup>a</sup> See on iv. 10.  
<sup>b</sup> Heb. exposed to approach.  
<sup>c</sup> Parh. iv. 16.  
 Acts xx. 24.  
 1 John iii. 16.  
 Rev. xii. 11.  
<sup>d</sup> iv. 6, 10, 14.  
<sup>e</sup> Josh. x. 22—27.  
 xii. 1, &c. 1s.  
 xxviii. 4—6.  
 xxviii. 12—14.  
 xxviii. 8—12.  
 Rev. xvii. 12—14.  
 xix. 19.

18 <sup>a</sup> Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that <sup>a</sup> jeoparded <sup>a</sup> their lives unto the death <sup>b</sup> in the high places of the field.

19 The <sup>a</sup> kings came and fought; then fought the kings of Canaan in <sup>a</sup> Taanach by the waters of Megiddo: <sup>a</sup> they took no gain of money.

20 They <sup>a</sup> fought from heaven, <sup>a</sup> the stars in their <sup>a</sup> courses fought against Sisera.

21 The river of <sup>a</sup> Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon. <sup>a</sup> O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength.

22 Then were the <sup>a</sup> horse-hoofs broken by the means of the <sup>a</sup> pransings, the pransings of their mighty ones.

23 <sup>a</sup> Curse ye Meroz, said <sup>b</sup> the Angel of the LORD, curse ye bitterly the

inhabitants thereof; because <sup>a</sup> they came not to the help of the LORD, <sup>a</sup> to the help of the LORD against the mighty.

24 <sup>a</sup> Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be; blessed shall she be above women in the tent.

25 He <sup>a</sup> asked water, and she gave him milk: she brought forth butter in a lordly dish.

26 She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workman's hammer: and <sup>a</sup> with the hammer she smote Sisera; <sup>a</sup> she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples.

27 <sup>a</sup> At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down; at her feet he bowed, he fell: <sup>b</sup> where he bowed, there he fell down <sup>a</sup> dead.

breaches, or stopping the incursions, which the sea had made upon their inheritance. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18. From these two tribes Barak had raised his army; and they had boldly ventured and even despised their lives, in meeting the enemy, with their iron-chariots, in the open field of battle. (*Notes*, iv. 6, 7, 14.) But some of the others were ready to follow the blow, though not present in the first engagement.—It is remarkable that Judah and Simeon are not mentioned in this poem, either as deserving censure or commendation: and this cannot well be accounted for; unless the inhabitants of the southern part of the land were at that time so circumstanced, that it could not be expected they should help their brethren of the north. (*Note*, iii. 30.)

V. 19. Some other kings of Canaan had confederated with Jabin, entirely out of hatred against Israel, without receiving any recompence for their assistance.

V. 20. The angels are called “morning stars,” (*Job xxxviii. 7.*) and their assistance may be here meant: or in poetical language, a violent tempest, raised at that time, which greatly facilitated the destruction of the Canaanites, might be ascribed to the influences of the stars in their courses; which thus, without any such miraculous alteration in the heavens, as took place in the days of Joshua, fought effectually against Sisera and his army. (*Note*, *Josh. x. 12—14.*)—Some think the battle continued during part of the night; and that the bright shining of the stars enabled Israel more successfully to pursue and more effectually to destroy their enemies.

V. 21. *The river of Kishon.* *Marg. Ref.*—The stream of this rivulet seems to have been so swelled by the rains which had fallen, that numbers of the Canaanites, attempting to cross it, were swept away by it.—Deborah, by exciting Barak and the Israelites against their powerful enemies, and by their strong faith and fervent prayers, had trodden down their strength in the very dust. (*Note*, *Mic. vii. 8—10.*)

V. 22. *Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, *Is. v. 26—30.*

V. 23. It is probable that Meroz was some town or city, near to the field of battle, and that the inhabitants were more inexcusable in not affording their assistance, than those who lived at a distance: and perhaps their refusal arose from a secret favour borne to the Canaanites. The Lord did not want their help against the mightiest of his enemies; but their conduct proved their unbelief and degeneracy.—Deborah did not curse them out of personal resentment, but “the Angel of the LORD” commanded her to pronounce a curse upon them; that Angel of the Lord, who was the “Captain of the LORD’s host.” (*Note*, *Josh. v. 13—15.*)—Perhaps Meroz had before been a flourishing city; but in consequence of this curse, it became so obscure that its situation is at present unknown (*Note*, *Josh. vi. 26.*)

V. 24. The inhabitants of Meroz, though Israelites, feared the power or valued the friendship of the Canaanites, more than they dreaded the power and desired the favour of God; and they were therefore joined with the accursed Canaanites. Jael, though not a native Israelite, from faith, and love to the cause of God, preferred the friendship of his oppressed people to that of their enemies; and she was joined with them in the blessing, yea, had a special and superior blessing. (*Notes*, *Matt. xxv. 31—46. Gal. iii. 6—14.*) And indeed, “in the tent,” she jeoparded her life as much as the soldiers did “in the high places of the field.” (*Notes*, iv. 21. *Josh. ii. 8—16.*)

V. 26, 27. When Jael had driven the nail through the head of Sisera, she perhaps cut it off with his own sword: though indeed no intimation is given of it in the history; and the words may merely be a poetical repetition of the same idea by a variety of terms. (*Note*, *1 Sam. xvii. 50—53.*)—When he felt the anguish of the nail penetrating his head, perhaps he struggled to arise, but fell down again, and bowed, and died at her feet; finding death where he had sought life, and a terrible enemy where he expected a kind friend.

28 The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried 'through the lattice, <sup>i 2 Kings i. 2. a</sup> Why is his chariot so long in coming? <sup>k Cant. ii. 9. k</sup> Why is his chariot so long in coming? <sup>l Ex. xv. 9. Job vii. 14. Jam v. 7.</sup> why tarry the wheels of his chariots?

29 Her wise ladies answered her, yea, she returned \*answer to herself,

30 <sup>† Heb. the head of a man.</sup> Have they not sped? have they <sup>m Gen. xxxvii. 3. 2 Sam. xiii. 18 Ps. xlv. 14.</sup> not divided the prey; to <sup>†</sup> every man a damsel or two? to Sisera a prey <sup>n</sup> of

divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needle-work, of divers colours of needle-work on both sides, *meet* for the necks of *them that take* the spoil?

31 <sup>a</sup> So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD: but *let* <sup>o</sup> them that love him *be as* <sup>p</sup> the sun when he goeth forth in his might. <sup>q</sup> And the land had rest forty years.

iv. 18. Dan. xii. 3. Hos. vi. 3. Matt. xiii. 43.

<sup>n</sup> Ps. xlviii. 4, 6. lvi. 10, 11. lxxiii. 1—3. lxxxiii. 9—14. xcvi. 8. Rev. vi. 10. xviii. 20. xix. 2, 3. <sup>o</sup> Ex. xx. 6. Deut. vi. 5. Ps. xci. 14. xcvi. 10. Rom. viii. 28. 1 Cor. viii. 3. Eph. vi. 24. Jam. i. 12. i. 5. 1 Pet. i. 8. 1 John iv. 19—21. v. 2, 3. <sup>p</sup> 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. Ps. xix. 4, 5. xxxvii. 6. Prov. q iii. 11, 30.

V. 28. The mother of Sisera, with impatient expectation, looked for his return, and wondered what so long delayed him; not in the least fearing his success in a contest with so unequal an enemy, as Barak and his forces appeared to her. In an ordinary poem we should say, this was finely imagined: but we may here conclude it was actually the case.

V. 29. *Wise.*] This seems to be spoken ironically. Her ladies, *in their great wisdom*, suggested that Sisera only waited to divide the immense spoil which had been taken; and she *as wisely* pleased her vain mind with the soothing imagination!

V. 30. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*A damsel or two.*] What a picture does this give of an ungodly and sensual heart! How shameful are these wishes of an aged mother for a beloved son, and his officers and soldiers: that a woman of honour and virtue, as we say, could delight her fancy, with conceiving the Israelitish virgins divided among the conquerors, as their property, to be exposed to their unbridled, domineering lust! And that nothing more excellent could be conceived by her trifling mind, than to see her son, and his attendants and concubines, arrayed in fine garments, wrought by the singular skill and industry of their vanquished enemies!

V. 31. The mother of Sisera is left to enjoy her imaginary triumph, and meet her bitter disappointment; while the hymn of praise concludes with praying for similar destruction to all the enemies of the Lord, and prosperity to those who love him; that their characters may be honourable, their endeavours successful, their course increasingly useful, and their path shining more and more; till they resemble the noon-day, when the sun by his full strength has dispelled the mists and clouds which his rising draws up, and which at first obscure his way, but afterwards increase his splendour. (*Notes, Ps. lxviii. 1—3. Rev. xix. 1—6.*)

*Had rest forty years.*] It is not agreed whether these years are to be computed from the time that Deborah was raised up to be judge; or from the beginning of the oppression by Jabin. The former is the more obvious interpretation. (*Notes, iii. 11. 30.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—11.

No delay should be made in returning thanks to God for his mercies: for our praises are most acceptable, pleasant, and profitable, when they flow from a full heart: nor should we be backward to celebrate his praises, and declare our obligations to him, before his most determined enemies, or in the presence of the mightiest and haughtiest of the princes of the earth. Let them be reminded, that the Lord is above them; and against them, so long as they seek their own glory and oppose his cause: let them be warned to "rejoice with trembling" in their dangerous

pre-eminence: let them lower their diadems to the crown of "the King of kings;" and learn to embrace his salvation, and become his servants, or they will ere long perish like Jabin and Sisera. (*Ps. lxxxiii. 9, 10. Note, Ps. ii. 10—12.*)—Those princes who desire to serve God, must trust in him, and not in chariots and horses, fleets, or armies; they must use their authority in advancing truth and righteousness, and account his worship to be their most honourable and delightful privilege and employment.—Every recent mercy calls upon us to renew our gratitude for former benefits: the works of the Most High can consistently be compared only with each other; and all combine in proclaiming, that nothing is too hard for his power, or too large for his love. Our praises in prosperity will be heightened and purified, by the remembrance of preceding troubles, and by humiliation for those sins which occasioned them: for nothing but sin gives birth to misery, whether personal or publick, temporal or eternal.—When men rebel against God, he withdraws his protection, and sets his face against them: then their weakest foes prevail, and his curse infuses bitterness into all their comforts; nor can any thing but repentance stop the speedy progress of advancing judgments. But if faithful and zealous persons are raised up, as magistrates or ministers, to attempt reformation; if others willingly offer themselves to concur in their pious designs; and if the people are suitably influenced by these endeavours; the affairs of nations and churches then begin to wear a more favourable aspect. And when in our personal afflictions we are brought to humble ourselves before God, to repent, to pray and seek forgiveness, deliverance and comfort are not far off. Happy are they who are thus "chastened of the Lord," "that they should not be condemned with the world:" for the prosperity of the wicked increases pride, insolence, presumption, and sensuality, till they "suddenly perish," "and that without remedy."—While we can go abroad, or rest at home, in security; while we can follow our employments, and attend on the ordinances of God, without any to make us afraid; let us join, to our thanksgivings for such distinguishing mercies, our sympathising prayers for those who are groaning under the calamities of war, oppression, or persecution.—But, as a craving appetite will urge men to venture even their lives for its gratification; did we thirst aright for the blessings of salvation, neither the persecutor's rage, nor the tempter's assaults, could keep us from the house of God, or the throne of grace.

##### V. 12—31.

When we rehearse the righteous, faithful, and merciful acts of the Lord; we should also bear true respect and affection, and give due commendation, to those who have been his willing messengers of kindness to us, and should

## CHAP. VI.

Israel, relapsing into sin, is oppressed by Midian, and reproved by a prophet, 1—10. The Angel of the Lord appoints Gideon to deliver them, and confirms his commission by consuming his oblation with fire, 11—21. Gideon knows who the Angel is, and is alarmed; but when encouraged, he builds an altar, and calls it **JEHOVAH SHALOM**, 22—24. By divine command he destroys Baal's altar and grove, and offers a sacrifice to **JEHOVAH**, 25—27. His citizens purpose to put him to death; but his father defends him, and calls him Jerubbaal, 28—32. He raises an army, and is encouraged by a twofold sign, 33—40.

a li. 13, 14, 19, 20.  
Lev. xxvi. 14.  
Deut. xxviii. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40.  
b Gen. xxi. 2.  
Num. xxi. 17.  
18. Hab. iii. 7.

**AND** the children of Israel <sup>a</sup>did evil in the sight of the **LORD**; and the **LORD** delivered them into the hand of <sup>b</sup>Midian seven years.

at least recompense them with our fervent prayers for his blessing on them: and while he needs no human help, he is pleased to employ and accept the services of those, who in their several stations improve their talents to advance his cause: nay, he *requires* every man to do this, and will call those to a severe account who neglect or evade his service.—The higher any man is advanced in Providence, the more forward ought he to be in promoting the publick good, and in stirring up others, by his example, influence, and authority to do the same; not deeming the high praises of God unbecoming the bench, the senate, or the throne, or unseasonable in the most ordinary conversation with strangers, and even with the nobles of the earth.—They who would do good, must shake off sloth, renounce indulgence, and learn to be active and endure hardship. On some occasions they may be called to “jeopardy their lives in the high places of the field;” at all times, to sacrifice many personal interests for the publick good; and by so doing, to incur the reproach and censure of a mis-judging world. Most men will therefore excuse themselves: and while they are averse to the cross, and disaffected to the cause of God, they will find apologies for their conduct, from the variety of their secular engagements and avocations. But they who temporize in a matter which admits not of neutrality, are numbered among his enemies; and whilst they grieve and discourage the hearts of others, bring heavy wrath upon themselves. Indeed power and pre-eminence at present seem to be on their side, and the servants of God are poor, despised, and afflicted: but the tables will soon be turned; and the feeblest believer shall “tread down strength,” and exercise dominion over the mightiest of the wicked.—When the Almighty “arises to judgment, to help all the meek upon earth,” and to avenge the cause of his people, the whole creation wages war against his enemies; “the stars in their courses,” the elements melting with fervent heat, and all the angels in heaven shall concur in their destruction: while the hosts of God shall sing with triumphant acclamations, “So let all thine enemies perish, O **LORD**!” “and they who love the **LORD**,” shall “shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” What will then become of the hopes of the sensual, the vain, the covetous, and the ambitious? The objects of their noblest wishes were degrading, and

2 And <sup>c</sup>the hand of Midian <sup>e</sup>pre-  
vailed against Israel: *and* because of  
the Midianites the children of Israel  
made them the <sup>d</sup>dens which *are* in the  
mountains, and caves, and strong-holds.

3 And *so* it was, <sup>e</sup>when Israel had  
sown, that the Midianites came up,  
and the Amalekites, and <sup>e</sup>the children  
of the east, even they came up against  
them;

4 And they encamped against them,  
and destroyed the increase of the earth,  
<sup>e</sup>till thou come unto Gaza; and <sup>b</sup>left  
no sustenance for Israel, neither <sup>f</sup>sheep,  
nor ox, nor ass.

5 For they came up with their cat-

c Lev. xxvi. 17.  
Deut. xxviii. 47,  
48.  
\* Heb. was strong.

d 1 Sam. xiii. 6.  
xiv. 11. Heb. xi.  
88. Rev. vi. 15.

e Lev. xxvi. 16.  
Deut. xxviii. 30  
—33. 51. Job  
xxxii. 8. Is. lxxv.  
21, 22. Mic. vi.  
15.  
f 33. vii. 12. viii.  
10. 1 Kings iv.  
30. Job i. 3.

g Gen. x. 19. xiii.  
10.  
h Prov. xxviii. 8.  
Jer. xlix. 9, 10.  
Ob. 5.  
† Or, goat.

many of their desires base and brutish: yet even these wishes and desires will not be gratified, and eternal disappointment and black despair will complete their final misery. Where will then be their boasted wisdom? where their high-sounding titles and glittering distinctions? All, all are vanished, and gone for ever! But the righteous may look forward to that solemn scene with joyful expectation; may consider death and judgment as the coming of their Beloved to complete their felicity: and, though willing to wait his time, yet longing to behold his face, they may well say, “Why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariots?” Though they meet delays, they shall not suffer disappointment; for yet a little space, and he will come, and receive them to his glorious and eternal rest.

## NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1. The Israelites had executed vengeance on the Midianites, just before the death of Moses, and had almost extirpated them: (*Notes*, Num. xxxi. 1—18:) but the remnant had increased and acquired power; and, probably instigated by resentment, they joined themselves to the Amalekites, the devoted enemies of Israel, in order to retaliate (3). As the tyranny of these enemies, though exceedingly grievous, was much shorter than that of their former oppressors; it is probable, that the guilt of Israel had not been so atrocious.

V. 2, 3. These caverns were well known to the Israelites, when this history was written: but it was proper that the original intent and use of them should be remembered, both to humble them, and to excite their gratitude.—The Midianites and their allies seem to have come rather as freebooters, than as a disciplined army of troops under experienced commanders: yet the courage of the Israelites was so sunk, that, instead of manfully resisting them, they dastardly concealed themselves under ground from their ravages. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4. *Gaza.*] The country of Midian lay beyond the most eastern borders of the land, and Gaza was near the Mediterranean sea on the west. So that the invaders went across the country, and occupied and desolated the whole of it, leaving “no sustenance.” (*Note*, Jer. xlix. 9—11.)

V. 5. *Marg. Ref.*

i Cant. i. 5. 1a. xiii. 20.  
 v. 12. viii. 10.  
 Jer. xvi. 23.  
 1 viii. 21. 1 Sam.  
 xxx. 17. 1a. ix.  
 6. Jer. xix. 29.  
 32.  
 m Pa. lxxxiii. 4—  
 12.  
 n Pa. cvi. 43. Marg.  
 Jer. v. 17. Mal.  
 i. 4.  
 o See on iii. 9. 15.  
 —Pa. i. 15.  
 lxxxviii. 34. cvi.  
 44. Is. xxvi. 16.  
 Hos. v. 15.

tle, and their tents, and they came  
 as grass-hoppers for multitude; for  
 both they and their camels were with-  
 out number: and they entered into the  
 land to destroy it.

6 And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel cried unto the LORD.

7 And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD because of the Midianites,

8 That the LORD sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage:

9 And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and I drave them out from before you, and gave you their land:

10 And I said unto you, I am the LORD your God; fear not the gods of

the Amorites in whose land ye dwell: but ye have not obeyed my voice.

11 ¶ And there came an Angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abi-ezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites.

12 And the Angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

13 And Gideon said unto him, O my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

14 And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?

15 And he said unto him, O my

t ii. 2. Prov. v. 13.  
 Jer. iii. 13. 25.  
 ix. 13. xii. 21.  
 xliii. 4. 7. Zeph.  
 iii. 2. Rom. x.  
 16. Heb. v. 9.  
 14—16. u. 1—5.  
 v. 23. xii. 3. 19.  
 —20. Gen. xlviii.  
 16. Is. lxiii. 9.  
 q ym. 2. Josh. xvii.  
 2.  
 r Heb. xi. 32. Ge-  
 deon.  
 † Heb. cause it to  
 flee.

s ii. 18. Ex. iii. 12.  
 Josh. i. 5. 9.  
 Ruth ii. 4. Matt.  
 i. 23. xxviii. 20.  
 Luke i. 28. Acts  
 xviii. 9, 10.  
 t Gen. xxv. 23.  
 Ex. xxxiii. 14—  
 16. Num. xiv. 14.  
 15. Rom. viii. 31.  
 u Deut. xxix. 24.  
 xxx. 17. 16. Pa.  
 lxxxix. 49. Is.  
 lix. 1. 2. lxxv. 15.  
 x Pa. xlii. 1.  
 lxxxviii. 3, 4.

y Deut. xxxi. 17.  
 2 Chr. xv. 2. Pa.  
 xxv. 9. Is. xli.  
 17. Jer. xxxi. 36.  
 z See on 11.

a Iv. 6. Josh. i. 5  
 —9. 1 Sam. xii.  
 11. 1 Chr. xiv.  
 9, 10.

q See on Pa. xlii.  
 2, 3.

r See on Ex. xx.  
 2, 3.

s 2 Kings xvii. 33.  
 35. 38. Jer. x. 2.

V. 6—10. (Notes, iii. 9, 10, 14.) The people having long suffered under their affliction, at length cried unto the Lord to deliver them from it; but it does not appear, that they were deeply humbled for their sins. (Notes, Is. i. 10—20.) He therefore sent a prophet to call them to repentance, before he raised up a judge to deliver them from their enemies. The message itself was very plain and convincing, and probably was delivered from city to city, throughout the land; and it seems to have had considerable effect, as it prepared the way for their deliverance.—It may be useful here to compare the language of this prophet, “Thus saith the LORD, &c.” with that of the Angel before mentioned, (Note, ii. 1—5,) and with the subsequent part of this chapter (11—24).

V. 11. (Marg. Ref.) The people contrived by various means to conceal a scanty portion of their harvest, just sufficient to keep them from starving. In the wine-press Gideon beat out the wheat with a staff (Heb.) unsuspected: for either the vintage was not ripe, or the people could make no use of their wine-presses.

V. 12. (Marg. Ref. s.) Perhaps Gideon, while at his work, was meditating on the miserable state of Israel, and conceiving bold designs against their invaders, which however he saw no possibility of accomplishing; to which thoughts these words of the Angel might refer.

V. 13. The Angel had said, “The LORD is with thee:” but Gideon’s mind was occupied about his people, and he therefore answered, “If the LORD be with us;” not conceiving that the LORD could be with him, when there was no evidence of his special presence with Israel. He judged right, when he concluded that they could not have been so distressed, if the almighty God, who had brought them out of Egypt, had not for the time forsaken them: but he

did not suitably advert to those crimes which had provoked him to anger. (Notes, Deut. xxxii. 26—31.)

Our fathers told us of, &c.] Language of this kind, frequently occurring in the subsequent historical books, shews how fully the conviction prevailed in the minds of the people, that all the wonderful works for Israel recorded in the books of Moses, had assuredly taken place. And this conviction could never have been produced and perpetuated, from the days of Moses, to all succeeding generations, had it not been certainly known by Moses’s contemporaries, that this was indeed the case.

V. 14. We here learn who this Angel was; even the LORD, JEHOVAH, the only begotten Son of God, who has in all ages declared the Father to mankind.—These repeated evidences continually remind the attentive reader, that the Scriptures are calculated to lead us to conceive of the one living and true God, as subsisting in distinct persons.—The LORD looked upon Gideon, with some peculiar expression of majesty or of favour, giving energy to his words, while he said, “Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel.” (Marg. Ref. on 11, p. Notes, Ex. iii. 12. iv. 1—12. Luke xxi. 14.)—Thus he was commissioned to execute the bold designs which he was revolving in his mind, or to attempt the deliverance of his people, in that strength of faith which he even then possessed.—If he believed that nothing was wanting to deliver them from the Midianites, but the presence of God who redeemed Israel from Egypt, let him go in this confidence, and he shall find that same power exerted to render him successful. “Have not I sent thee?” saith the divine Speaker.

V. 15. Manasseh was not one of the leading tribes in Israel; the thousand (marg.) to which Gideon belonged, was poor in that tribe; and he was (as he humbly thought)

Ex. iii. 11. iv. 10 Jer. i. 6. Luke i. 34. 1 Sam. ix. 21. xviii. 23. Heb. *thousand is the meanest*. Ex. xviii. 21—25. Mic. v. 2. Gen. xxxii. 10. Jer. i. 45. 1 Cor. xv. 9. Eph. iii. 8. See on 12.—Ex. iii. 12. Josh. i. 5. Is. xli. 10. 14.—16. Matt. xxviii. 20. Mark xvi. 20. Acts xi. 21. See on Ex. xxxiii. 13. 16. 36—40. Gen. xv. 8—17. Ex. iv. 1—9. 2 Kings xii. 8—11. Ps. lxxxvii. 17. Is. vi. 11. Gen. xxiii. 5. xia. 3. Or, *meat-offering*.

Lord, 'wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, 'my \*family is poor in Manasseh, and I am 'the least in my father's house.

16 And the LORD said unto him, 'Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

17 And he said unto him, 'If now I have found grace in thy sight, then 'shew me a sign that thou talkest with me.

18 Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and 'bring forth my 'present, and set it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again.

19 And Gideon went in, and 'made ready 'a kid, 'and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it.

20 And the Angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and 'lay *them* upon this rock, and 'pour out the broth. And he did so.

21 Then the Angel of the LORD put

forth the end of the staff that *was* in his hand, and touched the flesh, and the unleavened cakes; and there 'rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the Angel of the LORD departed out of his sight.

22 And when Gideon 'perceived that he *was* an Angel of the LORD, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord God 'for 'because I have seen an Angel of the LORD face to face.

23 And the LORD said unto him, 'Peace *be* unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.

24 Then Gideon 'built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it 'Jehovah-shalom: unto this day it is yet in 'Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

25 ¶ And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, 'Take thy father's young bullock, 'even the second bullock of seven years old, and 'throw down the altar of Baal that 'thy father hath, and 'cut down the grove that is by it;

26 And 'build an altar unto the LORD thy God upon the top of this

the meanest person in the family, and utterly unfit to undertake such a service. (Notes, Ex. iv. 13, 14. Is. vi. 5—8. Jer. i. 6—8.)

V. 16. *As one man.*] With great facility, and to their entire destruction. (Num. xiv. 15. Note, vii. 16—22.)

V. 17. *That thou talkest, &c.*] Gideon seems to have desired some assurance, that the Person, now speaking with him, was He, who at the bush commissioned Moses to deliver Israel out of Egypt, and who had given him sensible tokens of his divine power and authority. (Notes, Ex. iii. 2—12. iv. 1—9. xxxiii. 17—19.)

V. 18. *My present.*] "Meat-offering." (Marg.) As a kid was part of the meat-offering (19), the word cannot always be used exclusively for oblations of flour, &c. as some have thought.

V. 19. This preparation would serve, either for a hospitable meal, or for a sacred oblation. The quantity was far more than was necessary for one person at one time: and it shews that, even in his poverty, Gideon was ready to "use hospitality without grudging," according to the custom of those times. (Gen. xviii. 3—8.)

V. 20, 21. This command seems to have been intended as a trial of Gideon's faith and obedience, by which the Lord gave him the sign which he required (17). With the staff in his hand, he "touched the flesh, and the unleavened cakes;" and by fire, miraculously kindled, the whole was consumed, as a sacrifice, and not as a hospitable meal; for he was God, and not man. (Notes, 1 Kings xviii. 33—39. 2 Chr. vii. 1—3.)

V. 22. The sight of a created angel, though it might have surprised Gideon, would not have thus terrified him: but it was a current opinion, that the vision of the divine glory was fatal; and, except as seen in Jesus Christ, no doubt it would be so. (Marg. Ref. p.) 'From such 'places as this the ancient Christians rightly gathered, that 'the Son of God appeared, upon some great occasions, 'in old time: which is not incredible, but a matter of 'easy belief; if we be persuaded, that he did really appear 'in our flesh, which he took of the virgin Mary, and 'dwelt among us a long time, and then ascended in it 'to heaven, where he lives for ever. For why should we 'think it strange; if for a short time he appeared sometimes in human shape, as a prelude to what he intended 'in the fulness of time? ... It was indeed a greater thing 'which he did for us at last: but he that did the greater, 'may well be granted to have done the less, and there is 'no reason to doubt of it.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 23. *The LORD said.*] Either at a second appearance, or by an audible voice, or in a vision as afterwards (25).

V. 24. Gideon does not seem to have intended this altar for sacrifices; but for a memorial of the Lord's appearance, and gracious words to him. (Marg. Ref. r, and on marg. reading.) It remained at the time when this history was written.

V. 25, 26. Our translation supposes, that only one bullock was sacrificed: yet the term, "the second bullock," may imply that two were appointed. It does not

\* Heb. <sup>strong</sup> rock, in <sup>†</sup> the ordered place, and take the second bullock, and offer a burnt-sacrifice with the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down.

27 Then Gideon took ten men of his servants, <sup>a</sup> and did as the LORD had said unto him: and *so* it was, because he feared his father's household, and the men of the city, that he could not do *it* by day, that <sup>b</sup> he did *it* by night.

28 And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold the altar of Baal was cast down, and the grove was cut down that *was* by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar *that was* built.

29 And they said one to another, Who hath done this thing? And when they enquired and asked, they said, Gideon the son of Joash hath done this thing.

30 Then the men of the city said unto Joash, <sup>c</sup> Bring out thy son, that

he may die: because he hath cast down the altar of Baal, and because he hath cut down the grove that *was* by it.

31 And Joash said unto all that stood against him, <sup>d</sup> Will ye plead for Baal? will ye save him? he that will plead for him, <sup>e</sup> let him be put to death whilst *it is yet* morning: <sup>f</sup> if he be a god, let him plead for himself, because <sup>g</sup> one hath cast down his altar.

32 Therefore on that day he called him <sup>h</sup> Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar.

33 ¶ Then <sup>i</sup> all the Midianites, and the Amalekites, and the <sup>k</sup> children of the east, were gathered together, and <sup>l</sup> went over and pitched in <sup>m</sup> the valley of Jezreel.

34 But <sup>n</sup> the Spirit of the LORD <sup>o</sup> came upon Gideon, and he <sup>p</sup> blew a trumpet; and <sup>q</sup> Abi-ezer <sup>r</sup> was gathered after him.

however appear, when or how the first bullock, if two were meant, was offered. This "second bullock of seven years old," (the same number as the years of Israel's oppression,) seems to have been fattened on purpose for a publick sacrifice to Baal.—Before he offered the sacrifice, Gideon was directed to "throw down the altar which his father had" for the worship of Baal; and "to cut down the grove;" and thus to declare open war against idolatry, before he attacked the enemies of his people: regarding the honour and command of God, more than the authority or credit of his father; which probably had hitherto made him satisfy himself with silent disapprobation.—Some think that the word rendered *grove*, means an image of Ashtaroth, which was cut in pieces; and burnt as fuel in consuming the sacrifice offered to JEHOVAH. (Note, ii. 11—13.)—Gideon was not a priest, or even a Levite; but he acted by extraordinary commission, as a prophet.—Sacrificing also was generally restricted to the altar at Shiloh: yet on this occasion the Lord was pleased to dispense with the *ritual* appointment; and even to command and accept a sacrifice offered with those things which had been employed in idolatry: for it was of great importance, that a protest against the worship of Baal, and an avowal of JEHOVAH, as the only true God, should introduce Israel's deliverance. (Notes, Lev. i. 5—9. xvii. 3—7. Deut. xii. 2—9. 1 Sam. vii. 9. 1 Kings xviii. 38, 39. 2 Kings iii. 20.)

V. 27. The large family of Gideon's father was grievously infected with this idolatry; which the more magnifies the mercy of God in preserving him, and in selecting him to be Israel's deliverer. Some however, even of his servants, were ready and willing to help in this perilous attempt.

V. 28—30. When the citizens arose betimes, (perhaps to pay their morning-devotions to Baal,) and saw what had

taken place, they were speedily informed that Gideon had done it; and nothing but his blood could satisfy the persecuting rage of these infatuated idolaters! (Note, 1 Kings xix. 2.)

V. 31, 32. Joash, though himself guilty of idolatry, was unwilling to have his son punished: and probably, by what had been done, he was convinced of the sin and folly of worshipping an idol, which could not defend itself; and which needed to be saved by its devotees, instead of being able to save them. If Baal were indeed a God, let him plead his own cause against Gideon: and if he were not a god, they who pleaded for him deserved immediate death. (Notes, 1 Sam. v. vi. Is. xlv. 1, 2.)—Probably Joash now recollected the law against idolaters. (Note, Deut. xiii. 1—5.) Some however think, that he spake merely as a magistrate, against any who should excite a tumult on account of these transactions.—On this occasion he gave his son a new name, and called him Jerubbaal; as if he had said, *Let Baal plead against him if he be able*. He was also called Jerubbesheth, which signifies, *let shame plead*; (2 Sam. xi. 21;) for what the people called Baal, or lord, was indeed their shame. (Notes, Jer. xi. 13. Hos. ix. 9, 10.)—Some fragments of Phenician history evidently mention Gideon under the title of *Jerombalus*, and call him the priest of *Jero*; doubtless from this sacrifice offered by him to JEHOVAH. The writer says he received some commentaries from him, which probably mean the books of Moses, the law of JEHOVAH.

V. 33, 34. It seems that a very great and surprising reformation took place on this occasion, in Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites; for that city furnished Gideon with his first troops, when he prepared to attack the Midianites after they had crossed Jordan on their annual plundering invasion. (Note, 2, 3.)

p 2 Chr. xxxv. 6—12. 35 And he sent<sup>o</sup> messengers through-  
out all Manasseh; who also was ga-  
thered after him: and he sent messen-  
gers unto Asher, and unto Zebulun,  
and unto Naphtali; and they came up  
to meet them.

p 14 17—20. Ex. iv. 1—9. 2 Kings xx. 8. Pa. ciii. 18. 14. Matt. xvi. 1. 36 ¶ And Gideon said unto God,  
p 14 17—20. Ex. iv. 1—9. 2 Kings xx. 8. Pa. ciii. 18. 14. Matt. xvi. 1. <sup>p</sup> If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand,  
as thou hast said,

p 14 17—20. Ex. iv. 1—9. 2 Kings xx. 8. Pa. ciii. 18. 14. Matt. xvi. 1. 37 <sup>o</sup> Behold, I will put a fleece of  
wool in the floor; and if the dew be  
on the fleece<sup>o</sup> only, and *it be* dry upon  
all the earth *beside*, then shall I know  
that thou wilt save Israel by mine  
hand, as thou hast said.

V. 36—40. The view of the very great multitudes of the enemy perhaps rather discouraged Gideon; who, for the confirmation of his own faith, and that of his troops, desired this miraculous sign of the Lord's presence as the seal of his commission. But, as it is the nature of wool to suck in the moisture, when there is any in the air, so the first token did not quite satisfy him: and, though conscious of his unbelief, he asked the reversal of the sign, joining with his petition a humble deprecation of the Lord's displeasure; and he obtained his request. (*Notes*, vii. 13—15. *Ex.* iv. 1—7. *Luke* i. 18—20.)—According to this miracle, the nation of Israel was moistened by the dew of heavenly blessings, when the whole earth besides remained dry: and now that the nations of the earth enjoy the blessings of redemption, the Jews remain like the dry fleece.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

## V. 1—10.

The tendency of our fallen nature to apostasy from God is so strong, that no means can of themselves prevent its effect; and in all cases when divine grace is withheld, man as naturally does evil as the stone falls to the ground. The Scriptures every where teach us this humiliating truth: and in proportion as we effectually learn it, we shall in all things depend on the special assistance and blessing of God, with constant, earnest prayer; and unreservedly give him all the glory, whatever good be wrought in us, or done by us.—He has so constituted the world, that fear, shame, and misery are the natural effects of sin, and will inevitably follow the commission of it; however impenitent sinners may endeavour to evade them, and for a time succeed.—Conscious guilt appals the heart, and reduces men to the most degrading expedients for self-preservation: and plenty abused in excess must expose them, at least, to the merciful chastisement of pinching want. Heavy afflictions often extort from sinners cries of distress and prayers for relief: but if the Lord regard these cries and prayers, he will convince the sufferers of their guilt and lead them to repentance; for without this no deliverance will eventually prove a blessing.—The ministers of God must declare to sinners, his perfections and authority; the relations in which they stand to him, and their obligations to obedience; the reasonableness of his precepts, the

38 And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl-full of water.

39 And Gideon said unto God, <sup>Gen. xviii. 22.</sup> 'Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: Let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be <sup>Ps. cvii. 33—35.</sup> 'dry only: upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew.

40 And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.

advantages of his service, the evil of sin, and the number and heinousness of their transgressions. Hence it will appear, that they greatly need repentance and forgiveness; and that the message of the gospel is indeed worthy of their most cordial acceptance. And, having brought these things home to their consciences, they must leave the rest with God, earnestly praying to him to render his word successful. Yet, alas! numbers hear the word of God, and are convinced that their conduct is inexcusable, who notwithstanding proceed in their sinful courses, even while groaning under the painful effects of them!

## V. 11—24.

The Lord reserves to himself a remnant in the worst of times, to whom he manifests his gracious presence; and they are never more likely to be thus favoured, than when struggling with outward difficulties, employed in honest labour, and meditating upon heavenly things.—Talents, suited for peculiar services, may for a time be buried in obscurity; but in due season the Lord will take the candle from "under the bushel," and place it "on a candlestick" to give light to all around: and that time must be waited for, by those who feel their hearts glow with desires of usefulness, which at present they have no opportunity of executing.—We are more disposed to muse on our troubles, than on our transgressions: and when we do not directly experience the same deliverances as have been afforded to others, we are apt to think that the Lord's "hand is shortened," or that "he hath forgotten" to be "gracious;" not considering that he worketh every thing in its appointed season, according to the determinations of his unfathomable wisdom, and as best answers the purposes of his own glory.—But "before honour is humility:" and the delays and disappointments, by which he humbles those whom he delighteth to honour, often discourage their hearts, and induce distrust and reluctance to duty: so imperfect and so defiled with sin are our best graces! Yet he generally employs those who are most sensible of their own unworthiness and insufficiency: at the same time teaching them to exercise the courage of faith, and to grow strong by simply expecting help from Him; and graciously assuring them of his direction and support.—When the Lord favours his servants with glimpses of his glory, and tastes of his love, they long for the continuance of his

## CHAP. VII.

Gideon's army is tried by divine directions, and reduced to three hundred men, 1—8. He is sent into the enemy's camp by night, and encouraged by hearing a dream interpreted, 9—15. He divides his army into three companies, giving each man a trumpet, and a lamp in a pitcher, 16—18. The Midianites are thrown into confusion and put to flight, 19—22. The Israelites intercept their flight, and take their princes Oreb and Zeeb, whom they put to death, 23—25.

**THEN** <sup>a</sup> Jerubbaal, (who is Gideon,) and all the people that *were* with him, <sup>b</sup> rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side

a vi 32

b Gen. xxii. 3  
Josh. iii. 1. vi  
12. Ec. ix. 10.

gracious presence: and when the sense of his pardoning love has banished the fear of wrath; they rise superior to discouragements, praise him for his mercies, and are ready to say, "Here am I, send me;" though the service be dangerous and difficult, and require much self-denial. (Notes, Is. vi. 6—8.)

## V. 25—40.

In attempting reformation, (which is the first step towards recovering prosperity,) no man must be known according to the flesh: nay, when the commands of God are concerned, even parental authority loses its obligation; and though the method of procedure should be regulated by wisdom, yet we must not be counselled by natural affection or the fear of man. (Notes, Matt. x. 37—39. P. O. 34—42. Luke xiv. 25—27. 2 Cor. v. 16.)—If we do any thing *effectual* against the cause of Satan, his servants will certainly be enraged, especially those who are zealous for any kind of false religion. But the Lord has all hearts in his hands, and can easily intimidate the enemies of his people, or convert them into friends and helpers: and persecution must always appear unreasonable and odious to a reflecting mind. JEHOVAH does not allow his servants to use carnal weapons: and his friends should leave them exclusively to idolaters, anti-christians and ungodly men.—Wicked men are frequently most furious, when destruction is just at hand: for "when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD lifteth up a standard against him." Yet even they who have the Spirit of God, and by the trumpet of the gospel call others to the conflict, cannot always keep out disquieting fears, in circumstances of peculiar danger and difficulty. In this struggle against involuntary unbelief, the Lord himself, the Author and Finisher of his people's faith, is their Refuge: to him they make application, and he will help them; and when they are encouraged, they will be enabled to strengthen their brethren. Yet the same inward enemy will repeatedly assail them; and conscious that their fears dishonour the power and faithfulness and love of God, they will deprecate his displeasure, and beseech him to strengthen their faith; and he will both pardon them, and condescend to their desires, while they endeavour to trust in him, but "cannot do the thing that they would."—What cause have we sinners of the Gentiles to thank the Lord, that the

of them, by the hill of <sup>c</sup> Moreh, in the valley. Gen. xii. 6.

2 And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that *are* with thee, *are* <sup>d</sup> too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest <sup>e</sup> Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, 'Mine own hand hath saved me.

3 Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, <sup>f</sup> 'Who-soever is fearful and afraid, let him return, and depart early from mount Gilead: and there returned of the people <sup>g</sup> twenty and two thousand, and there remained ten thousand.

4 And the LORD said unto Gideon,

dew of heavenly blessings, once confined to Israel, now descends upon the inhabitants of the earth, without that limitation! Yet still the means of grace are dispensed in different measures according to the purposes of God; and even in the same congregations, one man's soul is like Gideon's moistened fleece, another's like the dry ground. Let us then continually pray for the divine blessing on the ordinances of God to ourselves and others: not at any time forgetting the nation of Israel, to which all other nations are so deeply indebted, and which has been so long a dry fleece, whilst the earth around has enjoyed the blessing.

## NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 2, 3. Gideon either forgot the law, which ordered proclamation to be made before the battle, that the *fearful* with some others might return home; or he thought it might be dispensed with on so urgent an occasion. (Note, Deut. xx. 5—9.) But the Lord knew, that pride and unbelief prevailed in the army. The people had readily enlisted at first; but when they saw the multitudes of the Midianites, their courage sunk: yet, had they prevailed, they would have *vaunted*, and ascribed the victory to their own valour, and not to the special help of God! Most of them were destitute of true faith, and many doubtless disheartened with a guilty conscience. They thought that instead of being too many, they were too few; and the greatest part of them availed themselves of the proclamation, and went home.—Mount Gilead, here mentioned, must have been some mountain of that name west of Jordan, of less note than mount Gilead which lay east of that river: for Gideon's army never crossed Jordan, till after the victory. (viii. 4.)

V. 4—7. Some of the soldiers that still remained, were not so courageous as they would be thought: but Gideon had done his part in that respect; and it pleased the Lord himself to prove and purify the company, by an extraordinary expedient. Perhaps they were led to the water after the fatigue of a long march, under the idea that they were going directly to attack the enemy. It seems to have been customary for them to drink as the cattle do, by putting their mouths down to the water, and drawing it in; but they who only took a little into their hands, and sucked it up, (as dogs are remarked to lap a little water

The people *are* yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and <sup>1</sup> I will try them for thee there; and it shall be, *that* of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.

5 So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.

6 And the number of them that lapped, *putting* their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

7 And the LORD said unto Gideon, <sup>1</sup> By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the *other* people go every man unto his place.

8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their <sup>1</sup> trumpets: and he sent all *the rest of* Israel every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men. And the host of Midian was beneath him <sup>m</sup> in the valley.

9 ¶ And it came to pass <sup>a</sup> the same night, that the LORD said unto him, <sup>o</sup> Arise, get thee down unto the host; for <sup>r</sup> I have delivered it into thine hand.

10 But <sup>q</sup> if thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah thy servant down to the host.

11 And <sup>r</sup> thou shalt hear what they say, and afterward shall <sup>r</sup> thine hands be strengthened to go down unto the host. Then went he down, with Phurah his servant, unto the outside of the <sup>r</sup> armed men that *were* in the host.

12 And <sup>r</sup> the Midianites, and the Amalekites, and all the children of the east, lay along in the valley like <sup>r</sup> grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels *were* without number, as the sand of the sea-side for multitude.

13 And when Gideon was come, behold, *there was* a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream; and <sup>r</sup> lo, a cake of barley-bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along.

14 And <sup>r</sup> his fellow answered and said, This *is* nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: *for* <sup>r</sup> into his hand hath God delivered Midian and all the host.

15 And it was *so*, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the <sup>r</sup> interpretation thereof, that he <sup>r</sup> worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, <sup>b</sup> Arise, for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.

16 ¶ And he divided the three hundred men *into* three companies, and he put <sup>r</sup> a trumpet in every man's hand, with <sup>c</sup> empty pitchers, and <sup>d</sup> lamps within the pitchers.

17 And he said unto them, <sup>d</sup> Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold,

13, 14. Gen. xxiv. 14. 1 Sam. xiv. 8—12. 1 Sam. xxiii. 16. Ezr. vi. 22. Neh. vi. 9. 1a. xxxv. 3, 4. 2 Cor. xii. 10. Eph. iii. 16. vi. 10. Phil. iv. 13.

\* Or, ranks by five. Ex. xiii. 18. marg. vi. 3. 5. 33. 1 Kings iv. 50.

u viii. 10. 2 Chr. xiv. 9—12. Ps. cxl. 1. xxxiii. 3b. cxviii. 10—12. 1s. viii. 9, 10.

x iii. 15. 31. iv. 9. 21. vi. 15. 1s. xli. 14, 15. 1 Cor. i. 27.

y Num. xxii. 38. xxiii. 5. 20. xxiv. 10—13. Job i. 10.

z Ex. xv. 14, 15. Josh. ii. 9. 24. v. 1. 2 Kings vii. 6, 7.

† Heb. breaking thereof. Gen. xl. 8. xli. 11.

a Gen. xxiv. 26, 27. 48. Ex. iv. 30, 31. 2 Chr. xx. 18, 19. b iv. 14. 2 Cor. x. 4—6.

† Heb. trumpets in the hand of all of them.

c 2 Cor. iv. 7.

† Or, firebrands, or, torches.

d ix. 42. Matt. xvi. 24. 1 Cor. xl. 1. Heb. xiii. 7. 1 Pet. v. 3.

18—22. 1 Sam. xiv. 6. 1s. xli. 14—16.

† iii. 27. Lev. xxiii. 24. xxv. 9. Num. x. 9. Josh. vi. 4. 20. 1s. xxvii. 13. 1 Cor. xv. 52.

cu vi. 23.

a Gen. xvi. 2, 3. Job iv. 13. xxxiii. 15. 16. Matt. i. 20. ii. 13. Acta xviii. 9, 10. xxvii. 23.

c Josh. i. 5—9. 1s. xli. 10—16. xlii. 1, 2.

p iii. 10. 28. iv. 14, 5. 2 Chr. xvi. 8, 9. xx. 17.

q iv. 8, 9. Ex. iv. 10—14.

hastily,) might be supposed to be less enslaved to their appetite, more able to endure hardship, and more eager to engage.—It may be presumed that most of this very small company, by whom God was pleased to save Israel, were men of genuine faith and piety, as well as of steady courage.

V. 8. This small company seems to have retained nothing but present necessary provisions, and perhaps all the trumpets which belonged to the whole army, without any other arms! This was no doubt done by immediate direction from God. (Notes, 1 Sam. xiv. 6—15. 1 Cor. ii. 3—5.)

V. 9—11. Marg. Ref.—Note, vi. 36—40.

V. 12. Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1 Kings xx. 27. 2 Chr. xiv. 9—15.

V. 13—15. This dream might appear to have little

coherency in it: but the event evidently proved that it was from the Lord, who directed the soldier to an exact interpretation; and at the same time discovered, that the name of Gideon had filled the hearts of the Midianites with terror. The very small unarmed company which Gideon headed, had the Midianites known about them, would have appeared as contemptible as the barley-cake, and no more likely to destroy their army than that to overturn a tent.—Gideon therefore took this as a sure pledge of success; and without delay worshipped God, and returned with confidence to his three hundred men, who were “the host of Israel,” by whom the Lord intended to deliver his people. (Note, 2 Cor. x. 1—6.)

V. 16—22. This small number of men, thus divided, would be able to encompass the whole camp of the Midianites. Concealing the lamps in the pitchers, they

when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be, *that* as I do, so shall ye do.

18 When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that *are* with me, then <sup>a</sup> blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, 'The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.

19 So Gideon, and the hundred men that *were* with him, came unto the outside of the camp <sup>a</sup> in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and <sup>b</sup> brake the pitchers that *were* in their hands.

20 And the three companies <sup>i</sup> blew the trumpets, and <sup>k</sup> brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow *withal*: and they cried, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.

21 And they <sup>i</sup> stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran, and cried, and fled.

22 And the three hundred blew the

trumpets, and <sup>n</sup> the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Beth-shittah <sup>a</sup> in Zererath, and <sup>a</sup> to the <sup>†</sup> border of <sup>o</sup> Abel-meholah unto Tabbath.

23 And <sup>p</sup> the men of Israel gathered themselves together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher, and out of all Manasseh, and pursued after the Midianites.

24 And Gideon <sup>q</sup> sent messengers throughout all mount Ephraim, saying, Come down against the Midianites, and <sup>r</sup> take before them the waters unto <sup>s</sup> Beth-barah and Jordan. Then all the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together and took the waters unto Beth-barah and Jordan.

25 And they took <sup>t</sup> two princes of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeeb; and they slew Oreb upon the <sup>u</sup> rock Oreb, and Zeeb they slew at the wine-press of Zeeb, and pursued Midian, and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon <sup>x</sup> on the other side Jordan.

c 20.

f 1 Sam. xvii. 47.  
2 Chr. xx. 15—17.

g Ex. xiv. 24. Matt. xxv. 6. 1 Thes. v. 3. Rev. xvi. 15.

h Ps. ii. 9. Jer. xlii. 13, 14. xix. 1—11.

i Num. x. 1—10. Josh. vi. 4. 16. 20. Ia. xxvii. 13. 1 Cor. xv. 52. 1 Thes. iv. 16. k 2 Cor. iv. 7. Heb. xi. 4. 2 Pet. i. 15.

l Ex. xiv. 13, 14. 2 Chr. xx. 17. Is. xxx. 7. 16.

m Ex. xiv. 25. n 2 Kings vii. 6, 7. Job xv. 21, 22. Prov. xxviii. 1.

n 1 Sam. xiv. 9—20. 2 Chr. xx. 23. Ps. lxxviii. 9. Ia. ix. 4. xix. 2.

o Or, toward.

† Heb. fig. o 1 Kings iv. 12. xix. 16.

p vi. 35. 1 Sam. xiv. 21, 22.

q iii. 27. Rom. xv. 30. Phil. i. 27.

r iii. 28. xli. 5.

s John i. 28.

t vii. 3. Ps. lxxviii. 11.

u Josh. vii. 26. Ia. x. 26.

x viii. 4.

would pass unobserved to their appointed stations: then in the dead of the night, when most of the enemy were fast asleep, all at once breaking their pitchers one against another, with as much noise as they could; and blowing the trumpets, and shouting "The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon;" they would occasion an exceedingly great alarm. And their enemies, thus awakened and affrighted, hearing the continued sound of so many trumpets, and seeing the camp surrounded with lights, would in their confusion naturally conclude themselves surprised by a large army: so that, perceiving the lamps and trumpets still keeping their stations, they would be led to suspect that the enemy was even now in the camp. And in the dark they would become jealous of one another: so that, when some had by mistake been slain by their comrades, the distraction, terror, and suspicion would become general; until every one was engaged in battle with his fellow-soldier. Thus we may easily conceive the success of this stratagem: but the power of God had previously prepared the dismayed hearts of the Midianites to receive such an impression, and he set every man's sword against his fellow; (Note, 2 Chr. xx. 22—25;) and the obedience of faith alone could have induced so defenceless a company to venture on such an expedient, which no doubt God directed Gideon to employ. (Notes, Josh. vi. 3—5. 7. 2 Cor. iv. 7. P. O. 7—12.)

V. 23—25. As soon as the stratagem began to take effect, many of those who had been dismissed contrary to their inclinations, would return: (Note, 1 Sam. xiv. 16—23;) Gideon also speedily sent messengers to the Ephraimites. So that numbers were soon collected; and, while

some occupied the fords of Jordan to prevent the escape of any Midianites, others pursued and slew the fugitives: (Note, iii. 29;) especially the Ephraimites intercepted and slew two princes of Midian, and brought their heads to Gideon at the passage of Jordan (מצרי לידן).—(Marg. Ref.—Note, viii. 3, 4.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

##### V. 1—15.

Activity and prudence very properly accompany dependence upon God for success in our lawful undertakings: but "the LORD seeth not as man seeth;" and knowing the secrets of every heart, he varies his conduct, with a wise regard to innumerable circumstances which are imperceptible by all others. When he sees men inclined to overlook him, and through unbelief to shrink from perilous services, or through pride "to vaunt themselves against him," he lays them aside, and does his work by other instruments. Indeed very many profess themselves followers of Christ, helpers to his servants, and prepared to fight under his banner, while persecution and tribulation are at a distance: but without true faith and a good conscience, the heart will fail in the immediate prospect of danger; and some pretence will be found for deserting the cause, and escaping the cross. But though a religious society may thus be greatly diminished in numbers, and in external prosperity; yet it will be improved in purity, and may consequently expect an increasing blessing.—Many who have real faith and grace are unfit for special services, and unable to bear peculiar trials, from which therefore the Lord will exempt them; and to which he will appoint

## CHAP. VIII.

The Ephraimites take offence, but are pacified by Gideon, 1—3. He pursues the Midianites: the men of Succoth and Penuel insolently refuse relief to his company: he threatens to chastise them; which he does, after he has taken Zebah and Zalmunna, 4—17. He puts Zebah and Zalmunna to death, because they had slain his brethren, 18—21. He refuses the government offered him: but asks the ear-rings out of the spoil, and of these he makes an ephod, which proves an occasion of idolatry, 22—27. Midian is subdued, 28. Gideon's family and death; and Israel's idolatry and ingratitude, 29—35

<sup>a</sup> xii. 1—6. 2 Sam. xix. 41. Job v. 2. Ec. iv. 4. Jam. iv. 5, 6. <sup>b</sup> Heb. *What thing is this thou hast done unto us?*

AND <sup>a</sup> the men of Ephraim said unto him, <sup>b</sup> Why hast thou served us thus,

those, to whom he has given superior hardiness, boldness, and firmness of spirit: and very trivial incidents will sometimes make a discovery of men's capacities and dispositions, and shew who are and who are not to be depended on in arduous undertakings.—But, while the Lord pursues his purposes of displaying his own glory, he will try to the uttermost the faith and courage of the strongest believers: and even when they are acting by his orders, and have the security of his promise for their support, appearances may be so very much against them, that they cannot keep out the misgivings and struggles of unbelief. This he perceives; and in the most seasonable hour, by some “token for good,” he will make their faith victorious, and establish their hearts in confidence. (*Notes, Acts xviii. 9—11. xxiii. 11. xxvii. 20—26. xxviii. 15.*)—Dreams generally savour of our waking thoughts or dispositions, and frequently discover the sin that dwells in us: we have therefore often cause to be humbled on recollecting our sleeping imaginations, or to feel thankful that they were not realities; and we should be reminded to pray against terrifying or polluting dreams. Sometimes, however, they may afford us a salutary hint; which, agreeing with the truth and precepts of God's word, may be made useful, without exactly ascertaining how it was brought into our mind: and if we can get any benefit from the dreams of others, we should readily and thankfully embrace it.—In discovering the disposition of those with whom we are concerned, faith may frequently discern the secret operation of God, and both take encouragement from it and point it out to others.

## V. 16—25.

The feeblest and most improbable methods, when divinely appointed and used in faith, produce the most decisive consequences.—The ministers of Christ are frail, sinful men, and seldom adorned with the embellishments of worldly wisdom, large capacities, or great eloquence; but are rather comparable to mean earthen pitchers: yet the light of divine truth and grace which resides in them, accompanied by the trumpet of the gospel preached by them in their several stations, is the power of God to the salvation of his people, and to the subversion of the kingdom of sin and Satan. Nor should they shrink from danger, or fear death: the earthen pitcher must be broken: and frequently the light of their testimony, set off by the

that thou calledst us not when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites? And they did chide with him <sup>†</sup> sharply.

2 And he said unto them, <sup>b</sup> What have I done now in comparison of you? <sup>c</sup> is not the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of <sup>d</sup> Abi-ezer?

3 <sup>d</sup> God hath delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb: and what was I able to do in comparison of you? <sup>e</sup> Then their <sup>f</sup> anger was abated toward him when he had said that.

<sup>†</sup> Heb. *strongly.*

<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 4—7. Gal. v. 14, 15. Phil. ii. 2, 3. Jam. i. 19, 20. iii. 13—18.

<sup>c</sup> vi. 11. 34.

<sup>d</sup> vii. 24, 25. Ps. xlii. 3. cxv. 1. cxviii. 14—16. John iv. 37. Rom. xii. 3. 6. xv. 13, 19.

<sup>e</sup> Prov. xv. 1. xvi. 32. xxv. 11. 15. <sup>f</sup> Heb. *spirit.*

recollection of their example, shines brightest after their decease; especially when they have been honoured, by being called to lay down their lives in so good a cause.—The same light and sound of heavenly truth, which save the Israel of God, confound and dismay his enemies: and if *threatened* vengeance so appals the sinner's alarmed conscience in this world; what will be the effect of the archangel's trumpet, the voice of the Judge, and the shout of the redeemed, at the great day of account! and of that full blaze of light, which will manifest all hearts, display every character, and shew every impenitent sinner his deserved and inevitable doom!—In this world the wicked are often left, under the power of their own delusions and the fury of their mad passions, to avenge the cause of God upon each other: a period is approaching when we may expect that the persecuting foes of Christianity will destroy one another; whilst the host of Israel shall look on, and have nothing to do but to blow the trumpet of the gospel, and read the meaning of such singular events in the light of prophecy: and in the world to come, the wicked, by mutual enmity, upbraidings, and contempt, will increase their own and each other's misery. What then have the people of God to fear, except unbelief and sin? what have they to do, but to believe his word, to trust his power and promise, to obey his orders, to wait his time, and to help one another, as occasions are afforded and circumstances require? For they, who are incapable of one service, may be useful in another. Their victory is sure, and will soon be complete over their most numerous and powerful opponents.

## NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1—3. Gideon was of the tribe of Manasseh, and the Ephraimites were perhaps jealous of him, as having the chief command in this war. It is probable, that they were averse to take any part in the perilous and arduous attempt of delivering Israel: yet it served as a pretence for their anger, that they had not been called upon to assist, though Gideon acted expressly by divine command! But he modestly threw a veil over his own achievements, and spoke highly of theirs, and thus prevented the fatal effects of their resentment. He represented his own victory, by the three hundred men, who were chiefly of Abi-ezer, as little in comparison of their taking

4 And Gideon came to Jordan and passed over, he, and the three hundred men that *were* with him, 'faint, yet pursuing *them*.

1 Sam. xiv. 28.  
29. 31. 32. xxx.  
10. 2 Cor. iv. 8.  
9. 16. Gal. vi. 9.  
Heb. xii. 1—4.

5 And he said unto the men of Succoth, Give, I pray you, <sup>b</sup> loaves of bread unto the people that follow me; for they *be* faint, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian.

Gen. xxxiii. 17.  
Ps. lx. 6.  
Gen. xiv. 18.  
Deut. xxxiii. 4.  
1 Sam. xxv. 18.  
2 Sam. xvii. 28.  
3 John 6—8.

6 And the princes of Succoth said, <sup>1</sup> Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that we should give bread unto thine army?

v. 23. 1 Sam. xxv. 10, 11.  
1 Kings xx. 11.  
2 Kings xiv. 9.  
Prov. xviii. 23.  
Phil. ii. 21.

7 And Gideon said, Therefore when the LORD hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into mine hand, then I will <sup>\*</sup>tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness, and with briers.

\* Heb. thresh. 16.

8 And he went up thence to <sup>k</sup> Penuel, and spake unto them likewise; and the men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had answered *him*.

Gen. xxxii. 30.  
31. 1 Kings xii. 23.

9 And he spake also unto the men of Penuel, saying, When <sup>1</sup> I come again in peace, <sup>m</sup> I will break down this tower.

1 Kings xii. 27.  
28.  
m 17.

the princes of Midian; though the former might be called the *vintage*, and the other the *gleaning*: and he intimated that the whole glory belonged neither to them nor him, but to the Lord. 'This is an argument of the singular modesty and prudence of Gideon, and no less conspicuous in him than his courage; which is a mixture that rarely meets together, but is absolutely necessary to make a truly great man; who never appears so great, as when he treats insolent men with humility, and angry men with meekness.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, xii. 1—7. Prov. xv. 1. xvi. 32.)

V. 4. None, except Gideon and his three hundred chosen men, seem to have passed over Jordan in pursuit of the two kings of Midian, who with fifteen thousand men had got over before the fords were taken (10). This small company, though deserted by some, and chidden and abused by others of Israel, and though the remaining Midianites so far exceeded them in number; yet, in the courage, self-denial, and patience of faith, pursued them, faint and hungry as they were, with long watching, fasting, and fatigue.—We do not find, that any one of them was either slain or missing. (Note, Num. xxxi. 48—54.)

V. 5, 6. The services of Gideon and his men were very great, their necessity urgent, and their request moderate: the behaviour therefore of the men of Succoth and Penuel was extremely insolent and base, and proved them disaffected to Israel and the God of Israel. (Note, Prov. xviii. 23.) They despised Gideon's feeble army, depreciated his

10 Now Zebah and Zalmunna *were* in Karkor, and their hosts with them, about fifteen thousand *men*, all that were left of all the hosts of <sup>a</sup> the children of the east: for there <sup>o</sup> fell <sup>an</sup> hundred and twenty thousand men that drew sword.

n vii. 14.  
o vii. 22. 2 Chr. xiii. 17. xxviii. 6. 8. 1a. xxxvii. 35.

11 And Gideon went up by the way of them that dwelt in tents, on the east of <sup>b</sup> Nobah and Jogbehah, and smote the host: for the host was <sup>d</sup> se-cure.

† Or, an hundred and twenty thousand, every one drawing a sword. xx. 2. 15. 17. 25. 35. 46. 2 Kings iii. 26. p Num. xxxii. 35. 42. q xviii. 27. 1 Sam. xv. 32. xxx. 16. 1 Thes. v. 3.

12 And when Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued after them, and <sup>r</sup> took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and <sup>s</sup> discomfited all the host.

r Josh. x. 16—18. 22—25. Job xii. 16—21. xxv. 9. Ps. lxxiii. 11. Amos ii. 14. Rev. vi. 15, 16. xix. 19—21. ‡ Heb. terrified.

13 And Gideon the son of Joash returned from battle before the sun *was* up,

14 And <sup>t</sup> caught a young man of the men of Succoth, and enquired of him: and he <sup>u</sup> described unto him the princes of Succoth, and the elders thereof, *even* threescore and seventeen men.

i. 24. 25. 1 Sam. xxx. 11—15. † Heb. writ.

15 And he came unto the men of Succoth, and said, Behold, Zebah and

former success, attempted to weaken his confidence of completing their delivery, and would not afford him the least assistance in his patriotick and pious undertaking! (Note, 1 Sam. xxv. 10, 11.)—Succoth.] Note, Gen. xxxiii. 17.

V. 7. Gideon "deferred his indignation;" and intimated to the princes or rulers of Succoth, that if the kings of Midian escaped him, they also might; but if the Lord enabled him to destroy the kings, as he was confident he would, this would make it plain, that he was appointed judge of Israel, and in that character he would punish their ill behaviour, and teach them to behave in future more consistently with the character of Israelites.—It is not agreed, in what manner he used these briers and thorns, in tearing the flesh of the men of Succoth: but though he doubtless put them to great pain, it is not at all probable that he slew them. (Note, 14—16.)

V. 8, 9. (Gen. xxxii. 30, 31.) The inhabitants of Penuel probably boasted of their tower, and confided in it, to secure them both from the Midianites, and from Gideon: he therefore destroyed it; and, as some at least of the men of Penuel were still more culpable than those of Succoth, he put them to death. (17. Notes, v. 23. Matt. xii. 29, 30.)

V. 10—12. Marg. Ref.—Notes, 4—6.

V. 14—16. This young man seems to have written down (marg.) the names of the principal persons in Succoth, or of those chiefly concerned. By this information, Gideon was enabled to distinguish between the guilty and

<sup>c</sup> 6, 7. Zalmunna, with whom ye did <sup>1</sup> upbraid me, saying, *Are* the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that we should give bread unto thy men *that are weary?*

<sup>u</sup> 7. Prov. x. 13  
<sup>xix.</sup> 29. Ez. ii. 6.  
<sup>x</sup> Mic. vii. 4.  
<sup>•</sup> Heb. *made to know.*  
16 And he took <sup>a</sup> the elders of the city, and <sup>•</sup> thorns of the wilderness, and briers, and with them he <sup>•</sup> taught the men of Succoth.

<sup>y</sup> 9. 1 Kings xii.  
17 And <sup>•</sup> he beat down the tower of Penuel, and slew the men of the city.

18 ¶ Then said he unto Zebah and Zalmunna, What manner of men *were* they whom ye slew at <sup>•</sup> Tabor? And they answered, <sup>a</sup> As thou *art*, so *were* they: each one <sup>•</sup> resembled the children of a king.

19 And he said, They *were* my brethren, *even* the sons of my mother: as the LORD liveth, if ye had saved them alive, I would not slay you.

20 And he said unto Jether his first-born, <sup>b</sup> Up, and slay them: but the youth drew not his sword; for he feared, because he *was* yet a youth.

21 Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, <sup>c</sup> Rise thou, and fall upon us: for as the man *is*, so *is* his strength. And Gideon arose, and <sup>d</sup> slew Zebah and Zalmunna, and took away the <sup>e</sup> ornaments that *were* on their camels' necks.

the innocent, and so to inflict punishment upon the offenders only.

V. 18, 19. In the troubles of Israel, these kings of Midian had slain the brethren of Gideon by the mother's side; and therefore he determined on this occasion to act as "the avenger of blood." They were not of the devoted nations of Canaan, so that he might otherwise have spared them, and he declared that he would.—It seems that Gideon, though little in his own eyes, was a man of a very majestic appearance; and that his brethren greatly resembled him. (Note, vi. 15.) Perhaps this excited the jealousy of these kings against them, who slew them for their own security, though it eventually proved their ruin.

V. 20, 21. Gideon desired to inure his son to execute vengeance on the enemies of God and Israel: (Note, Josh. x. 24:) but the youth was timorous and declined the service; and the kings themselves intreated, that they might be slain, (if they must die,) by the hand of Gideon; who was in his full strength, and of great reputation: for their death would be ignominious and lingering, if a feeble, timid youth were their executioner.—The ornaments from the camels' necks, being in the shape of the moon, had probably been used for idolatrous purposes. (Marg.—vii. 12.)

22 ¶ Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, <sup>e</sup> Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian.

23 And Gideon said unto them, <sup>f</sup> I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you; <sup>g</sup> the LORD shall rule over you.

24 And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would <sup>h</sup> give me every man the ear-rings of his prey. (For they had golden ear-rings, <sup>i</sup> because they *were* Ishmaelites.)

25 And they answered, We will willingly give *them*. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the ear-rings of his prey.

26 And the weight of the golden ear-rings, that he requested, was a thousand and seven hundred *shekels* of gold, beside ornaments, and <sup>j</sup> collars, and <sup>k</sup> purple raiment that *was* on the kings of Midian, and beside the <sup>l</sup> chains that *were* about their camels' necks.

27 And Gideon made <sup>m</sup> an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, *even* in <sup>n</sup> Ophrah: and all Israel went thither <sup>o</sup> a whoring after it: which thing became <sup>p</sup> a snare unto Gideon, and to his house.

V. 22, 23. Gideon was willing to fight for his people to administer justice, and reform religion, as the Lord's deputy, and so long as he pleased: but he would not accept of the perpetual government, or the hereditary succession to his children, to which God had not called him. Let JEHOVAH the King of Israel appoint whom he pleased, either during his life, or after his decease. This shews, how deeply the more reflecting persons in Israel were convinced, that the constitutions of the law of Moses, were of divine authority, and ought implicitly to be complied with. (Notes, ix. 1—6. Deut. xvii. 14, 15. 1 Sam. viii. 6—9. 19—22.) In this respect Gideon imitated also the disinterested conduct of Moses, whose sons were left among the ordinary Levites.

V. 24—26. Marg. Ref.—Ishmaelites. (24) Notes, Gen. xxv. 1—4. xxxvii. 25.

V. 27. It is highly probable that Gideon requested the golden ear-rings, with a view to make some religious use of them, after the example of the officers in the time of Moses; as his small army seems to have been preserved in the same manner: (Note, Num. xxxi. 48—54:) and that the want of accurate knowledge of the divine law led him thus to misapply them. The "ephod" seems to have been a very rich garment, like that worn by the high priest: and

g Ps. lxxxiii. 9—  
12. Is. ix. 4. x.  
26.  
r iii. 11. 30. v. 31.  
• vi. 32. 1 Sam.  
xii. 11.  
t Neh. v. 14. 15.  
u ix. 2. 5. x. 4.  
xii. 9. 14. Gen.  
xvi. 26. Ex. i.  
5. 2 Kings x. 1.  
• Heb. going out  
of his thigh.  
x Gen. ii. 24. vii.  
7. Deut. xvii. 17.  
2 Sam. iii. 2—5.  
v. 13—16. 1 Kings  
xi. 3. Mal. ii.  
15. Matt. xix. 5  
—8. Eph. v. 31  
—33.  
y ix. 1—5. Gen.  
xvi. 15. xxi. 24  
Heb. set.  
z Gen. xx. 2.  
a Gen. xv. 15.  
xxv. 8. Josh.  
xxiv. 29. Job  
v. 26. xlii. 17.

28 Thus <sup>a</sup> was Midian subdued be-  
fore the children of Israel, so that they  
lifted up their heads no more: and the  
country was in quietness <sup>a</sup> forty years  
in the days of Gideon.

29 And <sup>a</sup> Jerubbaal the son of Joash  
went and dwelt <sup>a</sup> in his own house.

30 And Gideon had <sup>a</sup> threescore and  
ten sons <sup>a</sup> of his body begotten: for he  
had <sup>a</sup> many wives.

31 And his <sup>a</sup> concubine that was  
in Shechem, she also bare him a  
son, whose name he <sup>a</sup> called <sup>a</sup> Abime-  
lech.

32 ¶ And Gideon the son of Joash  
<sup>a</sup> died in a good old age, and was buried

in the sepulchre of Joash his father, in  
<sup>b</sup> Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites.

33 And it came to pass, <sup>c</sup> as soon as  
Gideon was dead, that the children of  
Israel turned again, and <sup>d</sup> went a whor-  
ing after Baalim, and made <sup>e</sup> Baal-be-  
rith their god.

34 And the children of Israel <sup>f</sup> re-  
membered not the LORD their God,  
who had delivered them out of the  
hands of all their enemies on every  
side:

35 Neither <sup>g</sup> shewed they kindness  
to the house of Jerubbaal, *namely*,  
Gideon, according to all the goodness  
which he had shewed unto Israel.

some think, that Gideon also made “a breast-plate of judgment,” in order to enquire of God by it; (*Notes, Ex. xxviii. 6—30*;) and even that other things requisite were added, and sacrifices offered at Ophrah. Indeed otherwise it is difficult to discover how so much treasure could have been expended. (*Notes, xvii. 2—5*.) Gideon had been commanded, in an extraordinary manner, to offer a sacrifice in the place where the Lord appeared to him: (*Note, vi. 25, 26*;) and it is not improbable he might be led to conclude, that this authorized him to officiate as a priest occasionally at his own house, without going to the tabernacle: and perhaps the people’s humour and love of ease were by this means gratified. (*Notes, xviii. 30, 31. 1 Kings xii. 26—31*.) But whether this was the case, or whether he merely intended to form a memorial of his victory; his conduct was evidently improper, and proved a snare to him, the cause of his family’s ruin, and an occasion of idolatry to Israel after his death. (*Notes, 33. ix. 1—20*.)

V. 28. *Forty years.*] Probably from the time when he was constituted Judge of Israel; (*Note, v. 31*;) except as interrupted by Abimelech’s usurpation. (*Notes, ix.*)

V. 30. *Many wives.*] *Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. ii. 24. Deut. xvii. 17. 2 Sam. v. 13—16. 1 Kings xi. 1—8.*

V. 31. *Notes, xi. 1, 2. Gen. xxv. 5, 6.*

V. 33. After the death of Gideon, the people proceeded, from an irregular worship, to renounce JEHOVAH entirely, and to worship Baal as their God, under the name of “Baal-berith,” or the *lord of the covenant*; having, as it seems, generally covenanted to be his people. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, ix. 4—6. 46—49*.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

##### V. 1—17.

It is one vanity incident to human affairs, that “for every right work a man is envied by his neighbour.”—They who will not attempt or venture any thing in the cause of God, are commonly the most ready to censure such as are of a more zealous and enterprising spirit: and the charge of pride and ambition will be brought against the most unexceptionable undertakings. (*Notes, 1 Sam. xvii. 28, 29*.) When calumny is silenced in one respect by the event, it will assume another form: and they who were most reluctant to the peril and hardship of difficult

services, will be the most exasperated if excluded from the credit of them. But, “only by pride cometh contention:” it is the wisdom of Christians to turn away wrath by a soft answer; and their most noble victory is the conquest of their own spirits. In those things which pertain to the truth, authority, and glory of God, they should be unmoved as the sturdy oak; but in the little concerns of their own interest or reputation, they should resemble the pliant willow that yields to every gust. If by throwing a shade over what the Lord has done by them, and making honourable mention of what he has done by others,—if by giving obliging language in return for rough words, and commendations in lieu of bitter chidings,—envy may be avoided, anger abated, and contention prevented; the common cause will be more advantaged, than by the most successful controversy, which always takes Christians off from their spiritual warfare.—The active servants of God frequently meet with more dangerous opposition from degenerate professors of the gospel than from open enemies: but they must not regard the unreasonable behaviour of those, who are Israelites in name, but Midianites in heart, or who vainly wish to observe a neutrality. Notwithstanding manifold tribulations, they must carry on their warfare, though ready to faint through inward conflicts and outward hardships. And they shall be enabled thus to persevere: for the less men help them, and the more they attempt to hinder them, the more effectually will they be helped and prospered by God himself.—It behoves magistrates to distinguish between the guilty and the innocent, and to punish those who injure their brethren; yet this should be done with temper, and in order to teach them to behave better in future.—Ministers also must warn and severely rebuke such, as discourage the hearts of their fellow-servants; and the Lord himself will execute vengeance upon all who oppose his people in obeying his commands. In the mean time we must “defer our anger,” and go on with our work, not attempting to avenge ourselves. (*Notes, Prov. xix. 11. Rom. xii. 17—21*.)

##### V. 18—35.

Whatever earthly object men glory in, it will be torn from them: and sinners are never so exposed to danger, as when they deem themselves most secure. Sins long forgotten must be accounted for to God; and sinful methods

## CHAP. IX.

Abimelech, son of Gideon by a concubine, conspires with the Shechemites, murders his brethren, and is made king, 1—6. Jotham, by a parable, exposes their ingratitude, and foretells their ruin, 7—21. The Shechemites conspire with Gaal against Abimelech; Zebul sends him word; he overcomes them, and sows their city with salt, 22—45. They retire to the temple of Baal-berith, and are burnt in it, 46—49. Abimelech is slain at Thebez, by a woman, with a piece of a mill-stone, and Jotham's curse is fulfilled, 50—57.

a viii. 31.

b Gen. xxxiii. 19.  
xxxiv. 2. 1 Kings  
xii. 1.  
c 2 Sam. xv. 6.  
1 Kings xii. 3.  
20. Ps. lxxviii.  
2—4 Jer. xviii.  
18.

AND <sup>a</sup> Abimelech, the son of Jerubbaal, went to <sup>b</sup> Shechem unto his mother's brethren, and <sup>c</sup> communed with them, and with all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying,

of self preservation only hasten and aggravate the transgressor's destruction, especially when innocent blood has been shed.—The execution of atrocious criminals is, in some circumstances, an honourable service; yet we may well be thankful, if employed in saving men's lives rather than in destroying them. What a miserable consolation in death is derived from the hope of suffering less pain, and dying with less disgrace, than some others! yet many are more anxious on these accounts, than concerning the future judgment and its eternal consequences!—No honour should be sought, or so much as accepted, but that which comes from God, and consists with his sole authority and glory: nor is it allowable to seek for our children those things, which we may not desire for ourselves.—Whatever deputies are employed, and whoever has the external precedency in the church; God is the only real Judge, Defender, and Ruler of his people.—How soon will those ornaments, which feed the lust of the eye and form the pride of life, as well as the indulgences of the flesh, become the shame of those who loved them!—The characters of mere men have generally a grievous and wonderful mixture; nor may we follow any of them farther than they follow Christ. Things sanctioned by venerable names, and clothed with fair pretexts, are often found, by the light of God's word, to be vile abominations; and are proved by experience to be dangerous and fatal snares, to those especially who pay too much veneration to their fellow creatures. Small deviations from our rule afford a dangerous precedent, and open the way for more flagrant enormities: and even in marriage, when once the original institution is disregarded, the sensual heart of man, like a humoured child, will bear no contradiction, and be confined by no limitations. But, as we all need so much mercy from our God, we should learn the more patiently to bear the ingratitude of our fellow sinners, and the unsuitable returns we meet with for our poor services; and to resolve, after the divine example, "not to be overcome of evil, but to overcome evil with good."

## NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1—3. Gideon and his family had misled the people, through the ephod at Ophrah; and the people grievously offended in joining themselves to Baal-

2 Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the men of Shechem, \* Whether is <sup>e</sup> better for you, either that all the sons of Jerubbaal (*which are* <sup>d</sup> threescore and ten persons,) reign over you, or that one reign over you? remember also that I *am* <sup>e</sup> your bone and your flesh.

\* Heb. What is good? whether, &c.  
d viii. 30.

3 And his mother's brethren <sup>f</sup> spake of him in the ears of all the men of Shechem all these words: and their hearts inclined <sup>g</sup> to follow Abimelech; <sup>h</sup> for they said, He is <sup>i</sup> our brother:

e Gen. xxix. 14.  
2 Sam. xix. 13.  
1 Chr. xi. 1.  
Eph. v. 30. Heb. ii. 14.  
f Ps. x. 8. Prov. i. 11—14.

g Gen. xxix. 15

4 And they gave him threescore and ten *pieces* of silver out of <sup>h</sup> the house of Baal-berith; wherewith Abimelech

h 46—49. viii. 33.

berith. (Notes, viii. 27. 33.) And the Lord manifested his displeasure, not by delivering them into the hand of foreign invaders, but by giving them up to their own base passions.—Gideon had, very properly and disinterestedly, refused the proffered kingdom for himself and his sons: and it does not appear that his other sons aimed at dominion either before or after his death. (Note, viii. 22, 23.) Abimelech's name, (which signifies *my father the king*,) may however be supposed to have been given him by his mother from ambitious motives. The concubines, whose children did not inherit, would naturally set up an interest opposite to the rest of the family; and as Abimelech's mother was a native of Shechem, a principal city of Ephraim, he conceived the idea of obtaining the kingdom by her means. In order to succeed in this project, he accused his brethren of intending to seize upon the government, and possess it with joint authority: and, assuming this as an undoubted fact, he pleaded that it would be better to be governed by one prince, than by so many petty tyrants; and that if they, who were so nearly related to him, would raise him to the throne, he would be peculiarly attentive to their interests. In this manner, by the help of his mother's relations, he acquired the government, without either merit or capacity for such an important situation; in a total disregard to the divine law; (Notes, Deut. xvii. 14, 15;) and in direct opposition to the method which God the King of Israel had hitherto employed, of raising up rulers of his people, from time to time, as he saw good.

V. 4—6. The Israelites seem to have presented this money as an oblation to their *new god*; (Note, viii. 33;) and the men of Shechem borrowed it of him to supply their *upstart king*! It does not appear of what value these pieces of silver were; but probably of more value than shekels: and they sufficed for Abimelech's present purpose. Thus he became a pensioner of Baal, and seemed engaged to employ his authority to promote his worship; as if determined to shew himself as unlike as possible to his father, who had destroyed the altar and worship of Baal. (Notes, vi. 25—32.)—With this supply he hired a set of unprincipled men fit for any villainy; and with their assistance barbarously murdered all the numerous family of Gideon, except one son who escaped him! By such infamous measures and persons was this base born, but

1 vi. 3. 1 Sam. hired <sup>1</sup>vain and light persons, which followed him.

5 And he went unto his father's house <sup>k</sup>at Ophrah, and <sup>1</sup>slew his brethren, the sons of Jerubbaal, *being* threescore and ten persons, upon one stone: notwithstanding yet Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left; for he hid himself.

6 And all the men of Shechem gathered together, and all the <sup>m</sup>house of Millo, and went and made Abimelech king by the <sup>\*</sup>plain of the pillar that *was* in Shechem.

7 ¶ And when they told *it* to Jotham, he went and stood in the top of <sup>n</sup>mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto them, <sup>o</sup>Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you.

8 <sup>p</sup>The trees went forth *on a time* to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive-tree, <sup>q</sup>Reign thou over us.

9 But the olive-tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, <sup>r</sup>wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go <sup>1</sup>to be promoted over the trees?

10 And the trees said to the fig-tree, Come thou, *and* reign over us.

11 But the fig-tree said unto them, <sup>s</sup>Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?

12 Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, *and* reign over us.

13 And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which <sup>t</sup>cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?

14 Then said all the trees unto the <sup>u</sup>bramble, Come thou, *and* reign over us.

15 And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, *then* come *and* put your trust in my <sup>v</sup>shadow; and if not, <sup>w</sup>let fire come out of the bramble, and devour <sup>y</sup>the cedars of Lebanon.

Ex xxxix. 2. 7. xxxv. 14. Lev. xl. 1. 1 Kings xix. 15. 16. Ps lxxxix. 20. civ. 15. Acts iv. 27. x. 38. 1 John ii. 23.

† Heb. up and down for other trees. Job i. 7. ii. 2.

1 Luke xiii. 6. 7.

† Num. xv. 8. 7. 10. Ps. civ. 15. Prov. xxxi. 6.

† Or, *chistle*. 2 Kings xiv. 9.

u Is. xxx. 2. Dan. iv. 12. Hos. xiv. 7. Matt. xiii. 82. x. 40. 49. Num. xxi. 28. Is. i. 51. Ez. xix. 14. 2 Kings xiv. 9. Ps. civ. 16. Is. ii. 13. xxxvii. 24. Ez. xxxi. 3.

baser spirited man made king in Israel! being the first who expressly bore that title among the descendants of Jacob. (Notes, 2 Sam. xv. 1—11. xvi. 20—23. 2 Chr. xxi. 4. 12—19.)—House of Millo. (6) Notes, 16—20. 2 Sam. v. 9. 2 Kings xii. 20, 21.

V. 7. Mount Gerizim lay near to Shechem: and from it Jotham spake to the Shechemites, (who are supposed to have been assembled on some publick occasion,) so that at least many of them would hear him, and report what he said to the rest. (Notes, Deut. xxvii. 12, 13.) He solemnly called on them “to hearken to him, that God “might hearken unto them:” for if they did not repent of their ungrateful treatment of his father’s family, and desist from their malicious intentions against him, they could not expect that God would hear their cry, when anguish and distress came upon them. (Notes, Prov. i. 24—31. xxi. 13. Is. i. 10—15. lviii. 8—12. Mic. iii. 1—4.)

V. 8—15. A parable, or fable, is a descriptive picture, which shews the similitude of an event, or action in lively colours; and conveys to the mind the perception of some important truth, to which it was previously inattentive, or against which it was prejudiced. By this management those things are placed in a proper light, which before were misapprehended, and those made evident which before seemed doubtful; the subject is stripped of such circumstances as do not properly belong to it; the trouble of a long chain of arguments being spared, the cause is brought to a compendious decision; reason and conscience are induced to pass sentence, before self-love is consulted; and a man is for a moment, as it were, *imposed on, in order to his being profitably undeceived*; he is made judge in his own cause before he is aware, and decides against himself without ever intending it. (Note, 2 Sam. xii. 1—6.) The

truth of a parable lies in the instruction contained in it: and the feigned circumstances, being known to be such, are no ways inconsistent with veracity, but greatly subserve the cause of truth; conveying it in an unsuspected and agreeable manner to the mind. Parables or fables have therefore been much used by wise men in all ages, as the most advantageous method of teaching mankind the salutary lessons of justice and prudence; and they were abundantly sanctioned by our Lord’s own example.—In this parable of Jotham, the disinterested and unambitious conduct of Gideon and his other sons; the folly and ingratitude of the Shechemites, in making the basest of Gideon’s sons their king, and in murdering the rest; the presumption and arrogance of Abimelech in aspiring to such an honour; and the consequences of so unreasonable a procedure; are represented with great ingenuity and simplicity. The olive-tree, the fig-tree, and the vine, had excellency and usefulness, if the trees had indeed wanted a king: thus Gideon and his other sons were worthy of Israel’s suffrage, if there had been any occasion to set a king over them; yet they had humbly and wisely declined the offer. But Abimelech, the son of a slave and a concubine (18), a mean and worthless person, useless and troublesome as a bramble, had by insinuation induced them to offer him the kingdom, and had without hesitation accepted it. He had also foolishly promised them vast advantages from his protection, and terrible consequences from offending him: though indeed he was fit for nothing but to be a fire-brand, to set them all at variance to their common destruction; as the bramble, being set on fire, may communicate the flame to the loftiest cedars, and consume them along with itself in one common conflagration.—The oil, from the olive-tree, was the chief ingredient in the

16 Now therefore if ye have done truly and sincerely, in that ye have made Abimelech king, and if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done unto him <sup>a</sup> according to the deserving of his hands :

17 (For my father <sup>a</sup> fought for you, and <sup>a</sup> adventured his life far, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian ;

18 And ye <sup>a</sup> are arisen up against my father's house this day, and have slain his sons, threescore and ten persons, upon one stone, and have made <sup>a</sup> Abimelech the son of his maid-servant king over the men of Shechem, because he *is* your brother :)

19 If ye then have dealt truly and sincerely with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, *then* <sup>d</sup> rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you :

20 But if not, <sup>a</sup> let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech.

21 And Jotham ran away, and fled, and went to <sup>f</sup> Beer, and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

22 ¶ When Abimelech had reigned three years over Israel,

23 Then <sup>a</sup> God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem ; and the men of Shechem

<sup>a</sup> dealt treacherously with Abimelech : <sup>b</sup> 1s. xxxiii. 1. Matt vii. 2

24 <sup>1</sup> That the cruelty *done* to the threescore and ten sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood be laid upon Abimelech their brother, which slew them ; and upon the men of Shechem, which <sup>†</sup> aided him in the killing of his brethren. <sup>†</sup> Heb. strengthened his hands to kill.

25 And the men of Shechem set <sup>k</sup> liers in wait for him in the top of the mountains, and they robbed all that came along that way by them : and it was told Abimelech.

26 And Gaal the son of Ebed came with his <sup>l</sup> brethren, and went over to Shechem ; and the men of Shechem put their confidence in him. <sup>l</sup> Gen xlii. 8 xix 7.

27 And they went out into the fields, and gathered their vineyards, and trode *the grapes*, and made <sup>m</sup> merry, and went into <sup>n</sup> the house of their god, and <sup>o</sup> did eat and drink, and <sup>p</sup> cursed Abimelech. <sup>o</sup> Or, songs. 1s. xvi. 9, 10. xxiv. 7-9. Jer. xxv. 30. Am. vi. 3-6. m 4. xvi. 23. Ex. xxxii. 6. 19 Dan. v. 1-4. 23. n 1s. xxii. 12-14. Luke xii. 19, 20. xvii. 26-29. o Lev. xxiv. 11. 1 Sam. xvii. 43. p 1s. xxi. 17. 1 Sam. xxv. 10. 2 Sam. xx. 1. 1 Kings xii. 16. q Gen. xxxiv. 2.

28 And Gaal the son of Ebed said, <sup>r</sup> Who *is* Abimelech, and who *is* Shechem, that we should serve him ? *Is* not *he* the son of Jerubbaal ? and Zebul his officer ? Serve the men of <sup>r</sup> Hamor the father of Shechem : for why should we serve him ? <sup>r</sup> 2 Sam. xv. 4. 1 Kings xx. 11. Ps. x. 8. Rom. i. 30, 31.

29 And <sup>s</sup> would to God this people were under my hand ! then would I remove Abimelech. And he said to Abimelech, <sup>s</sup> Increase thine army, and come out. <sup>s</sup> 2 Sam. ii. 14-17. 2 Kings xiv. 8. xlii. 23. 1s. xxxvi. 8, 9.

r viii. 35.

a vii. 20. viii. 4-10.

• Heb. cast. Esth. iv. 16. Rom. v. 8. xvi. 4. Rev. xii. 11.

b 5, 6 Ps. cix. 4

c 6. 14. viii. 31

d 1s. viii. 6. Phil. iii. 3. Jam. iv. 16.

e 15. 23. 56, 57. vii. 22. 2 Chr. xx. 22. 23. Ps. xxi. 9, 10. xxviii. 4. iii. 1-5. cxix. 3, 4. cxi. 10.

f Num. xxi. 16. Josh. xix. 8. 2 Sam. xx. 14.

g 15. 20. 1 Sam. xvi. 14-16. xviii. 9, 10. 1 Kings xii. 15. xii. 22. 2 Chr. x. 15. xviii. 19-22. 1s. xix. 2, 14. 2 Thes. ii. 11, 12.

ointment, with which the priests were anointed : it was used for the lamps in the sanctuary ; and it formed a part of the meat-offering, by which God was honoured. (*Marg. Ref. r.*) The wine was used in drink-offerings, which were acceptable to God when properly presented. These trees better represented what a king ought to be, than the stately cedars ; for piety to God, and usefulness to man, are more essential to the character of a good prince, than external pomp and majesty.—It is observable that long before Israel had a king by the appointment of God, *anointing* is spoken of as a customary ceremony of inauguration.—This is the most ancient fable or parable extant ; and it is very apposite and beautiful.

V. 16—20. (*Notes*, 1—6. vii. viii.)—*Millo*, (that is, *fulness*.) seems to have been the name of the senate-house, or town-hall : and by the house of Millo are meant all the chief persons of Shechem, who had combined to make Abimelech king (6) ; and they were also intended by the cedars which the fire from the bramble would devour (15). (*Note*. 50—57.)

30 ¶ And when Zebul, the ruler of the city heard the words of Gaal the son of Ebed, his anger was \* kindled.

\* Or, *hob*

31 And he sent messengers unto Abimelech † privily, saying, Behold, Gaal the son of Ebed, and his brethren, be come to Shechem; and, behold, they fortify the city against thee.

† Heb. *erq'lyy*, or, *to Tormah*.

32 Now therefore up 'by night, thou and the people that is with thee, and lie in wait in the field:

‡ Job xxiv. 14—17. Ps. xxxvi. 4. Prov. i. 11—16. iv. 16. Rom. iii. 5.

33 And it shall be, *that* in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, thou shalt rise early, and set upon the city; and, behold, *when* he and the people that is with him come out against thee, then mayest thou do to them 'as thou shalt find occasion.

§ Heb. *as time hand shall find*. Lev. xxv. 26. marg. 1 Sam. x. 7. xxv. 8. Ec. ix. 10.

34 And Abimelech rose up, and all the people that *were* with him, by night, and they laid wait against Shechem in four companies.

35 And Gaal the son of Ebed went out, and stood in the entering of the gate of the city: and Abimelech rose up, and "the people that *were* with him, from lying in wait.

u 44.

36 And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, Behold, there come people down from the top of the mountains. And Zebul said unto him, Thou 'seest the shadow of the mountains as *if they were* men.

x Ex. vii. 7. Mark viii. 24.

37 And Gaal spake again, and said, See, there come people down by the 'middle of the land, and another company come along by the plain of 'Meonenim.

§ Heb. *navel*.

¶ Or, *the recorders of the times*. Deut. xviii. 14.

38 Then said Zebul unto him, 'Where is now thy mouth, wherewith thou saidst, Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him? *Is* not this the people that thou hast despised? go out, I pray now, and fight with them.

y 28, 29. 2 Sam. ii. 26, 27. 2 Kings xiv. 8—14. Jer. ii. 28.

39 And Gaal went out before the men of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech.

40 And Abimelech chased him, and 'he fled before him; and many were overthrown *and* wounded, *even* unto the entering of the gate.

z 1 Kings xx. 18—21. 30.

41 And Abimelech dwelt at Arumah: and 'Zebul thrust out Gaal and his brethren, that they should not dwell in Shechem.

a 28. 30.

42 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the people went out into the field; and they told Abimelech.

43 And he took the people, and divided them into three companies, and laid wait in the field, and looked, and behold, the people *were* come forth out of the city; and he rose up against them, and smote them.

44 And Abimelech, and the company that *was* with him, 'rushed forward, and stood in the entering of the gate of the city; and the two *other* companies ran upon all *the people* that *were* in the fields, and slew them.

b 15. 20. Gal. v. 15.

45 And Abimelech fought against the city all that day: and he took the city, and slew the people that *was* therein, and °beat down the city, and sowed it with salt.

c Deut. xxix. 28. 1 Kings xii. 25. Ps. cvii. 34. marg. Ez. xlvii. 11. Zeph. ii. 9. Jam. ii. 13.

Gaal the head of their conspiracy against Abimelech! Under this self-confident protector, they ventured out into the field to gather in their harvest and vintage; and then kept a feast to the honour of Baal-berith, and in their revellings cursed Abimelech in his name: (*Notes, Ex. xxxii. 1. Hos. ii. 8, 9*;) thus cleaving to the idol, while they rejected the usurper!—On this occasion Gaal, heated perhaps with wine, strongly expressed his disdain that Abimelech should reign over him, or the ancient city of Shechem. He reviled him as the son of Jerubbaal, who had destroyed the worship of Baal; and so it could not be right that Baal's worshippers should submit to him. (*Notes, vi. 25—32. Num. xxii. 6. 1 Sam. xvii. 42—44.*) He also spoke contemptuously of Zebul, who had been left governor of the city. He invited them to restore the authority, in his person, to the descendants of Hamor; promised what great things he would do against Abimelech; and challenged

him, as if present, to decide the contest by a battle.—(*Marg. Ref. r. s.*) The expression translated, *would to God*, is only an earnest wish that it might be so.

V. 30—33. It is probable that Zebul was not present, when Gaal delivered his vain-glorious speech: but he heard of it; and being exasperated by his insulting language, he sent to inform Abimelech of his danger, and counselled him to come without delay and surprise his enemies.

V. 36. *Thou seest, &c.*] Zebul, who had not yet declared against Gaal, spake this either in derision, or to carry on the deception till Abimelech should surprise his party unawares.

V. 38—45. (*Notes, 2 Kings xiv. 8—14.*) As Gaal's conduct and success had not answered the people's expectations, they seem to have been willing to be rid of him and his company; and on the morrow they went forth,

46 ¶ And when all the men of the tower of Shechem heard *that*, they entered into <sup>d</sup>an hold of the house of the god Berith.

d 4. 27. viii. 33.  
1 Kings xviii. 26.  
2 Kings i. 2-4.  
Ps. cxv. 8. 1a.  
xxviii. 15-18.  
xxviii. 38.

47 And it was told Abimelech, that all the men of the tower of Shechem were gathered together.

48 And Abimelech gat him up to mount <sup>e</sup>Zalmon, he and all the people that *were* with him; and Abimelech took an axe in his hand, and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it, and laid *it* on his shoulder, and said unto the people that *were* with him, <sup>f</sup>'What ye have seen <sup>g</sup>me do, make haste, *and do as I have done*.

e Ps. lxxviii. 14.

f vii. 17, 18. Prov.  
i. 11, 12.  
g Heb. *I have done*.

49 And all the people likewise cut down every man his bough, and followed Abimelech, and <sup>h</sup>put *them* to the hold, and set the hold on fire upon them: so that all the men of the tower of Shechem died also, about a thousand men and women.

h 15. 20. Gal. v.  
15. Jam. iii. 16.

50 ¶ Then went Abimelech to Thebez, and encamped against Thebez, and took it.

51 But there was a strong tower within the city, and thither fled all the

men and women, and all they of the city, and shut *it* to them, and gat them up to the top of the tower.

52 And <sup>h</sup>Abimelech came unto the tower, and fought against it, and went hard unto the door of the tower to burn it with fire.

h 48, 49. 2 Kings  
xv. 10. xv. 16.

53 And a certain <sup>i</sup>woman cast a piece of a mill-stone upon Abimelech's head, and all to brake his skull.

i 15. 20. 2 Sam.  
xx. 21. Job xxxi.  
3. Jer. xix. 20.  
L. 45.

54 Then he called hastily unto the young man his armour-bearer, and said unto him, <sup>k</sup>Draw thy sword, and slay me, that men say not of me, A woman slew him. And his young man thrust him through, and he died.

k 1 Sam. xxxi. 4.  
5.

55 And <sup>l</sup>when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every man unto his place.

l 2 Sam. xviii. 16  
xx. 21, 22. 1 Kings  
xxii. 35, 36. Prov  
xxii. 10.

56 Thus <sup>m</sup>God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech which he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy brethren.

m 24. Ps. ix. 12.  
xi. 6. lxxiii. 10.  
11. xciv. 23  
Prov. v. 22  
Acts xxviii. 4.  
Rev. xix. 20, 21

57 And all the evil of the men of Shechem did God render upon their heads: and <sup>n</sup>upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal.

n 20. Josh. vi. 26.  
1 Kings xvi. 34

either to fight with Abimelech, or (supposing him to have retired,) about their business in the fields: but he, being instigated by revenge, by means of ambushments smote them, seized the city, and slew the inhabitants; and having reduced the place to ruins, he sowed it with salt, as expressing his hope that the desolations would be perpetual. (*Marg. Ref. c.*)—We are not informed what became of Zebul.

V. 46—49. The inhabitants of a place not connected with the city, called the tower of Shechem, took refuge in the temple of Baal-berith, hoping that Abimelech would respect the sacredness of the place; but, in deep revenge, he contrived to burn the temple and the whole company of them together. (*Notes, 2 Kings xix. 36, 37. Gal. v. 13—15.*)

V. 50—57. Thebez is supposed to have been a city, which confederated against Abimelech, and to which perhaps some Shechemites had fled: but this blood-thirsty tyrant, having taken the city, purposed to burn the inhabitants with the tower, as he had done at Shechem! Thus he exactly answered the character of the bramble, which may set fire to that which is nobler and better than itself. (*Note, 8—15.*) But his measure of iniquity was accomplished: he had been the executioner of the divine vengeance upon others, and he must now himself endure it. (*Is. x. 12. Note, Jer. xxv. 12.*) In his rage therefore coming too near the tower, he was mortally wounded by a piece of a mill-stone from the hand of a woman: and understanding this circumstance, in a vain attempt to avoid the dis-

grace of such a death, he ordered his armour-bearer to slay him; who obeyed his command. (*Notes, 1 Sam. xxxi. 3—6. 2 Sam. xi. 21.*) Thus the world and Israel were rid of a vile murderer, usurper, and tyrant, who came in with subtlety, ruled in cruelty, and died in infamy. In the midst of these bloody transactions, the justice of God, in punishing both Abimelech and the Shechemites, is noticed by the sacred writer; in which the application, made by Jotham of his parable, was most wonderfully verified.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—21.

If parents could foresee their children's sufferings, their joy in them would be often turned into lamentations: we may therefore be thankful that we cannot penetrate futurity; and are reminded to commit those whom we most love into the hands of the Lord, and to attend to our present duty, casting our care upon him respecting ourselves and them. We should also be willing to leave this world when he pleases; for if we should live, we may behold such afflictions as would greatly distress our hearts. Above all, we ought to fear sin, and watch against it; for our misconduct may very probably produce the most fatal effects on our families and on society, even after we are laid in the grave.—No divine judgment is more terrible to individuals, than being given up to their own lusts; (*Note, Rom. i. 24—27;*) and none more dreadful to communities, than to be governed by wicked princes.—Able, upright men, who know the duties and difficulties of exalted sta-

## CHAP. X.

Tola judges Israel, 1, 2; and Jair, whose thirty sons had thirty cities, 3—5. The Israelites, relapsing into idolatry, are oppressed by the Philistines and Ammonites, 6—9. They cry to God, who sends them for help to their idols, 10—14. They deeply repent

and he pities them, 15, 16. They consult about choosing a leader, 17, 18.

AND after Abimelech, there <sup>a ii. 16. in. 2.</sup> arose to <sup>Or, deliver.</sup> defend Israel, Tola, the son of <sup>Heb. saaz</sup> Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issa-

tions, are diffident of themselves, and reluctant to quit the security, sweetness, and usefulness of private life, for the toils and dangers of pre-eminence. But men of sordid and selfish minds, destitute of the fear of God and benevolence to man, are often capable of an aspiring and daring ambition, and can form crafty projects to accomplish their designs. By insinuation they draw over such persons to their interests, as are of their own temper and character; and as they do not hesitate at the commission of the most horrid crimes, they will often for a season seem to prosper in their wickedness. Slanders, flatteries, bribery, perjuries, and even murders of the most atrocious kind, are the weapons which they use, as occasion requires, and as ambition or suspicion suggests. Their nearest relatives are not safe, if they stand in their way; the foundations of all government civil and ecclesiastical must be subverted for them, and distractions and publick troubles are the element in which they delight. Such Abimelechs every age produces; and it is surprising how they impose upon thousands to concur in their base designs. (*Notes and P. O.* 2 Sam. xv. 1—12.—*Notes*, xvi. 20—23. xvii. 1—14.)—But, when men are avowed infidels, profligates, and debauchees, what can be expected from them, if unrestrained by human laws? Indeed their wickedness is equalled by the folly of those, who trust power into their hands. Yet, by such scourges of the human race, and such infatuated counsels, the righteous God chastises his offending people, and executes vengeance on his enemies: and he will preserve, in the most imminent dangers, those whom he intends to employ for the good of others. He seldom proceeds to extremities against wicked men, without giving them warning: and those who will not hearken to his call to repent, to the voice of the oppressed who demand justice, or to that of the afflicted who implore relief, will one day cry unto the Lord in extreme anguish, and he will not regard them.—All the works of the creation, in their several ways, honour their Creator, and subserve the comfort and benefit of man; who is the more inexcusable in neglecting and rebelling against his bounteous Benefactor.—In departing from God, men are necessitated to trust in creatures, which can only disappoint and ruin them: and one man of moderate talents may soon do more mischief, than many very wise and excellent persons can do good, by the most persevering exertions. (*Notes*, 1 Kings xii. 1—15. Ec. ii. 18—23. ix. 13—18.)

## V. 22—57.

The wicked may flourish for a time, but they shall be rooted out at the last: in answer to the cries of the oppressed, God will give them up to their own mad passions; then suspicion, envy, and revenge, will be kindled in them against each other; and the weapons, with which they destroyed those who obstructed their iniquitous designs, will at length destroy themselves.—The history of mankind, if stripped of the false colourings, with which historians,

orators, and poets, have often exhibited the most detestable actions, and if impartially given by a pious writer, would appear very like this chapter. Here, as in a glass, we may see what man is, when left to himself and instigated by Satan; and what we should have been, had that been our case. Hence we may learn thankfulness for being preserved from such enormities; for an obscure situation, by which we are less exposed to the danger of falling victims to the ambition and jealousy of others; and for the gospel of Jesus Christ, whose “kingdom is in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”—But it is most lamentable, when such outrages are committed by professed Christians, and disgrace the religion of Jesus in the eyes of multitudes, who cannot, or will not, distinguish between Christianity, and those who have no more than the name of it. “Woe be to the world because of offences! and woe be to those, by whom such offences come!” (*Note*, Matt. xviii. 7—9.)—We may further note, that boasting generally terminates in disgrace; that dangers, despised at a distance, terrify the more when they approach; that the courage which wine inspires is of short continuance; that a mean spirit and a proud heart harbour the most implacable revenge, whilst the truly generous and humble are slow to anger and ready to forgive; that every sinful refuge accelerates or ensures destruction; that more ingenuity and diligence have hitherto been employed in destroying than in saving men’s lives; that daring crimes are often punished in kind, and the cruelty of murderers is retorted upon themselves, by the meanest and least dreaded instruments; and that the most successful wickedness speedily ends in lasting misery and infamy.—Vain and foolish is the concern, and worthless are the expedients, of dying sinners to preserve their reputation, when everlasting contempt is inevitably reserved for them in a future state! God will likewise record their crimes and punishments in this world, notwithstanding all their endeavours to the contrary; as far as it is necessary for the instruction of others, and for his own glory: and how can those expect fidelity or mercy from men, who have been traitors to God, and cruel deceivers of their brethren?—But, how strong must be man’s propensity to wickedness, when such general and horrible idolatry and unrighteousness prevailed even in Israel, after all the Lord had done for them, and notwithstanding all the advantages which they enjoyed! LORD, thou hast given us thy word of truth and righteousness: oh, pour out upon us thy Spirit of purity, peace, and love, and write thy holy law in our hearts, we beseech thee! else all our outward mercies will but enhance our guilt and increase our condemnation.

## NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1, 2. After the death of the usurper, the Lord raised up Tola to judge Israel. We do not find that he waged any war; but he restored peace and the regular administration of justice, after the late distractions,

b Josh. xv. 48

char; and he dwelt in <sup>b</sup>Shamir in mount Ephraim.

2 And he judged Israel twenty and three years, and died, and was buried in Shamir.

c Gen. xxxd. 48  
Num. xxxii. 29

3 ¶ And after him arose Jair, <sup>c</sup>a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and two years.

d e. 10. xii. 14.

4 And he had thirty sons that <sup>d</sup>rode on thirty ass-colts, and they had thirty cities, which are <sup>e</sup>called <sup>f</sup>Havoth-jair unto this day, which *are* in the land of Gilead.

e Num. xxxi. 41.  
1 Chr. iii. 14.  
f *Of the villages of Jair.*

5 And Jair died, and was buried in Canon.

g iv. 1. vi. 1. xiii. 1.

6 ¶ And the children of Israel <sup>g</sup>did evil again in the sight of the LORD, and served <sup>h</sup>Baalim and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and <sup>i</sup>the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and <sup>j</sup>the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the LORD, and served not him.

g ii. 11—13. iii. 7.  
2 Chr. xxviii. 23.  
Pa. cvi. 36.  
h 1 Kings xi. 5. 7.  
33. xvi. 31.  
2 Kings xvii. 16.  
29—31. xxiii. 13.

7 And the anger of the LORD <sup>k</sup>was hot against Israel, and <sup>l</sup>he sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon.

i xvi. 28. 1 Sam. v. 2. 2 Kings i. 2. 8. Jer. ii. 13. Ez. xvi. 26, 28.  
k ii. 14. Deut. xxxix. 20—23. xxxi. 16—19. xxxii. 16—22. Josh. xxiii. 15. 16. Pa. lxxiv. 1. Neh. i. 2. 6.  
l iv. 2. 1 Sam. xii. 9. Pa. xlv. 12. Is. i. 1.m 5. Is. xxx. 13.  
1 Thes. v. 3.  
† Heb. crushed.

8 And <sup>m</sup>that year they vexed and <sup>n</sup>oppressed the children of Israel eighteen years, all the children of Israel

that *were* on the other side Jordan, in the land of the Amorites, which *is* in Gilead.

9 Moreover the children of Ammon <sup>n</sup>passed over Jordan, to fight also against Judah, against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was sore <sup>o</sup>distressed.

n iii. 12, 13. vi. 3  
—5. 2 Chr. xiv  
9. xx. 1, 2.o Deut. xxviii. 65.  
2 Chr. xv. 5.

10 ¶ And the children of Israel <sup>p</sup>cried unto the LORD, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim.

p iii. 9. 1 Sam. xii. 10. Ps. cvi. 43.  
44. civ. 13. 19  
28

11 And the LORD said unto the children of Israel, <sup>q</sup>*Did not I deliver you* from <sup>r</sup>the Egyptians, and from <sup>s</sup>the Amorites, from <sup>t</sup>the children of Ammon, and from <sup>u</sup>the Philistines?

q ii. 1—3.  
Ex. xiv. 30.  
1 Sam. xii. 8.  
Neh. ix. 9—11.  
Pa. lxxviii. 51—  
63. cvi. 8—11.  
Heb. xi. 29.  
Num. xxi. 21—  
25. 35. Pa. cxxxv  
10, 11.  
t iii. 11—15.  
u iii. 31.  
x v. 19, &c.

12 <sup>v</sup>The Zidonians also, and <sup>w</sup>the Amalekites, and <sup>x</sup>the Maonites did oppress you; and ye cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand.

v ii. 12. Deut. xxxii. 15. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Jer. ii. 13. Jon. ii. 8  
b Deut. xxxii. 26—  
28. 1 Kings xviii.  
27. 28. 2 Kings  
iii. 13. Prov. i.  
25—27. Is. x. 8  
Jer. ii. 28.

13 <sup>y</sup>Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore I will deliver you no more.

c 2 Sam. xii. 13.  
xxiv. 10. Job  
xxxiii. 27. Prov.  
xxviii. 13. 1 John  
i. 8—10.

14 Go and <sup>z</sup>cry unto the gods which ye have chosen: let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.

d Josh. ix. 25.  
1 Sam. iii. 19.  
2 Sam. x. 12. xv.  
26. Jon. ii. 4. iii.  
9.

15 And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, <sup>z</sup>We have sinned: <sup>z</sup>do thou unto us whatsoever <sup>z</sup>seemeth

z Heb. *is good in thine eyes.*

and he reformed the state of religion: and thus he was as great a blessing, as those judges who performed more memorable exploits. His name signifies *a worm*; and he was no worse fitted for being the Lord's instrument of good to his people, if his opinion of himself accorded to so humble a name. Though of the tribe of Issachar, he came to live in mount Ephraim, probably that he might be in the centre of Israel, and near the tabernacle. (*Notes, Josh. xviii. 1. xix. 49, 50.*)

V. 3—5. *Jair.*] The next judge, Jair, probably was a descendant of Jair, the great grandson of Machir the son of Manasseh. (*Notes, Num. xxxii. 41. 1 Chr. ii. 22.*) His numerous sons inherited some of the cities, which had fallen to the lot of their ancestor, and assisted their father as magistrates, riding from place to place to administer justice.—Some of these years, of which scarcely any thing is recorded, may be considered as the best times of Israel under the judges. We must, however, take some of the eighteen years of Israel's apostasy from the latter part of Jair's government (8), during which the people seem gradually to have corrupted themselves, and fallen under oppression; and when Jair could no longer restrain them from idolatry, he was not able to defend them from their enemies.

*Ass-colts.* (4) *Note, v. 10.*—Horses are not once mentioned in this part of the history.

V. 6—9. (*Notes, ii. 11—14.*) The Israelites, having cast off the worship of JEHOVAH, and multiplied their idols beyond the example of their ancestors, were delivered into the hands of the Philistines on the west, and of the Ammonites on the east; who between them crushed the people for a long time, but most terribly towards the close of eighteen years; for then the Ammonites invaded the country west of Jordan, and greatly distressed the inhabitants.

*That year.* (8) 'The Ammonites vexed them in the east,... while the Philistines vexed them in the west....' Their invasion began in the same year, but did not end 'at the same time: for the Ammonites domineered over them only eighteen years; but the Philistines forty.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note, xiii. 1.*)

V. 11, 12. Probably the Zidonians aided Jabin, king of Canaan. (*Notes, iv.*)—The Maonites might be a tribe of Arabians, which assisted Moab. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13, 14. This is spoken after the manner of men; and shews most emphatically the deserving of Israel, the demands of divine justice, and the dreadful consequences of impenitence: but threatenings always imply a reserve of mercy for the penitent. (*Notes, Jer. ii. 26—30. xviii. 7—10.*)

V. 15, 16. The foregoing message was sent by a prophet, or was delivered by the high priest, when the congregation were assembled before the Lord. but the people

## CHAP. XI.

2 Sam. xxiv. 14 good unto thee; \* deliver us only, we  
Job xxxiv. 31, pray thee, this day.

12 Chr. vii. 14 16 And 'they put away the \* strange  
xv. 8. xxxiii. 15. gods from among them, and served the  
Jer. xviii. 7, 8. Lord: and 'his soul was 'grieved for  
Ez. xviii. 20-32. Hos. xiv. 1 the misery of Israel.

\* Heb. gods of the misery of Israel.  
17 Then the children of Ammon  
Gen. vi. 6. Ps. cvi. 44, 45. Is. lxiii. 9. Jer. xxxi. 20. Hos. xi. 8. Luke xv. 20. xix. 41. John xxi. 34. Eph. iv. 32. Heb. iii. 10. iv. 15.  
+ Heb. shortened.  
+ Heb. cried together.  
h xi. 11. 29 Gen. xxxi. 40.  
i. l. xi. 5-8. 1a. 1b. 1-8. xxxiv. 12.  
k xi. 11. xii. 7. 1 Sam. xvii. 25

18 And the people and princes of Gilead said one to another, 'What man is he that will begin to fight against the children of Ammon? 'he shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

with one consent submitted themselves to the justice of God; (Note, Rom. x. 1-4;) yet hoping in his mercy, they left themselves in his hands, craved deliverance from their enemies, and were earnest and decided in reformation. This return to the worship of God seems to have been permanent: for we do not find that the people relapsed into idolatry, under the subsequent judges. And compassion as effectually moved the Lord to relieve them, as a man is urged to assist a wretched fellow-creature, when he cannot otherwise help sharing his distress; or as a father is disposed to assist his suffering child. (Marg. Ref. g. Note, Jer. xxxi. 18-20.)

V. 17, 18. Some think, that the penitent Israelites recovering their courage, the Ammonites had retired beyond Jordan to Gilead: but it is more probable that they were collected in this place, in order to a new invasion of the country west of Jordan. The inhabitants, however, of the country east of Jordan convened at Mizpeh, with a determination to oppose them.—God did not as usual expressly appoint them a deliverer: but he secretly directed, and openly confirmed, their choice of one for themselves.—Some indeed think that they consulted the Lord, and that he pointed out Jephthah. (1 Sam. xii. 11. Notes, xi. 1-11.)

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The removal of hardened sinners, by a righteous God, often makes way for reformation and publick tranquillity, and proves a great mercy to those who survive.—Man's carnal heart is prone to prefer the bondage of sin and Satan to the service of God: but present indulgence will certainly produce future misery; for every expectation and advantage from sin, the world, and the friendship of wicked men, must ensure a distressing disappointment.—God is able to multiply men's punishments, according to the number of their iniquities and idols: (Note, Lev. xxvi. 24:) but there is hope, when, under temporal afflictions, sinners cry unto the Lord for help, and lament their ungodliness, as well as more scandalous transgressions. Yet the Lord might justly leave those who have forsaken him to their wretched choice; he might upbraid them with former mercies and their base returns; he might send them to their beloved idols and lusts; he might mock at their calamity, and absolutely refuse to help them. (Notes,

Jephthah, the base-born son of Gilead, thrust out by his brethren, is chosen commander against the Ammonites, 1-11. He sends an embassy to their king, but in vain, 12-28. His rash vow, 29-31. He conquers the Ammonites, 32, 33. He is met by his only daughter, and is deeply distressed; she piously submits, and he performs his vow, 34-40.

NOW \* Jephthah the Gileadite was a Heb. xi. 32  
a mighty man of valour, and he was Jephthah.  
the son of \*an harlot: and Gilead be- vi. 12. 2 Kings  
gat Jephthah. v. 1.  
\* Heb. a woman,  
an harlot.

2 And Gilead's wife bare him sons: and his wife's sons grew up, and they  
\* thrust out Jephthah, and said unto c Gen. xxi. 10  
him, Thou shalt not inherit in our fa- Deut. xxiii. 2.

2 Kings iii. 13, 14. Prov. i. 24-31.) This will be the dreadful condition of the wicked in another world; but here mercy can never be sought in vain: yet, for the deeper humiliation of those who are but superficially convinced, and to quicken those who are not duly in earnest; the Lord often seems to "shut up his loving kindness in his displeasure," he upbraids them with their sins, pursues them with his awful threatenings, and almost brings them to conclude that their case is hopeless. He will, however, keep them from desperation: and when their prayers are rendered more fervent, their confessions more ingenuous and humiliating, their self-examination more diligent, their submission to his justice and dependence on his mercy more entire, and their forsaking of sin more unreserved; it may be certainly concluded, that comfort and deliverance are at hand. Let then the trembling sinner, and the almost despairing backslider, cease from enquiring about God's secret purposes, or thinking to extract hope from former experiences: let them not sink into despondency, or yield to heartless indolence: let them cast themselves upon the mercy of God our Saviour; patiently submit to his severest chastisement; humble themselves more and more under his hand; seek deliverance on any terms from the dominion of sin, and from the powers of darkness; separate themselves as much as possible from all occasions of transgression; use all the means of grace diligently, and wait the Lord's time; and they shall certainly at length rejoice in his mercy. Finally, let all those "who think they stand, take heed lest they fall;" and may the Lord help us to "cleave to him with purpose of heart."

## NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1, 2. Jephthah seems evidently to have been the son of "a harlot;" not of a concubine, or of a secondary wife; of "a strange woman," either of an alien of bad character, or an Israelitess whose infamous conduct procured her that title. (Note, Prov. ii. 16.) So that his birth seemed, according to the law, to exclude him "from the congregation of the Lord." (Note, Deut. xxiii. 2.)—Gilead, the father of Jephthah, was probably a descendant of Gilead, the grandson of Manasseh.—Jephthah had no right to share with his brethren in the in-

ther's house; for thou art the son of a strange woman.

3 Then Jephthah fled from his brethren, and dwelt in the land of Tob: and there were gathered vain men to Jephthah, and went out with him.

4 And it came to pass in process of time, that the children of Ammon made war against Israel.

5 And it was so, that when the children of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob:

6 And they said unto Jephthah, Come and be our captain, that we may fight with the children of Ammon.

7 And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my father's house? and why are ye come unto me now when ye are in distress?

8 And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, Therefore we turn

again to thee now, that thou mayest go with us, and fight against the children of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

9 And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again to fight against the children of Ammon, and the LORD deliver them before me, shall I be your head?

10 And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, The LORD be witness between us, if we do not so according to thy words.

11 Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and captain over them: and Jephthah uttered all his words before the LORD in Mizpeh.

12 ¶ And Jephthah sent messengers unto the king of the children of Ammon, saying, What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come against me to fight in my land?

d Prov. ii. 16. v.  
3. 20. vi. 24—26.  
\* Heb. the face of  
his brethren.

e 2 Sam. x. 6.  
f. v. 4. 1 Sam.  
xxii. 2. xxvii. 2.  
xxx. 22—24.  
Job xxx. 1—10.  
Acts xvii. 5.  
† Heb. after days.  
x 8.

g x. 9. 17, 18.

h 1 Sam. x. 27. xi.  
6, 7. 12. Ps. cxviii.  
22. 23. Acts vii.  
35—39. 1 Cor. i.  
27—29.

i Gen. xxvi. 27.  
xxxvii. 27. xlv.  
4. 5. Prov. xvii.  
17. 18. 19. 14.  
Acts vii. 9—14.  
Rev. iii. 9.

k Ex. viii. 8. 28.  
ix. 28. x. 17.  
1 Kings xiii. 6.  
Luke xvii. 3, 4.  
x. 18.

m Num. xxxii. 20  
—29.

n Gen. xxi. 28.  
xxxi. 50. 1 Sam.  
xii. 5. Jer. xxix.  
23. xlii. 5. Rom.  
i. 9. 2 Cor. xi.  
31.  
† Heb. the hearer.  
Gen. xvi. 8.  
xxxi. 53. Deut.  
i. 16. 1 Sam.  
xxiv. 12.  
o Ex. xx. 7. Zech.  
v. 4. Mal. iii. 5.  
p 8.

q 1 Sam. xxiii. 9  
—12. 1 Kings iii.  
7—9. 2 Cor. iii.  
5. Jam. i. 5. 17.  
r x. 17. xx. 1.  
1 Sam. x. 17. xi.  
15.  
Num. xx. 14.  
xxi. 21. Deut. ii.  
26. xx. 10, 11.  
Prov. xxv. 8, 9.  
Matt. xviii. 15,  
16.  
2 Kings xiv. 8—  
12.

heritance; but he had not deserved to be turned out destitute, as if he had been a vagabond or a malefactor.

V. 3. A number of men of broken fortunes and unsettled dispositions joined themselves to Jephthah. It does not appear, however, that they attempted any depredations, or violence against their own countrymen, but rather that they made reprisals on those nations which oppressed them. In this course of life they learned hardness, boldness, and military skill; and thus Jephthah acquired that reputation which made way for his advancement, as commander in the war against Ammon.—It is not improbable, that he also reformed his followers, and gave them some instructions in religion, as David, in similar circumstances, evidently did in respect of his adherents. (Notes, 1 Sam. xxii. 1, 2. xxiv. 4—7. xxv. 7, 8. xxx. 22—25.)

V. 4—6. Jephthah, at the head of his company, had probably before this begun to fight against the Ammonites, by incursions and reprisals: and the elders of Gilead knowing him to be a man of approved courage and conduct, sent to offer him the chief command of their army. Perhaps they forgot the law before mentioned; or they supposed that in this emergency it might be dispensed with. Some indeed think, that they were directed by a divine admonition to send for him: at least the Lord confirmed their choice; perhaps in order that those, who had rendered themselves vile by sin, might be rescued from their enemies by one who lay under a disgraceful stigma; and that he might be humbled by recollecting, that he was marked in the divine law with the same brand, as the Ammonites whom he conquered. (Notes, Deut. xxiii. 2—5.)

V. 7, 8. Either these elders of Gilead were Jephthah's brethren: or they had concurred with them in driving him away, instead of defending him from their injustice: for he ascribed the ill-usage which he had met with to their hatred; and they did not deny the charge, though urged

as a reason why they ought not to apply to him in their distress. As he was of an enterprising spirit, they had perhaps suspected him of ambitious designs, like those of Abimelech (ix). They now, however, felt their need of his talents; and pleaded that they desired to appoint him their captain, that they might make him amends for their former injustice. (Note, x. 17, 18.)

V. 9—11. Jephthah had no great reason to confide in the elders of Gilead: and, as he supposed that if the Lord gave him the victory over Ammon, this would entitle him to the authority of judge over the tribes east of Jordan; he required the elders to engage by a solemn oath, that they would submit to him, before he would accompany them to Mizpeh. And when he came thither, being about to enter on this important service, he “uttered all his words,” or laid all his transactions, “before the LORD;” seeking his direction, assistance, and blessing very particularly in fervent prayer, as one who would go forth in faith, and expected all his success from God. (Note, Heb. xi. 32—34.)—Some think, that the high priest, with the sacred breast-plate, was come on this occasion to Mizpeh; and that Jephthah enquired of him.—Mizpeh here mentioned was east of Jordan, and was called Mizpeh of Gilead (29), in contradistinction from another place of the same name, which lay west of Jordan. (Josh. xv. 38.) There was also another city, if not two, called Mizpeh, which were of less note.

V. 12—23. Jephthah, now constituted ruler in Israel, sent to treat of peace with the Ammonites before he declared war against them. This accorded to the law of Moses, and was done perhaps by divine direction. (Notes, Deut. xx. 10—18.) The whole of these messages shew that Jephthah had well studied the historical part of the books of Moses. His arguments likewise were very clear, and his demands reasonable; for he only required, that

13 And the king of the children of Ammon answered unto the messengers of Jephthah, "Because Israel took away my land when they came up out of Egypt, from Arnon even unto Jabbok, and unto Jordan; now therefore restore those *lands* again peaceably.

14 And Jephthah sent messengers again unto the king of the children of Ammon,

15 And said unto him, Thus saith Jephthah, "Israel took not away the land of Moab, nor the land of the children of Ammon:

16 But when Israel came up from Egypt, and "walked through the wilderness unto the Red Sea, and "came to Kadesh;

17 Then Israel "sent messengers unto the king of Edom, saying, Let me, I pray thee, pass through thy land: but the king of Edom would not hear-*ken thereto*. And in like manner they sent unto "the king of Moab; but he would not *consent*: and Israel "abode in Kadesh.

18 Then they "went along through the wilderness, and "compassed the land of Edom, and the land of Moab, and came by the east side of the land of Moab, and "pitched on the other side of Arnon, but came not within the border of Moab; for Arnon *was* the border of Moab.

19 And "Israel sent messengers unto Sihon king of the Amorites, the king of Heshbon; and Israel said unto him,

Let us pass, we pray thee, through thy land unto my place.

20 But Sihon trusted not Israel to pass through his coast: but Sihon gathered all his people together, and pitched in Jahaz, and fought against Israel.

21 And the "LORD God of Israel delivered Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they smote them: "so Israel possessed all the land of the Amorites, the inhabitants of that country.

22 And they possessed all the coasts of the Amorites, from Arnon even unto Jabbok, and from the wilderness even unto Jordan.

23 So now, the LORD God of Israel hath dispossessed the Amorites from before his people Israel, and shouldest thou possess it?

24 Wilt not thou possess that which "Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess? So "whomsoever the LORD our God shall drive out from before us, them will we possess.

25 And now, *art* thou any thing better than "Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab? did he ever strive against Israel, or did he ever fight against them,

26 While Israel dwelt in "Heshbon and her towns, and in "Aroer and her towns, and in all the cities that *be* along by the coasts of Arnon, "three hundred years? why therefore did ye not recover *them* within that time?

27 Wherefore I have not sinned

the Ammonites should cease to harass a people, who neither had injured them, nor intended to do so. (*Notes, Num. xx. 14—21. xxi. 21—35. Deut. ii. iii. 1—11.*)—It is also evident that the books of Numbers and Deuteronomy were then extant in their present form.—Some of the country, at that time possessed by Israel, had once belonged to Ammon; but the Amorites had taken it from them; afterwards the Israelites had wrested it from the Amorites; and God, who gave the victory, expressly assigned to them the country of the vanquished for their inheritance.

V. 24. This did not imply, either that Chemosh was in reality a God, or that victory always gives a right to the possessions of the vanquished: but Jephthah argued with the king of Ammon on his own principles, the better to expose the injustice and unreasonableness of his conduct.

V. 25, 26. Balak feared Israel and plotted their destruction; but he had never proceeded to assault them,

nor did they ever give him any reason. (*Notes, Num. xxii. —xxv.*)—Jephthah here argues that it was absurd, at the end of three hundred years, to revive a claim, which had been so long suffered to lie dormant!—Solomon began to build the temple four hundred and eighty years after Israel left Egypt: (1 *Kings* vi. 1:) forty years were spent in the wilderness before the conquest of Sihon and Og: and Jephthah here speaks of three hundred years having elapsed to that time. So that (if he spake with exactness, and not of a round number,) these events happened one hundred and forty years before the building of Solomon's temple. Several computations have been made of the years under Joshua, the different judges, and king Saul, to accord with this general intimation: but none are very satisfactory. Obscurity rests on this part of sacred chronology, and probably will continue to do so. (*Note, iii. 11.*)

V. 27. In case the king of Ammon would not desist

against thee, but thou doest me wrong to war against me: the LORD, 'the Judge, 'be Judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon.

28 Howbeit, 'the king of the children of Ammon hearkened not unto the words of Jephthah which he sent him.

29 ¶ Then 'the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah; and he passed over Gilead and Manasseh, and passed over ' Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto the children of Ammon.

30 And Jephthah 'vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands,

31 Then it shall be, that 'whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, 'shall surely be the LORD's, 'and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering.

32 So Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against them; and 'the LORD delivered them into his hands.

33 And he smote them from 'Aroer, e Deut. ii. 36. even till thou come to 'Minnith, even d Ez. xxvii. 17. twenty cities, and unto 'the plain of: Or, Abel. the vineyards, with a very great slaughter. Thus the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.

34 ¶ And Jephthah came to 'Miz- e 11 z. 17.

peh unto his house, and, behold, 'his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she was his only child: 'beside her he had 'neither son nor daughter.

35 And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he 'rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for 'I have opened my mouth unto the LORD, and 'I cannot go back.

36 And she said unto him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the LORD, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; 'forasmuch as the LORD hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon.

37 And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me: let me

a Gen. xviii. 25.  
1 Sam. ii. 10.  
Job ix. 15. xxiii.  
7. Ps. vii. 11. i.  
6. lxxviii. 8. xciv.  
2. xlviii. 9. Ec.  
xi. 9. xii. 14. John  
v. 22. 23. Rom.  
xiv. 10—12.  
2 Cor. v. 10.  
2 Tim. iv. 8.  
Heb. xii. 23.  
1 Gen. xvi. 5.  
xxxi. 63. 1 Sam.  
xxiv. 12. 15. Ps.  
vii. 8. 9. 2 Cor.  
xi. 11.  
2 Kings xiv. 11.  
Prov. xvi. 18.  
xiii. 10. vi. 34.  
xiii. 25. Num.  
xi. 25. 1 Sam. x.  
10. xvi. 13—15.  
1 Chr. xii. 16.  
y z. 17.

z Gen. xxviii. 20.  
Num. xxx. 2.  
&c. 1 Sam. i. 11.  
Ec. v. 1, 2.

\* Heb. that which  
cometh forth,  
which shall come  
forth.

a Lev. xxvii. 2, 3  
29, 29. 1 Sam. i.  
11. 25. xiv. 24.  
44.

† Or, or I will,  
&c. Lev. xxvii.  
11. 12. Deut.  
xxiii. 18. Ia.  
(xxv. 3.)

b i. 4. ii. 18. iii.  
10.

f v. 1, &c. Ex. xv.  
20. 1 Sam. xviii.  
6, 7. Ps. lxxviii.  
25. cxxviii. 11,  
12. Jer. xxxi. 4.  
13.

g Or, he had not of  
his own either.  
Heb. of himself.  
Zech. xii. 10.  
Luke vii. 12  
viii. 42. ix. 38.  
h Gen. xxxvii. 29,  
30. 34. 35. xlii.  
36—38. 2 Sam.  
xiii. 30. 31. xviii.  
33. Job i. 20.

i Lev. xxvii. 28,  
29. Num. xxx.  
2—5. Ps. xv. 4.  
Ec. v. 2—6.

k xxi. 1—7. 1 Sam.  
xiv. 44, 45. Matt.  
xiv. 7—9. Acts  
xxiii. 14.

xvi. 23—20.  
2 Sam. xviii. 19.  
81. xix. 30. Acts  
xx. 24. xxi. 13.  
Rom. xxi. 4  
Phil. ii. 30.

from his demand, the war would become just and necessary: and therefore Jephthah solemnly appealed to JEHOVAH, "the Judge," to judge between Israel and the Ammonites, and to decide in favour of those who had the more righteous cause. Every declaration of war implies such an appeal; but it is seldom made upon such good grounds, and in the same spirit of humble faith. (Notes, 2 Sam. x. 8—14. 2 Chr. xiii. 4—22.)

V. 29. The Lord, by the communication of his Spirit, both confirmed the people's choice of Jephthah, and fitted him for the service to which he was called. (Note, 9—11.)—Being thus stirred up, he went through the adjacent countries to levy soldiers, and then marched boldly to attack the enemy.

V. 30, 31. Perhaps Jephthah's army was small, and his or their courage ready to fail in the prospect of imminent danger; and therefore he joined a solemn vow to his earnest prayers: but the vow itself was evidently rash and improper. (Marg. Ref. z. Notes, Gen. xxviii. 20—22. Num. xxx. 2.) God himself had prescribed the animals which were to be offered in the different kinds of sacrifices: and there were likewise different kinds of vows, and particular regulations of them. (Notes, Lev. i. 1, 2. xxvii.) It was therefore exceedingly absurd to vow, that whatsoever "came forth of the doors of his house, should be the LORD's, and be offered for a burnt-offering." The marginal reading, "or I will offer it," &c. on which much

stress has been laid by several expositors, is by no means a natural construction.—A dog or some other unclean animal, might first have met him; and in what sense could it have been the Lord's? but it was most probable that one of his family would, which indeed he seems to have expected. Not being so well acquainted with the preceptive part of the books of Moses, as with the historical, he confounded the several laws concerning sacrifices and vows; and especially, he seems to have had some confused idea of the law and custom of devoting persons or things to utter destruction. (Note, Lev. xxvii. 28, 29.) This being especially intended of the enemies of God, and things abused to idolatry, he erroneously applied to innocent persons and Israelites, over whose lives he could have no power, either in his publick or private character: and he supposed that the execution of this vow required, that the person devoted should be offered for a burnt-offering. His judgment was not only erroneous through ignorance of the divine law, but it was also perverted by a too great familiarity with the customs of the surrounding idolaters; who on such emergencies frequently vowed and offered human sacrifices, supposing them acceptable to the Deity, in proportion to the pain which they occasioned to the offerers. (Notes, 2 Kings iii. 27. Mic. vi. 6—8.)

V. 34—40. The whole conduct of Jephthah's daughter shews, that she was an amiable, dutiful, and pious young woman, according to the instructions afforded her: and

\* Heb. *go and go* alone two months, that I may \* go up and down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my fellows.

m 1 Sam. i. 6.  
Luke i. 26

38 And he said, Go. And he sent her away for two months: and she went with her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains.

39 And it came to pass at the end

of two months, that she returned unto her father, who <sup>a</sup> did with her according <sup>o</sup> to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man. And it was a <sup>†</sup> custom in Israel,

n 31. Lev. xxvii.  
28, 29. Deut. xii.  
31. Is. lxxvi. 3.  
o 1 Sam. i. 17. 28  
ii. 18.

+ Or, ordinance

40 That the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite, <sup>p</sup> four days in a year.

: Heb. *from year to year*  
† Or, to talk with.  
p 1 Kings ix 25.

the tokens of extreme distress, which Jephthah shewed, confirm the interpretation before intimated. (Note, 30, 31.) If he had understood the divine law, he would have known that his rash vow bound him to nothing but deep repentance; unless he had accompanied thank-offerings at Shiloh, with a sin-offering on this account.—But he deemed himself irrevocably engaged; (Notes, Lev. xxvii. 28, 29. Num. xxx. 2;) and, after two months, “he did with her according to his vow:” that is, as it appears evident to me, he offered her for a burnt-offering; perhaps induced by a misinterpretation of the command given to Abraham concerning his son Isaac. (Notes, Gen. xxii. 2—10.) In this he acted conscientiously: but his conscience was erroneous; and his error arose from ignorance of the divine law, and too much acquaintance with heathen customs. Otherwise he would not have placed his amiable daughter, who came to congratulate his victory, with joyful songs of praise, among the devoted enemies of God; much less would he have offered so detestable a sacrifice, which was most expressly forbidden, as “an abomination to the LORD which he hated.” (Deut. xii. 31.—Note, Lev. xx. 2—5.)—When Saul rashly brought his excellent son Jonathan under the curse of utter destruction, the people very properly rescued him; for the crime was Saul’s, not Jonathan’s. (Notes, 1 Sam. xiv. 24—46.)—Many learned men indeed have endeavoured to shew that Jephthah did not sacrifice his daughter, but that he shut her up in perpetual solitude and virginity: and they urge in favour of that opinion, that “she bewailed her virginity,” not her death; and that “she knew no man:” and they suppose that the daughters of Israel went to condole with her four times in the year, and not to lament her death. But it is not at all likely that it should become a custom, not only for her acquaintance, or the daughters of Gilead, but for those of all Israel, thus to flock to her four days in the year on such an account: and we never read of law or custom, either in the Old Testament or the New, for any person to be thus devoted to the Lord by perpetual celibacy, or the least hint of the kind. On the contrary, marriage and having children were so honourable in all, that to die unmarried or childless was deemed disgraceful, as well as a misfortune; which seems to have occasioned the expressions above-mentioned. (Luke i. 25.) So pious a person, supposing her death to be for the glory of God, and the benefit of Israel, would not bewail on that account: but, according to the sentiment of all Israelitish women, she must naturally lament that she died unmarried and childless, especially as her father had no other child, nor any prospect of posterity. Whereas, had she been shut up in perpetual solitude, as a single example of

that kind in the whole Scripture, and contrary to the whole tenour of it, she would not have needed to request two months to bewail her virginity, for she would have had all her remaining life to do it in.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—28.

As the sins of parents so often occasion disgrace and hardship to their children, this should unite with higher motives to induce men to govern their passions according to the law of God.—Activity, capacity, prudence, and piety, will often render a man superior to the disadvantages of his birth; and the hardships of his youth prepare him for the services of future life.—We should not despise the meanest person; for we know not how soon we may have reason to supplicate his assistance. It is especially dangerous to injure the servants of God; and many who do so in prosperity, are glad to seek the benefit of their protection, counsel, and prayers, in seasons of terror and distress: (Notes, Is. ix. 10—14. Rev. iii. 8, 9;) and in all ages they, whom God has most honoured and employed, have previously been treated with contempt and injustice, even by those to whom they afterwards were most useful. None ought therefore to be discouraged or surprised by it; as they are only dealt with in the same manner as Joseph, Moses, Jephthah, and David; nay, in this especially, are made like to the Son of God, “who endured the contradiction of sinners against himself,” before he was “exalted to be a Prince and Saviour.” Indeed, the Lord is continually thus treated: men neglect his service, despise his authority, and rob him of his glory; and yet in their distress they apply unto him for deliverance. But, as he forgives the penitent sinner without upbraiding him, so ought his people to behave to their enemies. It should be noted, however, that the Saviour himself will save none, who do not consent that he should “reign over them:” and his disciples, after his example, should seek to reform them, whose temporal distresses they relieve.—Those undertakings are likely to prosper, and those publick situations to be well filled, respecting which the Lord is consulted and trusted in simple faith, prayer, and conscientious obedience.—They, who possess the greatest genuine courage, will be the most disposed for peace, and to concede and yield the most for the sake of it; and when rapacity and ambition, concealed under the mask of equity, (for though few men love justice, most would be thought to do so,) render such endeavours unavailing; having shewn that we would, “if possible, live peaceably with all men,” we may safely leave the matter with the Lord; who, as Judge of all the earth, will award to those that delight in conten-

## CHAP. XII.

The Ephraimites quarrel with Jephthah, are smitten by the Gileadites, and slain in very great numbers at the passage of Jordan, 1—6. Jephthah dies, 7. Ibzan, who had thirty sons and thirty daughters, judges Israel, 8—10: and after him Elon, 11, 12: and then Abdon, who had forty sons and thirty grandsons, 13—15.

\* Heb. were called. **AND** the men of Ephraim \* gathered themselves together, and went northward, and said unto Jephthah, \* Wherefore passedst thou over to fight against the children of Ammon, and didst not call us to go with thee? <sup>b</sup> we will burn thine house upon thee with fire.

<sup>a</sup> viii. 1. 2 Sam. xix. 41—43. Ps. cix. 4. Ec. iv. 4. John x. 32.  
<sup>b</sup> xiv. 15. xv. 6. Prov. xxvii. 3. 4. Jam. iii. 16. iv. 1, 2.  
<sup>c</sup> xi. 12, &c.

**2** And Jephthah said unto them, \* I and my people were at great strife with the children of Ammon; and when I called you, ye delivered me not out of their hands.

<sup>d</sup> ix. 17. 1 Sam. xix. 5. xxviii. 21. Job xiii. 14. Ps. cxix. 109. Rom. xvi. 4. Rev. xii. 11.  
<sup>e</sup> xi. 27. 2 Chr. xiii. 12.

**3** And when I saw that ye delivered me not, I <sup>d</sup> put my life in my hands, and passed over against the children of Ammon, and the LORD delivered them into my hand: \* wherefore then are ye

come up unto me this day to fight against me?

**4** Then Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim, and the <sup>f</sup> men of Gilead smote Ephraim, because they said, Ye Gileadites are <sup>g</sup> fugitives of Ephraim, among the Ephraimites, and among the Manassites.

**5** And the Gileadites took <sup>h</sup> the passages of Jordan before the Ephraimites: and it was so, that when those Ephraimites which were escaped said, Let me go over, that the men of Gilead said unto him, *Art* thou an Ephraimite? If he said, Nay;

**6** Then said they unto him, <sup>i</sup> Say now <sup>†</sup> Shibboleth; and he said Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce *it* right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan: and <sup>k</sup> there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand.

**7** And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then died Jephthah the Gi-

<sup>f</sup> xi. 10. Num. xxxii. 39, 40. Deut. iii. 12—17.

<sup>g</sup> 1 Sam. xxv. 10. Neh. iv. 4. Ps. lxxviii. 9. Prov. xii. 12. xv. 1.

<sup>h</sup> iii. 28. vii. 24. Josh. ii. 7. xxii. 1.

<sup>i</sup> Matt. xxvi. 73. Mark xiv. 70.  
<sup>†</sup> That is, a stream, or, flood. Ps. lxxix. 2, 15. Is. xxvii. 12. Heb.

<sup>k</sup> Prov. xxii. 14. xxiii. 19. Ec. x. 12. Matt. xii. 25. Gal. v. 15. B. C. 1137.

tion, publick or private, a recompence meet for their turbulent dispositions and evil deeds.

## V. 29—40.

As far as we are acquainted with the word of God, we shall find a clear light shine upon our paths, discovering to us the safe and happy way: but, even when we act uprightly, if ignorant of the Scriptures, we shall fall into lamentable mistakes, to the dishonour of God and the great discomfort of our souls. This should excite us to a diligent study of the whole word of God, that we may be “completed in the knowledge of his will:” and it should remind ministers to be exact, copious, and frequent, in discussing practical subjects; that those who are disposed to perform their duty, may not be left to sin through ignorance or mistake, as very many professors of evangelical truth continually do.—How chequered are the scenes of this mortal life! Sorrow treads upon the heels of mirth; and our choicest comforts, often through our own unwatchfulness, become the occasions of our severest trials: but we need the less wonder at this, when we observe how defective the best characters are, and how the best actions are often connected with such, as are utterly unwarrantable.—A cheerful mind, disposed to be grateful to God, and to endure any thing for his honour and out of love to his people, with a ready submission to parental authority, are such beautiful blossoms in young persons, and promise such fruit in ripper years, that we must regret to see them blasted by premature death; and lament that those, who have so well performed the inferior duties, are not spared to be useful in the more important relations of the married state. But, though their death is a loss to society, they

are themselves no losers: for the preparation for a useful life will render death also comfortable, in whatever way they may be called hence.—In lawful vows, when we have “opened our mouth unto the LORD, we may not go back;” and on that account we should be very considerate in making vows, that we may not involve ourselves or others in distress, perplexity, or temptation: but nothing can oblige us to that which is in itself unlawful. With this single exception, we cannot do too much to express our gratitude for mercies received, or part with too much for the glory of God.—Though we cannot approve of the conduct of Jephthah, we may well admire and imitate his resolution and self-denial, and still more those of his daughter.—Let us not then forget the love of the Father in giving his Son, or of the Son in giving himself, a *real* and acceptable sacrifice for the sins of rebellious man. Bought with such a price, let us present our bodies and souls as a living sacrifice unto God; and look forward with heartfelt satisfaction to that country, where ignorance, error, sin, and sorrow shall be known no more; where the believer’s victory will be complete, his triumphs unalloyed and unsullied, and his hallelujahs uninterrupted and eternal.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1—7. Jephthah was a Manassite, and the Ephraimites had the same pretence of quarrelling with him, as their ancestors had for chiding with Gideon: (Note, xi. 1, 2:) but their resentment vented itself in a more outrageous and abusive manner. We find nothing to blame in Jephthah’s answer; but it was not so conciliating as that of Gideon had been. (Marg. Ref.—Note, viii. 1—3.) The Ephraimites had, it seems, been sent to, and

leadite, and was buried in *one of* the cities of Gilead.

1 Gen. xxxv. 9. 8 ¶ And after him Ibzan of <sup>1</sup> Beth-lehem judged Israel.

1 Sam. xvi. Mic. v. 2. Matt. ii. 1. m 14. n. 4. 9 And he had <sup>m</sup>thirty sons and thirty daughters, *whom* he sent abroad, and took in thirty daughters from abroad for his sons: and he judged Israel seven years.

B. C. 1130 10 Then died Ibzan, and was buried at Beth-lehem.

11 ¶ And after him Elon a Zebulonite judged Israel; and he judged Israel ten years.

12 And Elon the Zebulonite died, and was buried in <sup>a</sup>Aijalon, in the country of Zebulun. n Josh. xix. 42. 1 Chr. vi. 69. viii. 13.

13 ¶ And after him, Abdon the son of Hillel, a Pirathonite, judged Israel.

14 And he had forty sons and thirty <sup>\*</sup>nephews, that <sup>o</sup>rode on threescore and ten ass-colts: and he judged Israel eight years. • Heb. sons' sons o v. 10. x. 4. B. C. 1112.

15 And Abdon the son of Hillel the <sup>p</sup>Pirathonite died, and was buried in <sup>q</sup>Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, <sup>r</sup>in the mount of the Amalekites. p 2 Sam xxiii. 30. q iii. 13. 27. v. 14. Gen. xiv. 7. Ex. xvii. 8. 1 Sam. xv. 7.

would not come to help their brethren, and their anger was therefore extremely unreasonable: but instead of being satisfied with Jephthah's arguments, they proceeded to assault him: and they likewise irritated the Gileadites by abusive language; as if they had been the refuse of the descendants of Joseph, who had fled from justice and settled beyond Jordan! (Note, Josh. xxii. 21—29.)—The Gileadites, however, took a most severe revenge on them: for getting possession of the fords of Jordan, they slew great numbers of them; having artfully devised to distinguish them by their provincial pronunciation of the Hebrew word Shibboleth, which generally signifies *a river, or stream of waters*: (6. marg. reading and ref. on it:) though sometimes also used for *an ear of corn*. (Job xxiv. 24.)—How far Jephthah concurred in this cruel revenge cannot be determined; but it was entirely unjustifiable, and exceedingly weakened the common cause of Israel. (Notes, 2 Chr. xiii. 4—22. Prov. xvii. 14. Matt. xii. 25, 26.)—Indeed it is wonderful, that the political importance of Ephraim was not ruined by this massacre. (Notes, Gen. xlix. 22—26. Deut. xxxiii. 17.) After this transaction Israel quietly submitted to Jephthah as their judge; but he lived only a short time, and probably had little comfort in his advancement.

V. 9—15. “The mount of the Amalekites” (15), seems to have derived its name from some victory, gained over Amalek in that place by the Ephraimites. (Marg. Ref.)—Many learned men suppose, that these last four judges ruled over the eastern and northern parts of the country; and that Samson and Eli were contemporary with them, judging the southern and western parts.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

While pride prevails, there must be discord and contention: (Note, Prov. xiii. 10:) and when insolence escapes chastisement, it often grows more abusive. But the haughty and quarrelsome will at length meet with those, who are as ready to revenge their affronts, as others have been to endure them.—Nothing is more foolish than scurrility: without any advantage it rouses the most implacable resentment, and prepares the way for bloodshed. Thus “the tongue, that unruly evil, sets on fire the whole course of nature, and is set on fire of hell.” (Note, Jam. iii. 3—6.) But they, who are most ready to boast, menace, and revile, generally prove cowardly in real danger: and might have

their own reproaches retorted upon them, but that Christians must not “render railing for railing.”—In the origin or the event of dissension, all parties are commonly to blame: even good men cannot always bear with proper calmness the ingratitude and ill-treatment of those whom they have served; nor have all equally the talent of turning away wrath by a soft answer: and in a just cause we are apt to be hurried on by our passions to unwarrantable lengths; for “the beginning of strife is like the letting forth of water, therefore” let us “leave off contention before it “be meddled with.”—The splendour of men's exploits, and the excellence of their characters, often increase the number and rage of their enemies: nor need any man be surprised, if those who ought to thank, commend, and reward him, and to congratulate him on his success in dangerous attempts to promote the publick welfare, should abuse and hate him, and threaten his destruction. No one is prepared to do good in such a world as this, who has not learned to expect and accept evil, as his recompence from man: and to persevere in hope of a better recompence from a gracious God.—But no contentions are so bitter, as those which arise between brethren, or between rivals for honour and precedency. What need have we then to watch and pray against envy, pride, ambition, and those evil tempers, which set the world as it were in flames from age to age; and which by horrid carnage gratify that first great murderer, the devil!—Alas! that so many *Shibboleths* should be invented to divide the church also; to be the watchwords of angry disputants, and the pretext for professed disciples of Christ abusing and persecuting each other! May the Lord incline all his people “to follow “after the things which make for peace, and things where- “by one may edify another.”—Many renowned and envied persons die of broken hearts, on account of personal and domestick afflictions: so that their inward anguish might soften their bitterest enemies into compassion, if they knew the whole.—The Lord is to be acknowledged in giving all our comforts, as well as submitted to when he withholds or withdraws them: but increasing families bring increasing cares and duties, which cannot be neglected without guilt and painful consequences.—In fine, the happiest life of individuals, and the happiest state of society, is that which affords the fewest remarkable events. To live in credit and quiet, to be peacefully useful in our circle, to possess a clear conscience, to enjoy communion with God

## CHAP. XIII.

Israel offends God, and is reduced to serve the Philistines forty years, 1. An Angel appears to Manoah's wife, and promises her a son, who should be a perpetual Nazarite, 2—5. She informs her husband; who prays that the Angel may again appear to instruct them, 6—8. The Angel appears, and by his conduct, especially by ascending in the flame of Manoah's sacrifice, discovers who he is, 9—20. Manoah is greatly alarmed, as having seen God; but is encouraged by his wife, 21—23. Samson is born, and is moved by the Spirit of God, 24, 25

**AND** the children of Israel <sup>a</sup> did evil again in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD delivered them <sup>a</sup> into the hand of the Philistines forty years.

2 And there was a certain man of <sup>b</sup> Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name *was* Manoah: and his wife *was* <sup>c</sup> barren, and bare not.

3 And <sup>d</sup> the Angel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou *art* barren, and bearest not: <sup>e</sup> but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son.

4 Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and <sup>f</sup> drink not wine nor strong drink, and <sup>g</sup> eat not any unclean *thing*:

5 For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and <sup>h</sup> bear a son; and <sup>i</sup> no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a

Nazarite unto God from the womb; and he shall <sup>j</sup> begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.

6 ¶ Then the woman came, and told her husband, saying, <sup>k</sup> A man of God came unto me, and his <sup>l</sup> countenance *was* like the countenance of an angel of God, very <sup>m</sup> terrible: but I asked him not whence he *was*, neither told he me <sup>n</sup> his name.

7 But he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean *thing*: for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to the day of his death.

8 Then Manoah intreated the LORD, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send, come again unto us, and <sup>o</sup> teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born.

9 And God <sup>p</sup> hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and the Angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband *was* not with her.

10 And the woman made haste, and ran, and shewed her husband, and said unto him, <sup>q</sup> Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the *other* day.

<sup>i</sup> 1 Sam. vii. 13.  
<sup>j</sup> 2 Sam. viii. 1.  
<sup>k</sup> 1 Chr. xviii. 1.

<sup>k</sup> Deut. xxxiii. 1  
<sup>l</sup> Josh. xiv. 6.  
<sup>m</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 27. ix. 6.  
<sup>n</sup> 1 Kings xvii. 18. 24. 2 Kings iv. 9. 16. 1 Tim. vi. 11.  
<sup>o</sup> Matt. xxviii. 3.  
<sup>p</sup> Luke ix. 29.  
<sup>q</sup> Acts vi. 15.  
<sup>r</sup> 22. Gen. xxviii. 16, 17. Ex. iii. 2—6. Dan. viii. 17. x. 5—11. Matt. xxviii. 4. Rev. i. 17.  
<sup>s</sup> 18. Gen. xxxii. 29. Luke i. 19.

<sup>o</sup> Job xxxiv. 32.  
<sup>p</sup> Prov. iii. 5, 6.  
<sup>q</sup> Acts ix. 6.

<sup>p</sup> Ps. lxxv. 2. Matt. vii. 7—11.

<sup>q</sup> John i. 41, 42. iv. 23, 29.

<sup>a</sup> Heb. added to commit, det. ii. 11. iii. 7. iv. 1. vi. 1. x. 6.  
<sup>b</sup> 1 Sam. xii. 9.

<sup>b</sup> Josh. xv. 23. xix. 41.

<sup>c</sup> Gen. xvi. 1. xxv. 21. 1 Sam. ii. 2—6. Luke i. 7.  
<sup>d</sup> ii. 1. vi. 11, 12. Gen. xvi. 7—13. Luke i. 11, 28.

<sup>e</sup> Gen. xvii. 16. xviii. 10. 1 Sam. i. 20. 2 Kings iv. 16. Luke i. 13. 31.

<sup>f</sup> 14. Num. vi. 3. Luke i. 15.  
<sup>g</sup> 1. v. xi. 27. 47. Acts x. 14.

<sup>h</sup> Num. vi. 1. 1 Sam. i. 11.

our Saviour while we live, and to die at peace with God and man, form the substance of all that a wise man can desire as to this world.

## NOTES

CHAP. XIII. V. 1. These forty years are supposed to have begun when Jair judged Israel; about the same time as the oppression of Gilead by the Ammonites. (Note, x. 3—5.) These had been subdued, but the Philistines still harassed the Israelites, till Samson was arrived at maturity and began their deliverance. (Note, x. 6—9.)

V. 2—5. (Marg. Ref.) The Nazarite's vow was voluntary, and for a limited time; and by the touch of a dead body it was broken, and the specified time must be begun over again. (Notes, Num. vi. 2—21.) But Samson was devoted by the Lord's express appointment, to be a Nazarite all the days of his life; and it seems probable that this kind of separation was not so strict, as the voluntary vow. (Notes, 1 Sam. i. 9—11. Luke i. 11—17.)—The infant in the womb, and at the breast, subsists on the same nourishment with the mother; and therefore the mother of Samson was required to observe the same rules as the Nazarite during that period. She would be led to expect something extraordinary, from a child whose birth was attended by such observances: but it was a great trial to the

faith and patience of all concerned to be informed, that even the *beginning* of a deliverance from their oppressors must be so long waited for.—It is probable, that Samson was born about the time when the Philistines began to afflict Israel, as he did not live to complete their deliverance. (Note, 1.)—It seems, that the law concerning distinction of meats was not strictly observed at this time, or Manoah's wife would not have needed a caution to eat no unclean thing. (4. 7. 14.)

V. 6. *A man of God.* Marg. Ref.—This supposed “man of God,” or holy prophet, is said to have been *like an angel*; by which it is evident that angels, as they actually appeared to the people of God, were not distinguishable in general from prophets, except by a more venerable or majestick appearance: (Note, Acts vi. 15 :) though in the *emblematick* description of them, in some parts of Scripture, they are represented with wings.

V. 8. Manoah did not doubt the performance of the promise, which had been made to his wife in his absence; but only prayed that the same supposed prophet might be sent to instruct them in their duty relative to it. This was a genuine exercise of faith. (Note, Luke i. 34—38.)

V. 10. As the word *other* is not in the original, some think that the Angel appeared in the morning and evening of the same day.

11 And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said unto him, *Art* thou the man that spaketh unto the woman? And he said, *I am*.

12 And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass: \*how shall we order the child? and †how shall we do unto him?

13 And the Angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman, let her beware.

14 She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: \*all that I commanded her, let her observe.

15 And Manoah said unto the Angel of the LORD, I pray thee, \*let us detain thee until we shall have made ready a kid \*for thee.

16 And the Angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread; and if thou wilt offer a burnt-offering, thou must offer it 'unto the LORD: for Manoah knew not that he *was* an Angel of the LORD.

17 And Manoah said unto the Angel of the LORD, What *is* thy name, that, when thy sayings come to pass, we may do thee honour?

18 And the Angel of the LORD said unto him, \*Why askest thou

thus after my name, seeing it is 'secret?

19 So Manoah \*took a kid, with a meat-offering, and offered it upon a rock unto the LORD: and the Angel 'did wondrously; and Manoah and his wife looked on.

20 For it came to pass, \*when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that the Angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar: and Manoah and his wife looked on it, and \*fell on their faces to the ground.

21 (But the Angel of the LORD did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife.) Then Manoah <sup>b</sup>knew that he *was* an Angel of the LORD.

22 And Manoah said unto his wife, \*We shall surely die, because <sup>d</sup>we have seen God.

23 But \*his wife said unto him, If the LORD were pleased to kill us, †he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meat-offering at our hands; neither would <sup>e</sup>he have shewed us all these things; nor would, as at this time, have told us *such things* as these.

24 ¶ And the woman bare a son, and called his name <sup>b</sup>Samson; and <sup>1</sup>the child grew, and the LORD blessed him.

25 And \*the Spirit of the LORD began to move him at times in <sup>1</sup>the camp of Dan, <sup>1</sup>between Zorah and Eshtaol.

§ Or, wonderful. Is. ix. 6. x. vi. 20. 1 Kings xviii. 30—32.

y vi. 21. 1 Kings xviii. 33.

z 2 Kings ii. 11. Ps. xlviii. 5 Heb. i. 3.

a Gen. xlvii. 3. Lev. ix. 24. 1 Chr. xxi. 16. Ez. i. 28. Dan. x. 9. Matt. xvii. 6.

b vi. 22 Hos. xii. 4, 5.

c Gen. xxxiii. 20. Ex. xxxiii. 20. Deut. iv. 38. v. 26. Is. vi. 5. John i. 18. v. 37. Ec. iv. 9, 10. 1 Cor. xii. 21. f Gen. iv. 4, 5. Ps. lxxvi. 17.

g Ps. xxv. 14. Prov. iii. 32. John xiv. 20—23.

h Heb. xi. 32. i 1 Sam. iii. 19. Luke i. 80. ii. 52.

k iii. 10, vi. 34 xi. 22. 1 Sam. xii. 6. Matt. iv. 1. John iii. 34.

l Heb. Mahanehdan. xviii. 12. i xviii. 11. Josh. xv. 33.

\* Heb. what shall be the manner of the child? Gen. xviii. 19. Prov. iv. 4. xxii. 6. Eph. vi. 4. † Or, what shall he do? Heb. what shall be his work?

\* Deut. xii. 32. Matt. xxviii. 20. John ii. 5. xv. 14. 2 Thea. iii. 4.

\* vi. 18, 19. Gen. xviii. 3—5.

\* Heb. before thee

i 23. vi. 26.

u 6. Gen. xxxii. 29.

#### V. 11—14. Marg. Ref.

V. 15, 16. Manoah, not knowing who this messenger of God was, seems to have doubted whether he should prepare him a banquet, or a sacrifice. "For Manoah knew not that he was an Angel of the LORD." This implied, that had he known who it was, the thought of offering a burnt-offering, though irregular, would not have been in all respects improper: but as he took him only for a man, it was very wrong. The same would have been equally the case had he been the greatest created angel. (Note, Ex. xx. 3.)

V. 18—22. The word (wfp), rendered *secret*, signifies *Wonderful*; and is the same name as is given to the Messiah by the prophet. (Is. ix. 6.)—In consequence of this intimation Manoah, though no priest, offered a burnt-offering upon a rock, where perhaps some rude altar was hastily prepared; and he was accepted in so doing. Probably fire from the rock consumed the sacrifice.—He "offered it to JEHOVAH, and he did wondrously," (there is no word for the Angel in the original of v. 19,) according to the meaning of his name *Wonderful*; for in the presence of Manoah and his wife, he ascended towards heaven with the flame

of fire from off the altar, and by that Manoah knew him to be the Angel-JEHOVAH, and he was afraid, lest death should be the consequence of having "seen God."—From these circumstances the reader will easily collect, whom Manoah supposed the Angel to have been. (Notes, Gen. xvi. 10, 11, 13, 14. xxxii. 30. xlviii. 16. Ex. iii. 2. xxxiii. 20—23. Josh. v. 13—15. Hos. xii. 3—6. John i. 18.)

V. 23. Manoah's wife being, at that time, the stronger in faith, encouraged her husband, by the consideration, that the acceptance of their sacrifice, united with the promise of a son who should "begin to deliver Israel," assured them of the Lord's favour. Had he intended to slay them, he would neither, at such a time, have done these wondrous works, nor given them a promise, which must in that case fail of being accomplished.

V. 25. In the camp of Dan.] The tribe of Dan lay next to the land of the Philistines; (Note, Josh. xix. 40—48:) but it is uncertain, whether at that time any army of Danites were encamped to preserve the country from depredation, or whether the words should be read *Mahanehdan*, as in the margin; being the name of a place afterwards mentioned, but which was so called from events

## CHAP. XIV

Samson desires a woman of the Philistines to wife, 1—4. Going to see her he slays a lion; and afterwards finds honey in its carcase, 5—9. At his marriage-feast he proposes a riddle, which the guests explain by means of his wife, 10—18. He kills thirty

Philistines, gives their spoil to those who explained the riddle, and departs in anger, 19. His wife is given to his companion, 20.

a Gen. xxxviii 12  
3 Josh. xv. 16.  
xix. 43.  
b Gen. vi. 2.  
xxiv. 2. 2 Sam.  
xi. 2. Job xxxi.  
1. Ps. cxxx. 37.  
1 John ii. 16.

AND Samson went down to Timnath, and saw a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines.

prior to the days of Samson. (*Notes*, xvii. 1. xviii. 1. 11, 12.) Here, however, he discovered at times such extraordinary courage, strength, and activity, as evidently proceeded from the Spirit of the Lord.

## PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

## V. 1—7.

We ought to make haste to keep God's commandments, but to wait patiently for the performance of his promises: and we should be thankful that he has a remnant of servants in all ages. These indeed often have trials, which are unknown to their fellow-creatures, unpitied by them, or incapable of relief from them; but they have no sorrows which the Lord does not pity, and none which he will not remove in the best time and manner: and he has various methods of shewing them the kind notice which he takes of them, till he sees good to relieve them.—Retirement is always friendly to communion with God, and his people are never less alone, than when alone as far as men are concerned.—Every promise implies a correspondent duty; in expecting the performance of the one, we must not neglect the other; and those who are peculiarly honoured of God, must be proportionably ready to deny themselves for his sake.—If parents desire that their children should be mortified to fleshly lusts, and devoted to God, they should be careful to be so themselves.—The parental duty commences even from the child's conception, and every thing should be attended to, which may conduce to its welfare of body and soul: especially prayer should be offered in its behalf. For an immortal creature is brought into existence, which will be happy or miserable for ever; and, being conceived in sin, it cannot be holy or happy, without the regenerating grace of God, and an interest in the great Redeemer.—We need also divine direction in respect of the education of our children, lest any of the rules of Scripture should be forgotten, mistaken, or neglected; that, being trained up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," there may be a well-grounded hope of their becoming useful to the church and to the world.—Happy is it, when married persons possess unreserved confidence in each other, and can converse freely together concerning their spiritual experiences and duties, that they may have the benefit of each other's counsel and prayers. The one may suggest hints and encouragements, which did not occur to the other; and those, who at some times, or in some respects, are the weakest, may at others prove the strongest and the wisest.—When we desire to know the will of God that we may do it, we should pray for instruction with the most unshaken assurance of its being granted: (*Note*, James i. 5—8:) but perhaps he may see good to teach us by means of our inferiors.

## V. 8—25.

True spiritual knowledge, grace, and consolation always excite desires, and dictate prayers, for further communications and displays of God's glory to our souls. Those,

whom he honours as instruments of good to us, we should honour likewise; yet not in any way derogatory to the glory of the Lord himself.—"Hospitality without grudging" to those who love his name, and a readiness to devote our substance to his glory, are always ornamental to the profession of godliness.—In our best meant actions we are prone to forget or to mistake the truths and precepts of the sacred Oracles, and need reminding of them.—A vain curiosity often supplants our proper attention to practical subjects, especially those which relate to our present duty: but we should be as willing to be ignorant of what the Lord is pleased to conceal, as to receive whatever he is pleased to teach us. (*Note*, Deut. xxix. 29.)—The name of our Lord is *Wonderful* and *Secret*, because it is *incomprehensible*; (*Notes*, Matt. xi. 25—27;) but by his wonderful works he makes himself known, as far as our instruction and encouragement require it, and further knowledge would only fill us with self-conceit. (*Note*, 1 Cor. viii. 1—3.) His chief display of himself is in the person of Jesus Christ, his co-equal Son; who, having offered on earth one sacrifice for our sins, and being risen from the dead, and ascended into heaven, presents with acceptance our spiritual sacrifices, when offered through faith in his name. Happy are we, when our hearts and affections ascend after the Saviour: we may then, with pleasure and admiration, contemplate the wonders of redeeming love; and every discovery of his glory will awe our souls into deeper reverence and humiliation. This, however, Satan will sometimes attempt to convert into terror and discouragement, while we compare the holiness and majesty of our God with our meanness and pollution. (*Notes*, Is. vi. 5. lvii. 15, 16.) But he will not cast off those who are humbly determined, if they must perish, to perish supplicating his mercy: having spared them when enemies, and taught them to value his salvation, he will answer their prayers, dispel their fears, and fulfil his largest promises. The gospel itself, and the means of grace afforded us, are hopeful tokens that the Lord favours us: but if we have been taught to love the gospel, and to fear nothing so much as coming short of the salvation of Christ; if we have learned to delight in his ordinances and commandments, and have received evident answers to our prayers; we may be sure that "the Lord has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."—When children possess health, with the use of their limbs, senses, and understandings, parents have abundant cause for gratitude: but most of all, when they give early indications, that the Holy Spirit is working upon their tender minds, and preparing them for the service of God. This let us in the first place desire, seek, and pray for; and may this blessing be widely bestowed upon the rising generation.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1—4. Many think, that Samson was

2 And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnath of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore

Gen. xxi. 21.  
xxiv 2, 3 xxxiv.  
4. xxxviii. 6  
2 Kings xiv 9.

3 Then his father and his mother said unto him, *Is there* never a woman among the daughters of <sup>a</sup>thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the <sup>a</sup>uncircumcised Philistines? And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me: for <sup>a</sup>she pleaseth me well.

Gen. xiii 8  
xxiv. 27.

Gen. xv. 18. Gen.  
xxxiv. 14. Ex.  
xxviii. 12-16.  
Deut. vii. 2, 3.  
1 Sam. xiv 6.  
xvi. 26, 36; xxxi.  
4. 2 Sam. i. 20.  
Heb. she is right  
in mine eyes.

4 But his father and his mother knew not that <sup>a</sup>it was of the LORD, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines: for at that time the Philistines <sup>a</sup>had dominion over Israel.

Josh. xi. 20  
1 Kings xii. 15.  
2 Kings vi. 33.  
2 Chr. x. 15. xxi.  
7. xxv. 20. Ps.  
cxv. 3.  
g xlii. i. xv. 11.  
Deut. xxviii 48

5 Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath, and came to the vineyards of Timnath: and behold a young lion roared <sup>a</sup>against him.

Heb. in meeting  
him.

6 And <sup>a</sup>the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and <sup>a</sup>he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and *he had* nothing in his hand: but <sup>a</sup>he told not his father or his mother what he had done.

h iii. 10. xi. 29.  
xiii. 25 1 Sam.  
xi. 6.  
i xv. 8. 15. xvi.  
20. 1 Sam. xvii.  
24-37. 36. Zech.  
iv 6. 1 John iii.  
8.  
k 1s. xlii. 2. Matt.  
xi 29

7 And he went down, and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.

Gen. xxi. 21.  
Matt. i. 20.

8 And after a time he returned <sup>a</sup>to

take her, and he turned aside to see the carcase of the lion; and behold *there was* a swarm of bees and honey in the carcase of the lion.

9 And he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them, that he had taken the honey out of the carcase of the lion.

10 ¶ So his father went down unto the woman: and Samson <sup>a</sup>made there a feast; for so used the young men to do.

m Gen. xxix. 22  
Matt. xxi. 2-4  
John ii. 9. Rev.  
xix. 9.

11 And it came to pass, when they <sup>a</sup>saw him, that they brought <sup>a</sup>thirty companions to be with him.

n 1 Sam. x. 23  
xvi. 6.

12 And Samson said unto them, I will now put forth <sup>a</sup>a riddle unto you; if ye can certainly declare it me within <sup>a</sup>the seven days of the feast, and find *it* out, then I will give you thirty <sup>a</sup>sheets and thirty <sup>a</sup>change of garments.

o Matt. ix. 15  
John iii. 29.

13 But if ye cannot declare *it* me, then shall ye give me thirty sheets and thirty change of garments. And they said unto him, Put forth thy riddle, that we may hear it.

p 1 Kings x. 1.  
Ps. xlix. 4. Prov.  
i. 6. Ez. xvii. 2.  
xx. 49. Matt.  
xxii. 13, 34. Luke  
xiv. 7. John xvi.  
29. 1 Cor. xiii.  
12. Marg.

14 And he said unto them, <sup>a</sup>Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness. And <sup>a</sup>they could not in three days expound <sup>a</sup>the riddle.

q Gen. xxix. 27.  
28.

r Or, shirts. Matt.  
xxvii. 28. Mark  
xiv. 51, 52.

s Gen. xiv. 22.  
2 Kings v. 8. 22  
Matt. vi 19.  
Jam. v. 2.

t Gen. iii. 6  
Deut. viii. 15, 16.  
1 Kings xvii. 6.  
2 Chr. xx. 2.  
25. 1s. liii 10-  
12. Rom. v. 3-5.  
viii. 37. 2 Cor.  
iv. 17. xii. 9, 10.  
Phil. i. 12-20.  
Heb. ii. 14, 15.  
xii. 10, 11. Jam.  
i. 2-4. 1 Pet. ii.  
24.

u Prov. xxiv. 7.  
Matt. xiii. 11.  
Acts viii. 31.

induced to contract this marriage by special direction from the Lord: such marriages not being *immoral* in themselves, but forbidden to the Israelites, to keep them separate from idolaters. (Note, Hos. i. 2, 3.) In this manner he was directed to seek occasion against the Philistines: yet he shewed his respect to his parents, by seeking their concurrence; who opposed his marriage as long as "they knew not that it was of the LORD." For the words translated, "she pleaseth me well," may be rendered "*it is right*," and considered as an intimation, that it was from God; upon which his parents consented and went with him.—But perhaps it is only meant, that it pleased God to leave Samson to follow his own inclinations, intending in his infinite wisdom to over-rule his misconduct for good to Israel; and that his parents consented because he was fully bent upon it. (Marg. Ref. f.)—*Uncircumcised*, &c. (3) Marg. Ref. e.

V. 5, 6. Samson, when at a distance from his parents, was assaulted by a young lion, which was come to its full strength and fierceness: yet, though unarmed, he rent it as a kid; because "the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him." But he did not mention the extraordinary exploit to his parents, either restrained by modesty, or

being afraid of exciting the jealousy of the Philistines. This was an earnest of his subsequent victories, not by human might or power, but by the Spirit of the Lord. (Note, Zech. iv. 4-7.)—Thus David slew a lion and a bear, before he killed Goliath and subdued the enemies of Israel: (Note, 1 Sam. xvii. 34-37:) and Jesus Christ, ere he entered upon his publick ministry, and on the cross before his ascension, overcame "the devil, that roaring lion, which walketh about seeking whom he may devour."

V. 8, 9. A swarm of bees had settled in the carcase of the lion, and collected honey there, which was a most unlikely place for that purpose; being, as might have been supposed, both inconvenient, and offensive to that delicate insect, which draws honey from the most odoriferous flowers and plants. This Samson found, when he turned aside to see the carcase, and perhaps again to thank God for his deliverance.—As every remains of a dead carcase of an unclean animal was polluting, it has been thought that Samson did not tell his parents where he found the honey, lest they should scruple to eat it: (Note, Lev. xi. 31:) though the extraordinary circumstances of the transaction satisfied him, that it might properly be done.

V. 10-14. When Samson, in conformity to custom,

15 And it came to pass, on the seventh day, that they said unto Samson's wife, <sup>a</sup>Entice thy husband, that he may declare unto us the riddle, <sup>x</sup>lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire: have ye called us to <sup>e</sup>take that we have? *is it not so?*

16 And Samson's wife wept before him, and said, <sup>y</sup>'Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people, and hast not told *it* me. And he said unto her, Behold, <sup>z</sup>'I have not told *it* my father nor my mother, and shall I tell *it* thee?

<sup>-</sup> Or, the rest of the seven days. 17 And she wept before him <sup>†</sup>the seven days, while their feast lasted: and it came to pass on the seventh day, that he told her, because <sup>a</sup>she lay sore

upon him; <sup>b</sup>and she told the riddle to <sup>b</sup>the children of her people.

18 And the men of the city said unto him, on the seventh day before the sun went down, What *is* sweeter than honey, and what *is* stronger than a lion? And he said unto them, If ye had not plowed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle.

19 And <sup>c</sup>the Spirit of the LORD <sup>c</sup>came upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and slew thirty men of them, and took their <sup>†</sup>spoils, and gave change <sup>†</sup>of garments unto them which expounded the riddle: and his anger was kindled, and he went up to his father's house.

20 But Samson's wife <sup>d</sup>was given to <sup>d</sup>his companion, whom he had used as <sup>e</sup>his friend.

celebrated his marriage-feast, the Philistines brought him thirty companions; professing respect, but probably placing them as a watch upon him, being in some degree aware of his great strength. To prevent perhaps a worse use of time, Samson proposed a *riddle* as a trial of ingenuity; and a wager with each of them, of a sheet, shirt, or other linen garment, and a change of raiment of all sorts, that they could not resolve it. The riddle, in its literal purport, meant no more, than that he had got honey, for food and pleasure, from the lion, which in its strength and fury was prepared to devour him. Yet this *explanation of the riddle* may be interpreted, as containing an emblem of more importance, and more hard to be understood, except by the teaching of God.—The victory, which Christ obtained over Satan, by means of his agonies and death, and his subsequent exaltation; the glory that redounded to the Father; and the spiritual advantages thence accruing to his people, may be shadowed forth in it.—The entrance of sin, the fall of man, and the ruin of the human race through the malice of Satan, will issue in *his* deeper misery, in the greater glory of God, and in the increased felicity of the redeemed, and of all holy creatures to all eternity.—The persecutions of the church have promoted its purity and prosperity. The trials, conflicts, and temptations of the Lord's people are productive of holiness and comfort to their souls in this world, and work for them an exceeding weight of glory in the next. The remains of indwelling sin, and even the falls of *real believers*, become *occasions* to them of deeper humility, more simple dependence on the Saviour, more ardent love and admiring gratitude, more compassion for their fellow sinners, more fitness for many kinds of service on earth, and greater meetness for the worship and occupations of the redeemed in glory. And if any abuse this truth, let them know, that they are not concerned in it; for *upright souls* are always rendered more watchful, humble, diligent, simple, compassionate, and fervent in prayer, by every false step which they make: at least no others give evidence that

they are believers.—Even death, that devouring monster, that king of terrors, being robbed of his sting and stripped of his horror, transmits the believer's soul to the realms of bliss, and makes way for the body itself being restored incorruptible, immortal, and glorious, to partake of endless felicity. In these and many other senses, "Out of the eater comes forth meat, and out of the strong, sweetness. (*Notes, Rom. v. 3—5. viii. 35—39. 2 Cor. iv. 13—18. Phil. i. 12—18. Jam. i. 2—4.*)

V. 15—17. The barbarity, insolence, and selfishness of the conduct of these Philistines, illustrate the misery of Israel's bondage under such tyrants.—Mr. Henry notes, that 'they ought not to lay wagers, who cannot bear to lose with better temper:' and we may add, that such violent passions and implacable resentments are the common effects of affronted pride and disappointed covetousness, in every kind and degree of gaming; and that it should be entirely avoided.—The *seventh day*, first mentioned (15), seems to have been the seventh day of the week, and the fourth of the feast; the remaining part of which Samson's wife, actuated by fear or attachment to her countrymen, spent in intreating him with tears to tell the riddle to her: and she at length prevailed. (*Notes, xv. 6. xvi. 6—21.*)

V. 18. *Plowed, &c.*] This is a proverbial expression. The Philistines could not have discovered the riddle of themselves, if they had not drawn it from Samson by tampering with his wife.

V. 19, 20. Samson found himself, by an immediate impulse of the Spirit of God, directed, emboldened, and assisted in this attack upon the enemies of Israel; which was fully justified by their public oppressions, without advertent to their treachery to him. (*Notes, xv. 1—5.*)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In contracting marriage, the senses are dangerous counsellors; beauty and wit are very doubtful recommendations; and wisdom, piety, and holiness ought principally

## CHAP. XV.

Samson, returning to visit his wife, finds her given to another, 1, 2. He sets fire, with foxes and fire-brands, to the corn of the Philistines; who burn his wife and her father, 3—6. Samson smites them, and retires to the rock Etam, 7, 8. The men of Judah, by his consent, deliver him bound to the Philistines; and he kills a thousand of them with the jawbone of an ass, 9—17. Being ready to perish by thirst, he cries to the Lord, who opens for him a fountain in Lehi, 18, 19. He judges Israel, 20.

**BUT** it came to pass within a while after, in the time of wheat-harvest, that Samson visited his wife with <sup>a</sup> a kid;

<sup>a</sup> Gen. xxxviii 17.  
Luke xv. 29.

to be regarded.—Next to the word of God, the concurrence of parents is generally requisite to render that relation honourable and comfortable.—But they ought to act with consideration and kindness; and if constrained to refuse their concurrence, they should give such convincing and important reasons, as may prove that their refusal springs from wisdom and affection, not from caprice and severity; from an unwillingness that their children should make an imprudent choice, not from any disposition to bind them against their will to a single life.—In no ordinary circumstances can there be any necessity for a person that professes godliness, to marry one who is manifestly irreligious: but the Lord can over-rule for the best of purposes those actions, which we must by no means imitate; his designs do not influence our conduct, unless he inform us of them; and his written word is our constant rule.—We are always exposed to danger of body and soul, both when alone and when in company; but nothing can hurt us except we wander from the path of duty. Even Satan, “that roaring lion,” may be effectually resisted, and completely overcome, if, in answer to the prayer of faith, the Spirit of God communicates his strength to our souls. By no other means can we subdue this enemy; and thus all his temptations shall eventually conduce to our benefit.—We often lose the comfort and the real credit of our best disputed conflicts with our spiritual enemies, in consequence of ostentation: and the special favours, which God bestows upon us, can be mentioned only on some occasions, to particular persons, and in great modesty, without savouring of vain glory: and we obtain many secret victories over temptation, for which we need repeatedly to bless God, but of which we cannot speak particularly to our nearest earthly friend.—We should be always ready to increase the comforts of others, by imparting to them our temporal good things; especially to parents and benefactors.—We enjoy the most sweetness from God’s goodness to us, when we most frequently turn aside to meditate, and to bless him on that account: and as one successful conflict prepares for another, so one season of peculiar mercy is an earnest of another.—It is almost impossible to associate with worldly people, without conforming to their vain customs: at best, even when evident evil is avoided in such company, we spend our time to no purpose; and are we not called to “redeem *our time*,” and to do all to the glory of God?—We

and he said, <sup>b</sup> I will go in to my wife into the chamber. But her father would not suffer him to go in. <sup>b</sup> Gen. vi. 4. xxix. 21.

2 And her father said, <sup>c</sup> I verily thought that thou hadst utterly hated her; therefore <sup>d</sup> I gave her to thy companion: is not her younger sister fairer than she? <sup>e</sup> take her, I pray thee, instead of her. <sup>c</sup> xlv. 13, 20. Acts xxvi. 9. <sup>d</sup> xiv. 20. Gen. xxxviii. 14. <sup>e</sup> Heb. let her be thine.

3 And Samson said concerning them, <sup>f</sup> Now shall I be more blameless than the Philistines, though I do them a displeasure. <sup>f</sup> Or, Now shall I be blameless from the Philistines though. xiv. 15.

4 And Samson went and caught

ought constantly to watch and pray against pride, anger, and covetousness, and to avoid every thing that gives force to these passions; for their effects are inconceivably dreadful when they acquire the ascendancy.—It is dangerous to be connected with those, who will not be satisfied with any measure of love or respect, except we will offend God or injure ourselves to oblige them. A worldly wife, or a worldly friend, is to a godly man as an enemy in the camp, who will watch every opportunity to betray him; and, by assiduity and perseverance, will more or less overcome his resolutions, and prevail with him to make such compliances, as will greatly injure his credit and comfort. (Notes, xvi. 6—21.) Nor can those connexions be comfortable or durable, where important secrets cannot be trusted without the danger of being divulged. Indeed Satan’s chief advantage against us arises from his correspondence with our deceitful hearts and inbred lusts.—But the wisest counsels of wicked men are very foolishness, and eventually all their gain is loss: they secure some worldly interest, and for it lose their lives or their souls!—We are naturally far more prone to be angry with those who have injured us, than to repent of our sins against God.—Imprudent connexions commonly terminate in speedy separations; nor are any more likely to asperse a man’s character, cheat him of his property, or defile his bed, than ungodly men who have been admitted to unmerited confidence. But happy are they, who feast upon the fruits of Christ’s conflicts and victories! all things shall work together for their good; and their sharpest trials on earth, yea, the severest agonies of death, shall prove the occasion of their loudest songs of triumphant joy and praise in heaven.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1, 2. (Notes, xix. 3, 4. *Esth.* ii. 1.) The anger of Samson, after a time, subsiding, and his affection reviving; he went to see his wife, taking with him a kid, on which to feast with her and her friends, and not knowing that she had been given to another. (xiv. 20.)—The Jewish writers relate, that she had become a proselyte before Samson married her; but the whole narrative militates against that opinion, especially the father’s answer on this occasion.

V. 3—5. Samson, being conscious that he was to be, in part, the deliverer of Israel from the Philistines, only

e Ps. lxxii. 10.  
Cant. ii. 15.  
Lam. v. 18.  
Or, torches

\* three hundred foxes, and took \* fire-brands, and turned tail to tail, and put a fire-brand in the midst between two tails.

f Ex. xxi. 6 2 Sam. xiv 30

5 And when he had set the brands on fire, 'he let *them* go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives.

g xii. 1 xiv. 15  
Prov xxii. 8  
1 Thes. iv. 6

6 Then the Philistines said, Who hath done this? and they answered, Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he had taken his wife, and given her to his companion. And the Philistines came up, <sup>s</sup> and burnt her and her father with fire.

h xiv. 4 19. Rom. xii. 19.

7 And Samson said unto them, <sup>h</sup> Though ye have done this, yet I will be avenged of you, and after that I will cease.

i Is. xxv. 10. lxxii. 3. 6.

8 And he <sup>i</sup> smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter: and he went down and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam.

9 ¶ Then the Philistines went up,

and pitched in Judah, and spread themselves in <sup>j</sup> Lehi.

j 17.

10 And the men of Judah said, Why are ye come up against us? and they answered, To bind Samson are we come up, to do to him as he hath done to us.

11 Then three thousand men of Judah <sup>†</sup> went to the top of the rock Etam, and said to Samson, Knowest thou not that the <sup>k</sup> Philistines are rulers over us? what is this *that* thou hast done unto us? and he said unto them, As they did unto me, so have I done unto them.

† Heb went down.

k xiii. 1. xiv 4.  
Deut xxviii. 13.  
47, 48.

12 And they said unto him, We are come down <sup>l</sup> to bind thee, that we may deliver thee into the hand of the Philistines. And Samson said unto them, Swear unto me that ye will not <sup>m</sup> fall upon me yourselves.

l Matt. xxvii. 2.  
Acts vii. 25.

m viii. 21. 1 Kings ii. 25. 34.

13 And they spake unto him, saying, No; but we will bind thee fast, and deliver thee into their hand: but surely we will not kill thee. And they bound him with two new cords, and brought him up from the rock.

waited for a fair occasion to declare against them. This was afforded him by the injurious treatment which he had received; and that was also a specimen of their conduct towards the Israelites when most submissive.—In the means which he employed, we must advert to the power of God, both in supplying them, and making them successful; which he did to mortify the pride, and punish the wickedness of the Philistines. Foxes were doubtless very numerous in those parts, and the people very expert in taking them; and probably Samson engaged assistants in procuring and preparing them. Being thus let go, they would hinder each other from gaining their holes in the woods, and would take shelter in the neighbouring corn-fields and vineyards: and the weather being dry, the corn ripe, and the fire kindled in many places at once, we may easily conceive that great destruction would very speedily be effected by this uncommon contrivance. (Note, vii. 16—22.)

V. 6. Samson's wife betrayed him, for fear of being burnt with fire; and thus brought that very death upon herself, for having by her treachery provoked Samson to this measure. (Note, xiv. 15—17.) In like manner the Jews crucified Christ, lest his claim to be their King should bring the Romans upon them; and by this conduct they brought that very calamity upon themselves. (Note, John xi. 47, 48.)

V. 7. The Philistines had indeed avenged Samson on those who had injured him; but they were instigated by hatred and dread of him, and not by any desire of doing justice: he therefore purposed effectually to avenge himself and his people upon them; and then, unless excited

by further injuries, he would desist from attacking them.

V. 8. The phrase, rendered "hip and thigh," has greatly perplexed critical expositors: but probably it means, that Samson, without any arms, attacked a great multitude of Philistines; and with his hips, or legs, and thighs, he threw them down, and then trode them to death. This he seems to have done on a mountain; and descending from it, he went and dwelt alone on the top of a rock: perhaps for retirement, that he might not be surprised by the Philistines, and because he did not choose to trust the Israelites.

V. 10, 11. The men of Judah had probably paid their stipulated tribute, and had given no cause of offence to their oppressors; and they wondered on what ground they came against them. They were sunk into an abject frame of spirit, and quietly endured to be in bondage to the Philistines; despairing of deliverance, or basely fearing the trouble and peril of attempting it: otherwise they would not have thus yielded up their champion. (Notes, Ex. ii. 13—15. 1 Sam. xiii. 3, 4.)

V. 12, 13. Samson quietly submitted to be bound by the men of Judah, (who were intentionally his murderers,) and to be delivered up to the Philistines: but he made an agreement with his countrymen, that they would not themselves fall upon him, lest he should be constrained to destroy them instead of their enemies; which he was unwilling to do, though so shamefully treated by them.—In all this he was a type of Christ, who in his retirement was rudely assaulted by the Jews, whom he could easily have destroyed, but would not: into their hands he surrendered himself, and they bound him, and delivered him up to the

14 And when he came unto Lehi, the Philistines shouted against him: and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him; and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands.

15 And he found a new jaw-bone of an ass, and put forth his hand and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith.

16 And Samson said, With the jaw-bone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jaw of an ass have I slain a thousand men.

17 And it came to pass when he had made an end of speaking, that he cast

away the jaw-bone out of his hand, and called that place Ramath-lehi.

18 And he was sore athirst, and called on the Lord and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant: and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised?

19 But God clave an hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water thereout; and when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived. Wherefore he called the name thereof En-hakkore, which is in Lehi unto this day.

20 And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

Romans to be crucified; though the bonds even of death could not hold him, or prevent his victories and triumphs. (Notes, John xviii. 1—9. Acts ii. 22—24.)

V. 14—17. When “the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon Samson,” his bonds were soon broken: and then the jaw-bone of the contemptible ass (the only weapon which came in his way,) became more formidable than sword or spear, and a thousand men fell before him, being alike unable to resist or to escape! (Note, 8.) Elated with this surprising victory, he seems to have celebrated his own praise, instead of giving glory to God.—The original word for an ass, signifies also a heap: and this circumstance gives a propriety and animation to the passage, which cannot be preserved in a translation. “Ramath-lehi” signifies the lifting up of the jaw-bone. The name Lehi, before used, referred to this event by an anticipation of the historian. (9. 14.)

V. 18, 19. Samson at this moment felt his weakness in himself, as before he had shewn his strength when assisted by the Lord. But his urgent distress reminded him of his danger; and led him to thank God for his deliverance, and to pray unto him for present relief: and then in the place where the jaw lay, or in Lehi, (marg.) a spring was supernaturally opened, by which he was relieved and preserved: so that he called the place “En-hakkore,” or the well of him that cried. (Marginal reading and Marg. Ref.)—Christ too in his grand conflict with our enemies, thirsted, but had no well opened for his relief: for he not only “trode the wine-press alone,” as Samson did on this occasion; but he also drank the cup of the wrath of God for us, which Samson could not have done. (Notes, Ps. lxix. 21. John xix. 28—30.)

V. 20. After this event Samson was submitted to, as judge, by the people.—From this we may suppose that he acted as a magistrate in civil concerns, and not merely as Israel’s defender against the Philistines. (Preface to Judges.) If Samson was not born before the forty years of oppression by the Philistines began, his death must have occurred much nearer to the end of them, than some learned men suppose. Yet the twenty years during which he judged Israel, are said to have been “in the days of the Philistines,” which intimated that Israel’s deliverance was in-

complete, and their enemies very formidable; no doubt because they had not duly repented, and returned to the Lord.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In every contest he who first proposes reconciliation gains the noblest victory; especially when this is done by the offended party and the superior relation: nay, such concessions adorn the characters even of those who are most renowned for courage. (Note, viii. 1—3.)—Where the knowledge of God and of his law are wanting, the most ordinary transactions of life will be conducted on such principles, as tend to confusion and licentiousness.—Wicked men, conscious of their own base intentions, suspect the worst concerning others, or pretend to do so to cover their own injustice: and their proposals, made under the guise of peace, are no less to be dreaded than their open enmity. It is therefore best to avoid all fellowship with them. (Notes, 2 Cor. vi. 14—18. Eph. v. 8—14.)—We should endeavour to live at peace with all men; and in case that be impracticable, to avoid every thing which may render us justly chargeable with the consequences of contention: and before the Lord proceeds to execute vengeance, he often manifests the inexcusable wickedness of his enemies.—When plenty is acquired by rapine, and abused by the possessors in sensual indulgence, they may reasonably expect to have it taken from them: nor does it require much ability to be an incendiary, and to kindle the fire of discord in families, churches, and nations. Indeed, such scourges are generally instigated by one more subtle and malicious than themselves; and they may expect to be consumed in the fires which they kindle. But in the hands of those whom God employs, the most contemptible instruments are rendered successful.—They who sin to avoid suffering will bring troubles upon themselves, against which they can have no protector.—Heartless professors of religion, who value the friendship and fear the frown of the world, and who are the slaves of sin and Satan, censure, hate, and betray those, who call them to liberty in the service of God: to save themselves in times of persecution, they often apostatize and turn betrayers and accusers of the brethren; (Matt. xxiv. 9, 10;) and in their opinion, the best services, and most hazardous endeavours to do

## CHAP. XVI.

Samson, ensnared by a harlot at Gaza, is in imminent danger, but escapes by carrying off the gates of the city, 1—3. He loves Delilah; who bribed by the Philistines, repeatedly, but in vain, tries to discover in what his strength lay, 4—15. Overcome by her importunity he discloses the secret; and the Philistines, shaving his head while asleep, bind and imprison him, having put out his eyes, 16—21. His hair grows again, and his strength returns, 22. The Philistines, at the feast of Dagon, make sport of him: he pulls down the house, and dies with great multitudes of his enemies, 23—30. He is buried by his friends, 31.

B. C. 1120.

a Gen. x. 19. Josh. xv. 47.

b Heb. a woman an harlot.

c Gen. xxxviii. 16—18. Ezra ix. 1, 2.

d 1 Sam. xix. 11. xxiii. 26. Ps. cxviii. 10—12.

e Acts ix. 24.

f 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33.

**T**HEN went Samson to <sup>a</sup>Gaza, and saw there <sup>b</sup>an harlot, <sup>c</sup>and went in unto her.

2 And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they compassed him in, and laid wait for

him all night in the gate of the city, and were <sup>d</sup>quiet all the night, saying, In the morning when it is day we shall <sup>e</sup>kill him.

3 And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight and <sup>f</sup>took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, <sup>g</sup>bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron.

4 ¶ And it came to pass afterward, that <sup>h</sup>he loved a woman <sup>i</sup>in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.

5 And <sup>j</sup>the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, <sup>k</sup>Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to <sup>l</sup>afflict him: and <sup>m</sup>we will

d xv. 18. Matt. xxi. 38. xxvii. 1. Acts xxiii. 15.

e Ps. cvii. 16. Is. lxiii. 1—5. Mic. ii. 13. Acts ii. 24.

f Heb. with the bar.

g 1 Kings xi. 1. Neh. xiii. 26. Prov. xxii. 2.

h 11. xxvii. 22.

i 1 Cor. x. 6.

j Or, by the brook.

k 11. 8. Josh. xiii. 8. 1 Sam. xxix. 6.

l xiv. 15. Prov. ii. 16—19. v. 3—11.

m 20. vi. 24—26.

n vii. 21—23.

o Or, hurrible.

p xvii. 2. Gen. xxxviii. 16.

q Num. xxii. 17.

r 18. Mic. vii. 8.

s Matt. xxvii. 16.

t 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

good, deserve reproach, condemnation, and punishment. But we shall not be discouraged by these things, when we consider how the Saviour was treated; we shall see how we ought to act, when we observe his meekness, patience, and dying prayers for his crucifiers; and we shall discard our fears, when we consider his triumphs, his ascension, his glory, and his promise that they who “suffer with him” shall also be glorified together.—Whenever we are peculiarly favoured of God, pride will lead us to rob him of his glory, unless we be very watchful: hence every comfort must be counterbalanced with a cross; and the more any man is made useful to others, the more he generally needs mortifying experiences of his own weakness, folly, and unworthiness. (Notes, 2 Kings xx. 12—19. 2 Chr. xxxii. 24—26. 2 Cor. xii. 7—10.) By such painful discipline we are taught to know our own place, and to feel our entire dependence on the Lord, and our continual obligations to him. When, however, our trials have produced the proper effect, they shall be removed, and become sources of gratitude and comfort, and excite us to raise fresh monuments of the goodness of God.—But in this world our enemies will continue powerful, and our victories incomplete: ere long we shall be made more than conquerors, and render perfect and eternal hallelujahs.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1—3. Hitherto Samson’s character, though uncommon, has appeared illustrious: and considering him as raised up to deliver Israel, and instructed, as well as assisted, to do it in that unprecedented manner, which best tended to mortify the Philistines, and to manifest the mighty power of God; we may fairly vindicate most of his past conduct, and safely imitate much of it: and notwithstanding many infirmities, we have hitherto met with nothing inconsistent with his character as a perpetual Nazarite. (Note, xiii. 4, 5.) But in this chapter we find him behaving in so wicked and infatuated a manner, that many have been led to question whether he were in-

deed a really pious man. The apostle however numbers him among those, “who obtained a good report through faith;” (Heb. xi. 32, 33. 39:) and by duly considering the doctrines and examples of Scripture, the deceitfulness of the human heart, the artifices of Satan, and the methods in which the Lord frequently deals with his people; we may interpret this ‘riddle of a man,’ as some have called him, and may learn useful lessons from his history, which perplexes some, and emboldens many to cavil and object.—Confiding in his great strength, and the dread of him with which the Philistines had been seized, he boldly entered Gaza, one of their chief cities, (on what account we know not,) and there he went in unto a harlot. This disgraceful circumstance was soon made known to the inhabitants; who, fearful of attacking him, laid wait for him all night, and were probably forming some stratagem, or sending for some re-inforcements, that in the morning they might assault and kill him. But at midnight (perhaps awakened by remorse of conscience,) he arose; and the Lord, though greatly offended, was pleased “to work for his own name’s sake;” and by his assistance, in contempt of the guards, he seized on the gate, with the posts, which he violently dragged out of the ground, and the bar also, and carried them several miles to the top of a hill, no one venturing to interrupt or seize him.—Thus our Lord, when in the likeness of sinful flesh, after his crucifixion between two thieves, arose as a conqueror over death and every foe; and, as it were, broke open and carried away with him the very gates of the grave, while he ascended into heaven as the first-fruits of the resurrection.

V. 4. It is not certain whether Delilah was a Philistine, or a licentious Israelite; but Samson indulged a base affection for her, and most shamefully wasted his time in her company, perhaps emboldened by his impunity in the foregoing instance.—Some think he had married her; but this is not intimated, nor is it probable. Her name implies a consumer, or wasting, which is very apposite.

V. 5. The princes of the five chief cities in Philistia

give thee every one of us eleven hundred *pieces* of silver.

k Ps. vii. 2. Prov. vi. 26. vii. 21. xlii. 14. xxi. 28. Jer. ix. 2-5. Mic. vii. 2-5.

6 And Delilah said to Samson, <sup>k</sup> Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength *lieth*, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee.

l 1 Sam. xix. 17. xxi. 2, 3. xxvii. 10. Prov. xii. 19. xvii. 7. Rom. iii. 8. Gal. vi. 7. Col. iii. 9.

7 And Samson said unto her, <sup>l</sup> If they bind me with seven <sup>\*</sup>green withs that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as <sup>†</sup>another man.

m Or, new cords. Heb. moist. † Heb. one.

8 Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven green withs which had not been dried, and she <sup>m</sup> bound him with them.

m Ec. vii. 26.

9 Now *there were* men lying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber. And she said unto him, The Philistines *be* upon thee, Samson. And he brake the withs, as a thread of tow is broken when it <sup>†</sup>toucheth the fire. So his strength was not known.

n Heb. smelleth. Ps. lvi. 9.

10 And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: <sup>n</sup> now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound.

o 1. 13. 15-17. Prov. xxiii. 7. 8. xxiv. 28. Ec. xxxiii. 31. Luke xxi. 48. Prov. xiii. 3. 5. xxix. 26. Eph. iv. 25.

11 And he said unto her, <sup>o</sup> If they

bind me fast with new ropes <sup>†</sup>that never were occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another man.

Heb. wherewith work hath not been done.

12 Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said unto him, The Philistines *be* upon thee, Samson. And *there were* liers-in-wait abiding in the chamber. And he brake them from off his arms like a thread.

13 And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web.

14 And she fastened *it* with the pin, and said unto him, The Philistines *be* upon thee, Samson. And he awaked out of his sleep, and <sup>p</sup> went away with the pin of the beam and with the web.

p Ezra ix. 13, 14. Ps. cvi. 48.

15 And she said unto him, <sup>q</sup> How canst thou say, I love thee, <sup>r</sup> when thine heart *is* not with me? thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength *lieth*.

q xiv. 16. Prov. ii. 16. v. 3-14. Gen. xxix. 20. Dent. vi. 5. 1 Sam. xv. 13. 14. 2 Sam. xvi. 17. Prov. xxii. 26. Cant. vii. 6. 7. John xiv. 15. 21-24. xv. 19. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. 1 John ii. 16, 16. v. 3.

soon heard of Samson's conduct, and formed a plan for his ruin. By promising Delilah about six hundred pounds sterling, to be made up by equal sums from each of them, they induced her to employ all her insinuation to find out the cause of his supernatural strength; which they supposed to depend on some observance, that he might be induced to neglect: and when in consequence his strength should fail him, they purposed to avenge themselves on him. They seem to have intimated to Delilah, that they only meant to *afflict* him, that he might not continue formidable; but not to kill him. Yet their dread of him was so great, that they durst not, on any advantage, attempt to seize him, till satisfied that his great strength was departed!

V. 6-8. This artful woman would no doubt propose the question, as a matter of mere curiosity; and would couch it in such terms, accompany it with such blandishments, and urge it at such times, as were most likely to prevail. (xiv. 16, 17.) Samson however seems to have had some suspicion, that she desired to pry into this important secret with no good design; yet instead of leaving her, or giving her a direct refusal, he endeavoured to amuse her by an evasive answer, or rather by a direct falsehood! He knew that his strength was immediately from God, who had constituted him a perpetual Nazarite, of which his hair was the token: but if he renounced his Nazarite's character by shaving his head, the Lord would depart from him, and he would become as other men. He was not at first so infatuated, as to disclose the secret; but he was taken in Satan's net, and was sure to be every moment

more and more entangled. (Notes, Prov. ii. 19. v. 4-9. vii. 26. P. O. Prov. ii. 10-22. v. 1-14.)

V. 9. Samson's infatuation was very great: but it cannot be conceived, that he would afterwards have fallen asleep in Delilah's lap, if he had at this time *seen* the Philistines in the chamber prepared to seize him. We may suppose therefore that they waited every time in some adjacent room, or closet, to see whether he was able to break his bonds: and when they found his strength was not departed, they kept close; while Delilah artfully turned the matter off as a jest, which she put on him to discover whether he had told her the truth or not.

V. 10-14. These repeated attempts of Delilah must have satisfied Samson that she intended his ruin, had not "whoredom taken away his heart," and made him senseless and brutish.—It is probable, that some time intervened between each attempt; and that she took the most favourable opportunities for making them: but those who say, she made him drink wine, that he might be heavy with sleep, forget that this would have forfeited the privilege of his being a perpetual Nazarite, as really as shaving his head did. (Notes, xiii. 4, 5. Num. vi. 3-5.) Doubtless he supposed himself entirely alone with her; and each attempt seems to have been made when he was asleep. (Notes, 2 Sam. xi. 1-5. Matt. xxvi. 40, 41.)—It is not certain how his hair was fastened in the web; but this evasion came nearer the discovery of the important secret, than any of the others.

V. 15. Delilah pretended to discredit all Samson's professions of love for her, so long as he refused to give her this peculiar proof of it. He had sacrificed his honour

<sup>a</sup> Prov. vii. 21—  
23, 26, 27. Luke  
xi. 8. xviii. 5.

<sup>b</sup> Heb. shortened  
Job xxi. 4.  
marg. Jon. iv.  
9. Mark xiv. 34.  
<sup>c</sup> Prov. xxiii. 11.  
Mic. vii. 5.

<sup>u</sup> xiii. 5. Num. vi.  
5. Acts xviii. 18.

16 And it came to pass, when <sup>a</sup>she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him so that his soul was <sup>b</sup>vexed unto death;

17 That he told her 'all his heart, and said unto her, <sup>c</sup>"There hath not come a razor upon mine head; for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb: if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.

18 And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, <sup>d</sup>"Come up this once; for he hath shewed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and <sup>e</sup>'brought money in their hand.

<sup>z</sup> Is. lxii. 9. Prov.  
xviii. 8. Jer. ix.  
4—6.

<sup>7</sup> 5. Num. xxii. 7.  
1 Kings xxi. 20.  
Matt. xxvi. 15.  
Eph. v. 5. 1 Tim.  
vi. 10.

conscience, interest, and every other valuable object, to his passion for her: but while he had one reserve, she would not be satisfied. Such absolute affection cannot be placed on any creature without idolatry; but it is that very love, which the Lord justly requires of us, when he commands us to *give him our heart*: (Notes, Ex. xx. 3. Prov. xxiii. 26 :) nor will he accept of us while there is one reserve, and while we deliberately refuse to part with any worldly object for his sake, or to yield him any service to which he calls us. Had Abraham peremptorily refused to sacrifice his beloved Isaac, the Lord might have said, "How canst thou say, I love thee, when thy heart is not with me?" For the true love of the infinitely glorious God, subdues, regulates, or subordinates, every other affection; and is alone *absolute and unreserved*. (Notes, Deut. vi. 5. Matt. x. 37—39.)

V. 16. *Vexed unto death.*] 'He was weary of life, ... and unconcerned what became of him.' Bp. Patrick. What an infatuation was this, that when Samson was incessantly and intolerably teased to do what he knew to be not only wicked, but foolish in the extreme, he had not resolution to depart from his seducer! (Notes, Gen. xxxix. 8—10. 1 Kings xi. 1—8. Prov. vii. 6—23. P. O.)

V. 17—21. To rebuke and severely correct Samson for his heinous offences, the Lord was pleased to leave him to be infatuated almost beyond conception; and thus he was prevailed upon to disclose the secret to his infamous paramour. Probably his manner of speaking, as well as the plain and satisfactory account which he gave of his supernatural strength, convinced Delilah, that he had now told the whole truth; and she sent an earnest message to the lords of the Philistines, as one that feared lest, after the previous disappointments, they should not credit her, and she should lose the stipulated reward. (5. Notes, Matt. xxvi. 14—16. 1 Tim. vi. 6—10.)—It seems, that after Samson had been shaven, she made trial of his strength by putting him to pain; as it is said that "she began to

19 And <sup>a</sup>she made him sleep upon her knees: and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him.

20 And she said, The Philistines <sup>b</sup>be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, <sup>c</sup>"I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that <sup>d</sup>the LORD was departed from him.

21 But the Philistines took him, <sup>e</sup>and <sup>f</sup>'put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and <sup>g</sup>'bound him with fetters of brass; and he did <sup>h</sup>'grind in the prison-house.

22 ¶ Howbeit, 'the hair of his head began to grow again, <sup>i</sup>'after he was shaven.

<sup>a</sup> 3. 9. 14. Deut.  
xxxii. 30. Is.  
xlii. 25. Hos. vii.  
9.

<sup>b</sup> Num. xiv. 9.  
42, 43. Josh. vii.  
12. 1 Sam. xvi.  
14. xviii. 12  
xxviii. 14—16  
2 Chr. xv. 2.  
Is. lix. 1, 2. Jer.  
ix. 23, 24. Matt.  
xvii. 16, 20. 2 Cor.  
iii. 5.

<sup>c</sup> Prov. v. 22. xiv.  
14. Jer. ii. 19.

<sup>d</sup> Heb. bored.  
2 Kings xxv. 7.  
2 Chr. xxxiii. 11.  
Ps. cvii. 10—12.  
Calix. 8.

<sup>e</sup> Ex. xii. 5. Is.  
xlvii. 2. Matt.  
xxiv. 41.

<sup>f</sup> Lev. xxvi. 44.  
Deut. xxxii. 36.  
Ps. cvi. 44, 45.  
cvii. 13, 14.

<sup>g</sup> Or, as when he  
was shaven.

"afflict him." For the Philistines, till satisfied that his strength was actually departed, dared no more approach him even when asleep, than they would have approached a sleeping lion. But it is wonderful, that the man who shaved him was restrained from attempting his life; and his preservation can be ascribed to nothing but the immediate power of God.—At length, however, his enemies ventured from their concealment, seized on their prey, and having put out his eyes, and bound him in strong fetters, preserved him as a monument of their victory, and made him drudge in hard labour. (Marg. Ref. d, e. Note, 2 Kings xxv. 6, 7.) To all this he could make no effectual resistance, for he found that "the LORD was departed from him."—What a change was this! To what a wretched and disgraceful situation had sin reduced this mighty judge of Israel, who before was himself as an army! Had his head been shaven without his fault, the case would have been different: but his whole conduct had been as great a contempt of the favour, glory, and authority of God, as if he had in disdain cut off his Nazarite's hair with his own hands; and therefore he was constrained to endure the dreadful effects of his folly. (Note, Prov. xxiii. 27, 28.)

V. 22. Samson's afflictions seem to have been the means of bringing him to deep repentance: (Notes, 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11—13 :) so that, through the loss of his bodily sight, the eyes of his understanding were opened to perceive his own madness and wickedness; and, by depriving him of his bodily strength, the Lord was pleased to renew his spiritual strength. Then, it must be supposed, he would humble himself before God, and seek his merciful forgiveness, and not seek in vain. In the mean while his hair grew, perhaps faster than usual; as an indication that the Spirit of the Lord was returning to him, and that he would soon recover his extraordinary strength. But the Philistines, having blinded, fettered, and imprisoned him, were under no further apprehensions on that account.

23 Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together, for to offer a great sacrifice unto <sup>g</sup> Dagon their god, and to rejoice: for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand.

24 And when the people saw him, they <sup>h</sup> praised their god: for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, <sup>i</sup> which slew many of us.

25 And it came to pass, when <sup>j</sup> their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison-house; and he made <sup>k</sup> them sport. And they set him between the pillars.

26 And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me

that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them.

27 Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines *were* there; and *there were* upon <sup>l</sup> the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport.

28 And Samson <sup>m</sup> called unto the LORD and said, O LORD God! remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, <sup>n</sup> that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.

29 And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and <sup>o</sup> on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left.

<sup>g</sup> 1 Sam. v. 2—5.  
Jer. ii. 11. Mic.  
iv. 5. Rom. i. 23  
—25 1 Cor. viii.  
4. 5. x. 20.

<sup>h</sup> Dent. xxxii. 27.  
Is. xxxvii. 20.  
Ez. xx. 14. Dan.  
v. 4. 23. Hab. i.  
16. Rev. xi. 10.

<sup>i</sup> Heb. and who  
multiplied *our*  
sins. xv. 8. 16.

<sup>j</sup> Is. 27. xviii. 20.  
xix. 6. 9. 2 Sam.  
xiii. 28. 1 Kings  
xx. 12. Esth. iii.  
15. Is. xlii. 13.  
Dan. v. 2. 3.

<sup>k</sup> Matt. xiv. 6, 7.  
Dan. v. 2. 3.

<sup>l</sup> Heb. *before*  
them.  
<sup>m</sup> Job xxx. 9, 10.  
Ps. xxxv. 15, 16.  
Is. xii. 26.  
Prov. xxiv. 17.  
18. Mic. vii. 8—  
10. Matt. xxvi.  
67, 68. xxvii. 29.  
29—44. Heb. xi.  
10.

<sup>l</sup> Is. 51. Dent.  
xxii. 8. Josh. ii.  
8. 2 Sam. xi. 2.

<sup>m</sup> 2 Chr. xx. 12.  
Ps. i. 15. xci. 15.  
cxvi. 4. Heb. xi.  
32.  
<sup>n</sup> Ps. lxxiv. 18, 22.  
Jer. xv. 15.

<sup>o</sup> v. 31. Ps. lviii.  
10, 11. cxliii. 12.  
2 Tim. iv. 14.  
Rev. vi. 10.

<sup>o</sup> Or, *he leaned on*  
them.

V. 23, 24. This was either some occasional festival, appointed by the lords of the Philistines in order to celebrate their victory over Samson, or an annual festival in honour of Dagon, observed on that account with the greater solemnity: and when they had offered the sacrifice, they met together to feast and to divert themselves, either in the temple of Dagon, or as some think in a theatre erected for such uses. On this occasion the Philistines renewed their triumph over Samson, who probably had been preserved for that purpose, and was exposed to publick view: and they also presumed to celebrate the triumph of Dagon their god over JEHOVAH the God of Israel; as if by the help of their idol they had prevailed against the judge of Israel, who formerly by the help of JEHOVAH had been victorious over them. But the very language of their joy shews how very much they had dreaded him. (Notes, 1 Sam. v. Dan. v. 1—9. 18—28.)

V. 25. Samson had been shewn to the people before (24): but now he was brought before the rulers of the nation, who diverted themselves amidst their feasting, by mocking his abject misery, and cruelly endeavouring to render him contemptible.—Thus Christ, being apprehended and bound by his enemies, was insulted by the council and rulers, as well as by the servants and people and soldiers. (Notes, Ps. lxix. 10—12. Matt. xxvi. 63—68. xxvii. 39—44.)

V. 26. The *main weight* of this building rested upon two pillars in the centre, very near together, according to the method of building in some parts of the world; and against these Samson, as if wearied, desired leave to lean and rest himself.

V. 27. All the principal persons of the nation were assembled within this building, whether temple or theatre; while about three thousand others were mounted upon the flat roof, looking through apertures perhaps made for that purpose, to enjoy the cruel pleasure of insulting over their fallen enemy! (Note, Prov. xvii. 5.)

V. 28, 29. The triumph of the Philistines was that of Dagon; but the cause of Samson was that of Israel and of JEHOVAH. (Notes, 1 Kings xviii. 18—20. 36—39.) As the judge of Israel, he was divinely appointed to be an avenger of their enemies: but for his transgression he had been *justly* delivered into their hands; and they had not only *cruelly* treated him, but impiously blasphemed the Lord himself. In ordinary cases we may hope for the conversion and salvation of our fellow sinners; and therefore we are commanded to forgive them, and do good to and pray for every one of them. But for the same reason that Satan and his angels, being the incurable enemies of God, are the objects of our allowed abhorrence; we should be required to detest any individual on earth, whom we certainly knew to be the object of God's final hatred: and in a future state, when sinners will no longer be under a dispensation of mercy, we shall rejoice in the destruction of all his enemies. (Notes, 2 Tim. iv. 14, 15. Rev. vi. 9—11. xix. 1—6.) Samson's prayer was both dictated and answered by God himself; nor does it appear that it could have been known, except by immediate revelation. He knew that, in this extraordinary case, it was right he should avenge the cause of God and of Israel; and also that he should desire to execute the vengeance of God upon them for their despicable cruelty to him.—'If this had proceeded from a spirit of personal revenge, God would not have heard it; (for he doth not love to gratify men's passions:)' but that is a proof, that this desire proceeded from God, (as St. Austin understands it,) who intended to punish the Philistines for oppressing Israel, as well as abusing Samson, and depriving him of his eyes.' Bp. Patrick.—Nor is Samson to be accused of *self-murder*, with which some have charged him; for he did not seek his own death, but Israel's deliverance, and the destruction of their enemies: and there is not the least intimation, that he was impatient under his sufferings; though in accomplishing his purpose, he was willing to lay down his life with the Philistines,

30 And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with *all his* might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that *were* therein. So the dead which he slew at his death, were more than *they* which he slew in his life.

31 Then his brethren, and all the house of his father came down and took him, and brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Esh-taol, in the burying-place of Manoah his father. And he judged Israel twenty years.

There is a very great difference between rushing uncalled into the presence of God, out of proud impatience, rebellion, and contempt of life, when it is made miserable by a person's own misconduct, and infidel disregard of future and eternal consequences; and being willing to lay down life for the honour of God, and the welfare of his people: though the circumstances, into which one adventures, be as certainly fatal, as the means by which another murders himself. For a man is no more deemed a self-murderer, who sacrifices his life for the good of his country in the field of battle, than he is deemed a murderer of others, who in a just war slays the enemies of his country.

V. 30, 31. The numbers, who were within and upon the house when it fell, of course would occasion great slaughter: but we must ascribe to the same power, as enabled Samson to throw down the building, the decisive destruction which it caused.—Thus Samson died in bonds and among the Philistines, as an awful rebuke for his sins: but no doubt he died penitent, and had not his future portion with them; and the effects of his death typified those of the death of Christ, who, by voluntarily laying down his life among transgressors, subverted the foundations of Satan's kingdom, and provided for the deliverance of his people.—By this blow the princes of the Philistines were destroyed, their government was unhinged, their power crushed, and their courage daunted; so that they made no opposition to Samson's relations, when they went to fetch his body to be buried among his people.—Thus the body of Christ also was, without opposition, given to his friends, that it might be honourably interred. (*Note, Matt. xxvii. 57—61.*)—The name *Samson* seems to signify a *little sun*: and according to this allusion, he arose upon Israel after a suitable pre-intimation to his parents. During the morning of his life he shone very bright; but towards the evening he was greatly obscured by clouds: yet when setting, he burst through the gloom, and shone with more splendour than ever. So Jesus, our long expected "Sun of righteousness," arose upon Israel and upon the earth: after shining with glorious and benign lustre during his life, he was obscured by the thickest clouds just before his setting: but when he cried out "It is finished,...and gave up the ghost," he shone forth with mild, but most glorious splendour, and died a triumphant conqueror. In very many respects, however, he differed from Samson; especially, as he died praying for his murderers, and arose again to complete the redemption of his people.—Samson seems to have died young, not much above forty years of age, and to have left no family.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—15.

Nothing, but evident duty, should prevail with us to venture into those places, where bad examples and licen-

tious characters abound. And even then, we should go with fear and trembling; earnestly beseeching God to "turn away our eyes from beholding vanity," to preserve our hearts from every sinful desire, and to strengthen us to resist every temptation.—Whenever we become unwatchful and self-confident, we are near some humiliating fall: the roving eye readily admits the licentious desire into the heedless heart; and "lust being conceived, sin is brought forth," and misery ensues.—The blandishments of beautiful women have often proved most dangerous temptations, even to pious men: (*Notes, Neh. xiii. 23—30. Prov. vii. 26:*) and Satan would rather see the active and useful servant of God, yielding to the enticements of a harlot, and sleeping in Delilah's lap, than boldly venturing the tyrant's rage, and enduring the fiery furnace. Those, who are captivated in this manner, must speedily be exposed to the deepest shame and the most imminent danger. Their reputation, strength, and usefulness will be torn from them; they will betray the cause which they should have served; and their enemies will insult and triumph, and be hardened in prejudices and revilings against religion. The *outward* peril, which attends such forbidden intercourse, is generally so great, that nothing but blind infatuation can induce men to venture upon it: but who can tell the machinations of the powers of darkness against those, who are stupidly indulging their lusts, and sleeping in the very jaws of destruction?—How lamentable is it to consider, that the goodness of God which preserves men from the immediate effects of their folly, is generally abused into an encouragement to future crimes! for every sinful propensity is strengthened by indulgence. So that even believers are seldom duly humbled for their sins, till they taste the bitter effects of them; and therefore it is eventually better to be chastened with sharpness when they first offend, than to escape with impunity.—Those who have not resolution to give a decided and explicit denial to improper requests, or to flee from their tempters, will soon be induced to equivocate and even to speak direct lies, with which they will afterwards be reproached: and if it be so very difficult, in some instances, to deny others, who have frequent access to us, and great influence over us, what must *self-denial* in many cases be? (*Notes, Matt. xvi. 24—28. Tit. ii. 11, 12.*)—Companions in iniquity can have no good reasons for trusting one another; and they who betray the cause of God, have no ground to expect any thing else, than to be betrayed by their fellow-creatures: for such as are enslaved to one lust, must not wonder to find their companions under the dominion of another.—Unworthy of a man, and still more of a believer, is that *love*, which is placed on a worthless object on account of external embellishments, and for the sake of animal gratification; while conscience, honour, and every noble purpose of the soul, are sacrificed to it. When a man is thus

## CHAP. XVII.

Micah an Ephraimite steals money from his mother, which he restores; and she makes images of it, 1—4.

"bound in the chain of his own sins," he seems to lose even common sense; and no wickedness in the object of his idolatrous affections can make him sensible of his folly and danger, or willing to renounce the base attachment. This is indeed a "deep ditch," into which many *great* men, and even some *good* men, have fallen, but from which few have escaped; and those by a miracle of mercy, and with the loss of almost every thing, except their souls. Whatever a man has already sacrificed to such a criminal passion, still more will be required; no denial will be taken, no bounds assigned to artful and interested importunity, until he has ruined himself and all those who are or ought to be dear to him: for assiduity, dissimulation, and incessant blandishment will overcome the strongest resolutions, and induce compliance with the most unreasonable and ruinous demands; and all counsels, warnings, and past experiences are in this case ineffectual. On this Delilah's lap thousands are lulled into so sound a sleep, that nothing but the flames of hell can awake them!

## V. 16—31.

Repeated deliverances, if men are not by them made sensible of their folly, and brought to repentance, only increase guilt, and make way for more aggravated misery: and if the Lord be provoked to leave sinners to themselves, and to give them up to the lusts of their own hearts; Satan will soon blind and enslave them, and employ them in his basest drudgery.—Every expectation of deliverance or assistance from God, while men are committing known sins, must be vain and presumptuous. They may think to "go forth as at other times:" but they will find their locks shorn, and their strength lost, because "the Lord is departed from them." Nay, if ministers, with the guilt of unrepented sin upon their consciences, continue to preach and administer ordinances with the greatest regularity; their exertions will generally fail of the wonted efficacy, and Satan will disregard their feeble efforts. But it is most lamentable, when this is observable to others, while they themselves seem not at all sensible of the awful change. What in that case can be expected, but that the enemy should blind and enslave them more and more?—Indeed, though the Lord again and again deliver his offending people, in the most extreme danger; yet if they presume upon his goodness, he will severely punish them, and even make them the contempt and reproach of the foolish: he will tear from them all their earthly comforts, and fill their souls with the most exquisite anguish; and, without sending them to hell, he can make their sufferings ten thousand times greater than all the pleasures of sin. Nay, he can cloud their characters with so dark a veil, that his people shall be ready to consider them as hypocrites and apostates. (Note, 1 Kings xi. 42, 43. P. O. Heb. iv. 1—11.) Thus he will set them up as beacons, to warn others of the rocks on which they split. And though many, by their falls and miseries, will be taught to watch and pray against temptation; yet they will be oppressed by the painful reflection, that multitudes by their crimes will be prejudiced,

Micah's idolatry, 5, 6. He hires a Levite to be his priest, 7—13.

AND there was a man of <sup>a x. 1. Josh. xv.</sup> mount Ephraim, whose name *was* Micah. <sup>9. xvii. 15. 18.</sup>

and hardened in infidelity and ungodliness, to their everlasting destruction. Out of this horrible pit none can escape, but by deep humiliation, earnest cries for mercy, patient submission to correction, and renewed conversion unto God through Jesus Christ. (Notes, Ps. li.) The heaviest sorrows, when they have these effects, will prove most precious favours: the comfort and strength of such humble penitents shall in due time be renewed, and their cruel enemies finally disappointed. Yet even in this case the chastening rod may pursue them to the grave. But having obtained pardon, and the hope of dying in peace and going to glory; they can desire to live for no other purpose, than to wipe off, if possible, the blot which they have cast upon the gospel, and to take vengeance, so to speak, upon Satan and his cause, for the injury which they have sustained; and with their dying lips, or in their dying moments, to render some service to the church of God. And indeed some who have disgraced the gospel, and rejoiced the hearts of his enemies, have afterwards been so deeply humbled, and have closed their lives in such a manner, as hath more than counterbalanced all, and turned the triumphings of wicked men into confusion. (Notes and P. O. 1 Chr. xxix.)—Successful villainy will soon be punished: and not only the prayers of the church, but the intercession of Christ himself, will eventually ensure the destruction of those, who treacherously, cruelly, and impenitently hate and persecute his servants. How then can they escape destruction? May God help us to walk humbly and watchfully; to abstain from fleshly lusts, and avoid the beginnings of evil; and to beware of the subtlety of Satan and his agents, and the deceitfulness of our own hearts: and may our unreserved love and entire dependence be placed on the divine Saviour. He conquered by dying, and rose to triumph: and by his power all his true people shall conquer and triumph also. Here they must live mingled with the wicked, and die *outwardly* in the same manner: but they have a Friend to receive their departing souls, and a place in heaven prepared for them. (Note, John. xiv. 2, 3. P. O. 1—6.) Their bodies may or may not be buried together with those of the wicked; but they shall certainly be separated at the resurrection of the dead: the one "shall go away into everlasting punishment," the other "into life eternal."

## NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1. The sacred historian had, in the preceding chapters, brought down the narrative to the times of Eli, who is thought to have been contemporary with Samson: but in the subsequent chapters he records some transactions, which seem to have taken place not many years after the death of Joshua. It is thought by many, that they occurred before Othniel was raised up to judge Israel; (Note, iii. 9, 10;) and Phinehas is mentioned, as still living, towards the close of them. (xx. 28.) "Israel served the Lord...all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua:" (ii. 7. Josh. xxiv. 31;) but it does not appear how many years were intended in this general statement.

2 And he said unto his mother, The eleven hundred *shekels* of silver, that were taken from thee, about which thou<sup>b</sup> cursedst, and spakest of also in mine ears; behold, the silver is with me; \*I took it. And his mother said, <sup>d</sup>Blessed be thou of the LORD, my son.

3 And when he had restored the eleven hundred *shekels* of silver to his mother, his mother said, \*I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the LORD from my hand for my son, to make<sup>e</sup> a graven image, and a molten image; now therefore I will restore it unto thee.

4 Yet he restored the money unto his mother; and his mother took<sup>f</sup> two hundred *shekels* of silver, and gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven image, and a molten image: and they were in the house of Micah.

5 And the man Micah had<sup>g</sup> an house of gods, and made an<sup>h</sup> ephod, and<sup>i</sup> teraphim, and<sup>j</sup> consecrated one of<sup>k</sup> his sons, who became his priest.

6 In those days *there was*<sup>m</sup> no king

in Israel, *but* every man did *that which was*<sup>n</sup> right in his own eyes.

7 ¶ And there was a young man out of<sup>o</sup> Beth-lehem-judah, of the family of Judah, who *was* a Levite, and he so-journed there.

8 And the man<sup>p</sup> departed out of the city from Beth-lehem-judah, to sojourn where he could find a *place*: and he came to mount Ephraim, to the house of Micah, <sup>q</sup>as he journeyed.

9 And Micah said unto him, Whence comest thou? And he said unto him, I *am* a Levite of Beth-lehem-judah, and I go to sojourn where I may find a *place*.

10 And Micah said unto him, Dwell with me, and be unto me<sup>r</sup> a father and a priest, and<sup>s</sup> I will give thee ten *shekels* of silver by the year, and<sup>t</sup> a suit of apparel, and thy victuals. So the Le-<sup>u</sup>vite went in.

11 And the Levite was content to dwell with the man; and the young man was unto him as one of his sons.

12 And Micah<sup>v</sup> consecrated the Le-<sup>w</sup>.

b v. 23. Deut. xxvii. 16. 1 Sam. xiv. 24. 28. xxvi. 19. Neh. xiii. 25. Jer. xlviii. 10. Matt. xxvi. 74. Rom. ix. 8. 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

c Prov. xxviii. 24. d Gen. xiv. 19. xlv. 30. 31. Ex. xx. 7. Ruth ii. 10. 1 Sam. xxiii. 21. Pa. x. 3.

e 13. xviii. b. Is. lvi. 3.

f Ex. xx. 4. 23. Lev. xix. 4. Deut. xii. 3. Pa. cxv. 4-8. Is. xl. 18-25. xlv. 9-20. Jer. x. 3-5. 8. Hab. ii. 3. 19. John xvi. 2.

g Is. xlv. 6, 7. Jer. x. 9, 10.

h xviii. 24. Gen. xxi. 30. Ezra i. 7. Hos. vi. 14.

i vii. 27. xviii. 14. Ex. xxviii. 4. 15. 1 Sam. xxiii. 6.

k Gen. xxi. 19. marg. Hos. iii. 4.

\* Heb. filled the hand. Ex. xxix. 9. 1 Kings xii. 31. xiii. 33, 34.

Heb. v. 4.

l Ex. xxiv. 5.

m xviii. 1. xix. 1. xxi. 26. Gen. xxxvi. 31. Deut. xxxiii. 5.

n Dent. xli. 8. Pa. xli. 4. Prov. xli. 15. xiv. 12. xvi. 2. Ec. xi. 9. Jer. xlv. 16, 17. o xix. 1. 2. Gen. xxxv. 19. Ruth i. 1, 2. Mic. v. 2. Matt. ii. 1, 5, 6.

p 11. Neh. xiii. 10, 11.

q Heb. is making his way.

r Gen. xiv. 8.

s 2 Kings vi. 21.

t vii. 8, 9. xli. 14. Job xxix. 16. Is. xxii. 21.

u xviii. 20. 1 Sam. ii. 36. Ex. xxiii. 19. Matt. xxvi. 15. John xii. 6.

v Tim. vi. 10.

w 1 Pet. v. 2.

x Or, a double suit, &c. Heb. an order of garments.

Joshua died B. C. 1426, or 1427. Eleazar seems to have survived him. (Josh. xxiv. 33.) Phinehas is supposed by some to have continued high priest twenty-five years. The defection after the death of the elders, who survived Joshua, may be supposed to have been gradual; yet the following chapters give the reader an idea of a very general and deep contamination. Perhaps twenty or twenty-two years had elapsed before the beginning of them. Othniel is supposed to have been raised up to be judge some years after this term. The dates affixed at the head of these chapters will be regulated according to these remarks: though this will place them somewhat later than many learned men do.—The annotations on the three last chapters imply, that the author assumes it as clear, that the events recorded were subsequent to those related in this and the following chapter; as the Jews do, or some of them at least. (Note, xx. 20—25.) Yet many date them at an earlier period, probably because Phinehas is mentioned. The dates will here, however, be placed according to the former supposition.—But the chronology of this book is peculiarly difficult and uncertain.

V. 2—4. Micah's mother, enraged by the loss of her money, openly imprecated the divine vengeance upon the thief, if he did not restore it, declaring that it was devoted to God by a solemn vow for the benefit of her son: (Marg. Ref. b, e, f:) and he, having stolen it, was affrighted by this curse, disclosed the theft, and restored the money. (Note, Prov. xxviii. 24.) Thus he obtained her blessing, such as it was. In consequence two hundred shekels were expended in making two images; and perhaps the remain-

ing nine hundred shekels, in preparation for the idolatrous worship.

V. 5. *An house of gods.*] Or, of God. It is probable, that Micah purposed to worship the God of Israel; but he ignorantly imagined, that, having appointed his son to be a priest, he might in this manner serve God as *acceptably*, as by going up to the tabernacle, and more *conveniently*. (Note, viii. 27.) Thus idolatry seems to have been first openly set up in Israel, by Micah and his mother. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xx. 4, 5. xxxii. 2—6. 1 Kings xii. 26—33. Hos. viii. 14.)

V. 6. Either there was no judge at that time, or he did not possess sufficient authority to repress idolatry, as a king might have done. (Note, 1.) This seems to intimate, that there were kings when the history was written; and implies, that nothing can be more pernicious to a people, than to be left without coercive authority. (Notes, xviii. 7—10. xix. 1. Rom. xiii. 1—5.)—It is probable also, that the law for appointing judges in every city was not duly attended to. (Notes, ii. 1—5. Deut. xvi. 18, 19. xvii. 8—13.)

V. 7, 8. This man's father was a Levite, but by marriage he was allied to the tribe of Judah, and so had been a sojourner at Bethlehem. But he left that place to seek some other situation. Perhaps, in those quiet times, the tithes were not paid very regularly: yet it can hardly be supposed, that a Levite of good character was constrained, from mere want, to ramble like a vagabond. He seems to have been a man of an unsettled disposition, who did not choose to be under the controul of the priests.

V. 10—13. The terms proposed by Micah do not seem

vite; and the young man became 'his priest, and was in the house of Micah. 13 Then said Micah, "Now know I that the LORD will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest."

#### CHAP. XVIII.

The Danites send five men to seek an inheritance for them, 1, 2. Meeting with Micah's Levite, they consult him, and are encouraged to proceed, 3—6. They search Laish, and bring back an encouraging report, 7—10. Six hundred men are sent to surprise the place, 11, 12. They rob Micah of his idols, and entice away his priest, 13—21. Micah pursues them, but is frightened back by threats, 22—26. They take Laish, and call it Dan, 27—29. They set up idolatry; and Micah's Levite, who was called Jonathan, and his sons after him, become the priests, 30, 31.

IN those days *there was* <sup>a</sup>no king in Israel: and in those days <sup>b</sup>the tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance to dwell in; <sup>c</sup>for unto that day *all their* inheritance had not fallen unto them among the tribes of Israel.

2 And the children of Dan sent of

to have been very advantageous: but the Levite thought the situation honourable, and a kind of preferment; especially as Micah spake of his being a father and a priest. Thus he was induced to intrude into the sacerdotal office; and Micah presumed to consecrate him. (*Note*, 2 Chr. xi. 13—17.) And so satisfied was Micah with what he had done, that he deemed himself sure of the Lord's blessing on that account; for it seems, he deemed the priesthood of his son *informal* (5). But instead of having now done better, he had added to all his other crimes, that of tempting a Levite to act as a priest, and to commit idolatry. (*Notes*, John xvi. 1—3. Acts xxvi. 9—11.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Old age will not wean the heart from love to worldly objects; and when men have lost their relish for other sinful indulgences, avarice frequently acquires double force: but every idol is liable to be torn from them, and their inordinate love increases their grief and resentment for the loss of it.—The curse causeless hurts only the person who vents it: yet when children rob their parents, they may expect from them a curse instead of a blessing, and in consequence the displeasure of God.—Confession and restitution, though attendants on true repentance, do not always imply it. (*Note*, Matt. xxvii. 3—5.)—Those parents who have not, by their instructions or examples, taught their children their duty to God, but have been their tempters to ungodliness, cannot reasonably expect that they should perform their duty to them.—Riches are seldom made a good use of: indeed they are commonly idolized, either in themselves, or in those things which the proud and sensual purchase with them.—Men naturally love their own inventions in religion, being more flattering

their family five men from their coasts, <sup>a</sup>men of valour, from <sup>b</sup>Zorah, and from <sup>c</sup>Eshtaol, <sup>d</sup>to spy out the land, and to search it; and they said unto them, Go, search the land: who, when they came to <sup>e</sup>'mount Ephraim, to the house of Micah, they lodged there.

3 When they *were* by the house of Micah, <sup>f</sup>they knew the voice of the young man the Levite; and they turned in thither, and said unto him, Who brought thee hither? and what makest thou in this *place*? <sup>g</sup>and what hast thou here?

4 And he said unto them, Thus and thus *dealeth* Micah with me, and hath <sup>h</sup>hired me, and I am his priest.

5 And they said unto him, <sup>i</sup>Ask counsel, we pray thee, <sup>j</sup>of God, that <sup>k</sup>we may know whether our way which we go shall be prosperous.

6 And the priest said unto them, <sup>l</sup>Go in peace: <sup>m</sup>before the LORD is your way wherein ye go.

to pride, and more indulgent to their sloth and lusts, than the appointments of God are; and the liberality of superstitious people often shames the niggardliness of the professors of true religion.—They who once deviate from the rule of the sacred Scriptures, will in general wander more and more widely, and bewilder themselves more entirely; and will presumptuously expect a reward for the very practices which God abhors!—When pride, an unsettled temper, ignorance, and sloth, in those appointed to the ministry, meet with poverty or extravagance; by the prospect of secular advantage they may be induced to patronize crimes, and become ringleaders in transgression; while their example and concurrence serve to quiet every remaining scruple in the consciences of others.—Many wealthy people love to have such "Levites for their priests," because instead of reproving their sins, they embolden them in the commission of them; and induce them to conclude, that there is no reality in religion, as its ministers are so mercenary and ungodly.

#### NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1. (*Note*, xvii. 6.) The tribe of Dan had its lot within that at first assigned to Judah, and near to the Philistines: so that, through their own neglect or cowardice, and concurrent causes, they had been in part kept out of possession of it, and were therefore greatly straitened at this time. (*Notes*, i. 34, 35. Josh. xix. 40—48.)

V. 2—4. *Hath hired me.* (4) *Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, xvii. 10—13.

V. 5, 6. It does not appear that the Danites had consulted the Lord by his high priest, about their intended enterprize: but when the spies met with this Levite, whom they had known in his former rambles, and were informed

xviii. 30. Num. xvi. 5. 8—10. 1 Kings xii. 31. xiii. 33, 34. Prov. xiv. 12. Is xlv. 20. lvi. 3, 4. Matt. xv. 9. 13. John xvi. 2. Acts xxvi. 9. Rom x 2, 3.

xvii. 6. xix. 1. xxi. 23. Josh. xix. 40—48. i. 34.

Heb. sons. d 8, 11. xlii. 2. 25. xvi. 31. Josh. xix. 41. Num. xiii. 17. Josh. ii. 1. Prov. xx. 18. Luke xiv. 31. xvii. 1. xix. 1. 18. Josh. xviii. 15—18. g xii. 6. Gen. xxvii. 22. Matt. xxvii. 73. h Is. xxii. 16. i xvii. 10. Prov. xxviii. 21. Is. lvi. 11. Ez. xiii. 19. Hos. iv. 8, 9. Mal. i. 10. John x. 12. 13. Acts viii. 18—21. xxi. 33. 1 Tim. iii. 3. Tit. i. 11. 3 Pet. ii. 3. 14, 15. 1 Kings xxii. 6. 2 Kings xvi. 15. Is. xxx. 1. Ez. xxi. 21. Hos. iv. 12. Acts viii. 10. 14. xvii. 5. 13. 1 Kings xxii. 6. 12. 15. Jer. xxiii. 21, 22. 32. n Deut. xi. 12. Ps. xxxiii. 18. 1 Thes. iii. 11.

7 Then the five men departed, and came to <sup>a</sup>Laish, and saw the people that <sup>b</sup>were therein, <sup>c</sup>how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure; and <sup>d</sup>there was no <sup>e</sup>magistrate in the land, that might put <sup>f</sup>them to shame in <sup>g</sup>any thing: and they <sup>h</sup>were far from the Zidonians, and had no business with <sup>i</sup>any man.

8 And they came unto their brethren to <sup>j</sup>Zorah and Eshtaol: and their brethren said unto them, What <sup>k</sup>say ye?

9 And they said, <sup>l</sup>Arise, that we may go up against them: for we have seen the land, and, behold, it is very good: and <sup>m</sup>are ye still? <sup>n</sup>be not slothful to go, <sup>o</sup>and to enter to possess the land.

10 When ye go, ye shall come unto a people secure, and to a large land: for <sup>p</sup>God hath given it into your hands; a place <sup>q</sup>where <sup>r</sup>there is no want of any thing that <sup>s</sup>is in the earth.

11 ¶ And there went from thence of the family of the Danites, out of Zorah and out of Eshtaol, six hundred men <sup>t</sup>appointed with weapons of war.

12 And they went up, and pitched in <sup>u</sup>Kirjath-jearim in Judah: wherefore they called that place <sup>v</sup>Mahanehdan unto this day; behold, <sup>w</sup>it is behind Kirjath-jearim.

13 And they passed thence unto <sup>x</sup>mount Ephraim, and came unto the house of Micah.

14 Then answered the five men that went to spy out the country of Laish, and said unto their brethren, Do ye know that there is <sup>y</sup>in these houses an <sup>z</sup>ephod, and teraphim, and a graven image, and a molten image? <sup>a</sup>now therefore consider what ye have to do.

15 And they turned thitherward, and came to the house of the young man the Levite, <sup>b</sup>even unto the house of Micah, and <sup>c</sup>saluted him.

16 And the <sup>d</sup>six hundred men appointed with their weapons of war, which <sup>e</sup>were of the children of Dan, stood by the entering of the gate.

17 And the <sup>f</sup>five men that went to spy out the land went up, <sup>g</sup>and came in thither, <sup>h</sup>and took <sup>i</sup>the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: and the priest stood in the entering of the gate with the six hundred men <sup>j</sup>that were appointed with weapons of war.

18 And these went into Micah's house, and fetched the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image. Then said the priest unto them, What do ye?

19 And they said unto him, Hold thy peace, <sup>k</sup>lay thine hand upon thy mouth, and go with us, and be to us <sup>l</sup>a father and a priest: <sup>m</sup>is it better for thee to be a priest unto the house of one man, or that thou be a priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel?

\* Josh. xix. 47. came to <sup>a</sup>Laish, and saw the people that <sup>b</sup>were therein, <sup>c</sup>how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure; and <sup>d</sup>there was no <sup>e</sup>magistrate in the land, that might put <sup>f</sup>them to shame in <sup>g</sup>any thing: and they <sup>h</sup>were far from the Zidonians, and had no business with <sup>i</sup>any man.

† Heb. possessor, or, heir, of restraint. 1 Sam. iii. 13. 1 Kings i. 6. Rom. xiii. 3. 1 Pet. ii. 14.

‡ 2. 11. xiii. 2. xvi. 31.

§ Num. xiii. 30. xiv. 7—9. Josh. ii. 24.

¶ 1 Kings xxii. 3. Josh. xviii. 3. 1 Sam. iv. 9. 2 Sam. x. 12. John vi. 27. Heb. vi. 11, 12. 2 Pet. i. 10, 11.

‡ Deut. ii. 23. iv. 1. Josh. vi. 16. u Ex. iii. 8. Deut. viii. 7—9. xi. 11, 12. Ex. xx. 6. 1 Tim. vi. 17.

‡ Heb. girded.

v Josh. xv. 60. 1 Sam. vii. 1. x xiii. 26. marg.

y 2, 3. xvii. 1. xix. 1. Josh. xxiv. 30. 38.

a Prov. xix. 27. 1a. viii. 19, 20.

† Heb. asked him of peace. Gen. xxxvii. 14. xliii. 27. 1 Sam. xvii. 22. marg. 2 Kings iv. 26. Matt. x. 12, 13. Luke x. 4—6. John xiv. 27. b 11.

c 2. 14. d vi. 31. xvii. 4, 5. Ex. xxxii. 20. 1 Sam. iv. 11. vi. 2—9. 2 Kings xix. 18, 19. 1e xvi. 1. 2. 7.

e Job xxi. 5. xxix. 9. xi. 4, 6. Prov. xxx. 32. Mic. vii. 16. xvii. 10. 2 Kings vi. 21. viii. 8, 9. xiii. 14. Matt. xxiii. 9.

by him that he was become a priest, they bethought themselves of enquiring by him; in which their ignorance and inattention were lamentably exposed.—The Levite, it is probable, having gone through his form, answered them according to their inclinations, in the language of piety: (Notes, 1 Kings xxii. 6. 13, 14:) and his words being verified by the event, raised the reputation of the oracle, and sanctioned the idolatry.—Thus all the mistakes and lies of fortune-tellers, monthly prognosticators, and other pretended prophets, are overlooked or soon forgotten, because they sometimes happen to conjecture right; and these random guesses, when they prove to be right, raise their credit with the ignorant and credulous.

V. 7—10. Laish, or Leshem, lay in the northern extremity of Canaan, but within the boundaries of the promised land; and perhaps it had been originally allotted to the Danites, in addition to their too contracted inheritance. But the Israelites so neglected to prosecute their victories, that the Canaanites despised them: and this people, abiding unmolested in a very plentiful country, had no magistrates, and were not secured by walls, troops,

or alliances; but every one lived according to his own inclination, without either fear or shame!—It seems indeed to have been considered as a part of the territory of the Zidonians; but it lay at a considerable distance, eastward of Zidon, and had no direct dependence on that city or protection from it, or intercourse with it (28). (Marg. Ref.)

V. 11, 12. So small a company as six hundred men out of this large tribe, (Num. xxvi. 42, 43,) unassisted by their brethren, marching on this enterprize, manifested how regardless the Israelites were of the publick cause, and how intent upon personal indulgence. Yet this small troop, in confidence of success, took their families with them (21). “Mahanehdan” signifies *the camp of Dan*. (Note, xiii. 25.)

V. 13—26. (Marg. Ref.) The Levite's answer to the spies having been *apparently* verified by the event, they seem to have concluded that he would be a valuable acquisition, if they could induce him to accompany them; especially if they could also take Micah's images, ephod, and teraphim with them: and at their instance, the Danites

<sup>f</sup> xvii. 10. Prov. xxx. 15. Is. lvi. 11. Ez. xiii. 19. Hos. iv. 8. Acts xx. 33. Phil. iii. 16. 2 Pet. ii. 3. 16, 16.

20 And the priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image, and went in the midst of the people.

21 So they turned and departed, and put the little ones, and the cattle, and the carriage, before them.

22 And when they were a good way from the house of Micah, the men that were in the houses near to Micah's house were gathered together, and overtook the children of Dan.

<sup>g</sup> Gen. xxi. 17. 1 Sam. xi. 6. 2 Sam. xiv. 5. 2 Kings vi. 28. Ps. cxiv. 5. Is. xxii. 1.

23 And they cried unto the children of Dan: and they turned their faces, and said unto Micah, <sup>h</sup> What aileth thee, that thou comest with such a company?

<sup>h</sup> Heb. art gathered together.

24 And he said, Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and ye are gone away; and <sup>i</sup> what have I more? and what is this that ye say unto me, What aileth thee?

<sup>h</sup> xvii. 13. Ps. cxi. 8. Is. xiv. 18—20. Jer. i. 38. li. 17. Ez. xxiii. 5. Hab. ii. 18, 19. Acts xix. 26. Rev. xvii. 2.

25 And the children of Dan said unto him, Let not thy voice be heard among us, lest <sup>j</sup> angry fellows run upon thee, and thou lose thy life, with the lives of thy household.

<sup>j</sup> Heb. butter of soul. 1 Sam. xxx. 6. 2 Sam. xvii. 8. Job iii. 5. xxvii. 2. Marg.

26 And the children of Dan went their way: and when Micah saw that

they were too strong for him, he turned and went back unto his house.

27 ¶ And they took the things which Micah had made, and the priest which he had, and came unto <sup>k</sup> Laish, unto a people that were at quiet and secure: and <sup>l</sup> they smote them with the edge of the sword, and <sup>m</sup> burnt the city with fire.

28 And <sup>n</sup> there was no deliverer, because it was <sup>o</sup> far from Zidon, and they had no business with any man; and it was in the valley that lieth by <sup>p</sup> Beth-rehob: and they built a city, and dwelt therein.

29 And they called the name of the city <sup>q</sup> Dan, after the name of Dan their father, <sup>r</sup> who was born unto Israel: howbeit the name of the city was Laish at the first.

30 And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan, <sup>s</sup> until the day of the captivity of the land.

31 And they set them up Micah's graven image, which he made, <sup>t</sup> all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.

zeal for his images did not induce him to venture his life in attempting to recover them.

V. 27—29. Marg. Ref.

V. 30, 31. Jonathan was the name of this Levite, but it is not known of what family he was; for Gershom and Manasseh were names common in Israel. The tradition of the Jews, that he was the grandson of Moses, is in all respects highly improbable.—As Dan lay on the northern extremity of the land, none of the judges were able to destroy this idolatry, which continued “all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.” This proves that the captivity here mentioned was that of the ark, by the Philistines, in the time of Eli. (Notes, 1 Sam. iv. v.) It may be supposed that Samuel or David put an end to it.—Jeroboam set up the worship of one of the golden calves in this very city. (1 Kings xii. 28—30.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

If men were as sensibly affected with the wants of the soul as with those of the body, the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven, though distant and future, would not be neglected; and the labour, danger, and self-denial, which lie in the way, would no longer affright or deter them from seeking it.—Whatever valour, wisdom, or diligence we employ in any undertaking, we shall not be successful in a comfortable and profitable way, if we neglect to consult the Lord, and to seek his assistance and blessing.—Un-

## CHAP. XIX.

A Levite's concubine commits adultery, and returns to her father, 1, 2. The Levite goes to take her back, and is kindly entertained, 3—9. They depart at a late hour, and lodge at Gibeah, being entertained by an old man of Ephraim, who sojourned there, 10—21. The men of the city beset the house, with a vile intent; the Levite yields up his concubine, who is abused till she dies, 22—28. He divides her body into twelve parts, and sends one to each tribe, 29, 30.

a xvii. 6. xviii. 1  
xxi. 28.

godly men generally find out those of their own character in every place. And they, who along with a worldly heart, and much ignorance or error, have yet convictions of conscience, that they ought to worship and serve some superior power, often meet with a superstition, or false religion, apparently devised and framed on purpose for them: as indeed it is; for Satan, who works in the children of disobedience, and prompts the devisers of every species of delusion, knows well what will suit the taste, and state of heart, and convenience, of those whom he aims to delude; and he forms his plans accordingly.—Success does not prove our undertakings pleasing to God, any more than a fortunate conjecture proves a man a prophet: for the former is sometimes sent as a curse; and the latter is permitted, in order to punish those who despise and hate the truth. (Notes, Deut. xiii. 1—5. 2 Thes. ii. 8—12.)—We ought to be very thankful for good government, and for magistrates who put men to shame for their crimes; without which they can scarcely be prevented from destroying each other. The blessings also of liberty and prosperity call for gratitude: yet when they produce sloth, self-indulgence, and carnal security, they indicate approaching destruction.—Worldly men, finding “no want of any thing that is in the earth,” do not consider the disadvantages which they lie under with respect to their souls: for if their situations or occupations are not consistent with true religion, they can either do without any religion, or adopt one more suited to their convenience.

## V. 11—31.

Those who are destitute of the fear of God, will seize on whatever they covet, when they possess power; and can do it with impunity: for justice, gratitude, and the rights of hospitality form but feeble barriers in their way. Indeed, injustice and idolatry consist well with each other; for Satan loves “robbery for burnt-offering,” though God “abhors it.”—They who do wrong are commonly much offended, if the injured party dares to complain or remonstrate; and thus theft is frequently an introduction to murder, through the combined influence of avarice, pride, and malignity. But those who rob God of his glory, and tempt others to iniquity, deserve to be plundered by their fellow-creatures; and they who trust in unprincipled persons, need not wonder if they are deceived.—Mercenary priests in every age are ready to go the most disgraceful lengths to obtain preferment, and even to put up their services for sale to the highest bidder: while however they eagerly seize upon the proposed advantage, let them re-

AND it came to pass in those days, \* when there was no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite sojourning on the side of <sup>b</sup> mount Ephraim, who took to him <sup>a</sup> a concubine out of <sup>c</sup> Beth-lehem-judah.

2 And his concubine <sup>d</sup> played the whore against him, and went away from him unto her father's house to Beth-lehem-judah, and was there <sup>e</sup> four whole months.

b xvii. 1. 8. Josh.  
xxiv. 30. 33.  
Heb. a woman,  
a concubine, or,  
a wife, a concu-  
bine. Gen. xxii.  
24. xxv. 6. 2 Sam.  
iii. 7. v. 13. xvi.  
22. xix. 5. xx.  
3. 1 Kings xi. 3.  
2 Chr. xi. 21.  
Ezra ii. 14. Cant.  
vi. 8. 9. Dan. v.  
3. Mal. ii. 15.  
c xvii. 8. Gen.  
xxxv. 19. Matt.  
ii. 6.  
d Lev. xxi. 9.  
Deut. xxii. 21.  
Ez. xvi. 28.  
† Or, a year and  
four months.  
Heb. days, four  
months

member, that they are increasing guilt, shame, mischief, and condemnation.—When the removal of idols weans the heart from idolatry, the anguish of parting will be made up by the consequent advantage: but wretched are they, who are deprived of their idols, and left under the power of the idolatrous affection! Thus death will rend men from all those worldly objects, on which they have placed their hearts: their gods will be for ever gone, and “what will they have more?” But the case of self-confident hypocrites, when disappointed of all their towering hopes, will be peculiarly dreadful.—Happy they, who renounce all for Christ, and in him have the LORD for their God! no enemies or changes can take away their portion, or their comfort. But if we would have this felicity, we must carefully attend to the word and ordinances of God, and be afraid of every deviation from our perfect rule: “for behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!”

## NOTES

CHAP. XIX. V. 1. The events, recorded in this and the following chapters, occurred while Phinehas the son of Eleazar was high priest, and therefore could not take place very long after the death of Joshua. (xx. 28.) Eleazar seems to have survived Joshua. (Josh. xxiv. 33.) Phinehas might continue high priest for twenty-five or thirty years. I suppose the events of these chapters subsequent to those in the preceding.—There was then no king in Israel, nor any judge who exercised authority over the people in general: and the want of a regular civil government produced many fatal effects, notwithstanding the advantages enjoyed by the Israelites in all other things. (Note, xvii. 6.)

V. 2. This woman seems to have been the Levite's only wife; who was called his concubine, because not admitted to all the privileges of the conjugal relation: (Note, Gen. xxv. 5, 6:) but her father is called his father-in-law, and he is called her husband. (3, 4.)—Having been guilty of adultery, she fled from him to escape punishment, or from dread of his resentment.—It is remarkable; that no mention is made of any other Levites in this whole book, except of him who established idolatry at Dan; and of this man, whose concubine proved the occasion almost of extirpation to the tribe of Benjamin, and of great slaughter in the other tribes! Phinehas, the high priest, is also named.—This both implies a censure on the regular ministers of religion; and confirms the opinion that the regular appointment of judges was neglected, as the Levites were chiefly called to that office.

e xv. 1.

f Gen. i. 21. Lev.  
xix. 17. xx. 10.  
Hos. ii. 14. Matt.  
i. 19. John viii.  
4. 5. 11. Gal. vi.  
1.  
\* Heb. to her  
heart Gen.  
xxiv. 3.  
g Num. xxii. 22.

3 And her husband arose, and <sup>e</sup> went after her, to <sup>f</sup> speak <sup>g</sup> friendly unto her, and to bring her again, having <sup>h</sup> his servant with him, and a couple of asses; and she brought him into her father's house; and when the father of the damsel saw him, he rejoiced to meet him.

4 And his father-in-law, the damsel's father, retained him; and he abode with him three days: so they did eat and drink, and lodged there.

5 And it came to pass on the fourth day, when they arose early in the morning, that he rose up to depart: and the damsel's father said unto his son-in-law, <sup>i</sup> Comfort thine heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward go your way.

6 And they sat down, and did eat and drink both of them together: for the damsel's father had said unto the man, Be content, I pray thee, and tarry all night, and <sup>j</sup> let thine heart be merry.

7 And when the man rose up to depart, his father-in-law urged him; therefore he lodged there again.

8 And he rose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart: and the damsel's father said, Comfort thine heart, I pray thee. And they tarried <sup>k</sup> until afternoon, and they did eat both of them.

9 And when the man rose up to depart, he, and his concubine, and his servant; his father-in-law, the damsel's father, said unto him, Behold now, the day <sup>l</sup> draweth towards evening, I pray you tarry all night: behold, the <sup>m</sup> day groweth to an end, lodge here, that thine heart may be merry: and <sup>n</sup> to-morrow get you early on your way, that thou mayest go <sup>o</sup> home.

10 But the man would not tarry that night, but he rose up and departed, and came <sup>p</sup> over against <sup>q</sup> Jebus, (which <sup>r</sup> is Jerusalem;) and *there were* with him two asses saddled; his concubine also *was* with him.

11 And when they *were* by Jebus, the day was far spent; and the servant said unto his master, Come, I pray thee, and let us turn in unto this city of <sup>s</sup> the Jebusites, and lodge in it.

12 And his master said unto him, We will not turn aside hither into the city of a stranger, that *is* not of the children of Israel; we will pass over to Gibeah.

13 And he said unto his servant, Come, and let us draw near to one of these places to lodge all night, in <sup>t</sup> Gibeah, or in Ramah.

14 And they passed on, and went their way, and the sun went down upon them *when they were* by Gibeah which *belongeth* to Benjamin.

15 And they turned aside thither to go in, and to lodge in Gibeah: and, when he went in, he sat him down in a street of the city; for *there was* <sup>u</sup> no man that took them into his house to lodging.

16 ¶ And, behold, there came an old man from <sup>v</sup> his work out of the field at even, which *was* also of mount Ephraim; and he sojourned in Gibeah, but the men of the place *were* Benjamites.

17 And when he had lifted up his eyes, he saw a way-faring man in the street of the city: and the old man said, <sup>w</sup> Whither goest thou? and whence comest thou?

18 And he said unto him, We *are* passing from Beth-lehem-judah toward

† Heb. to over against.  
1 i. 8. Josh. xviii.  
28. 2 Sam. v. 6

m 10. i. 21. Gen.  
x. 16. Josh. xv.  
63.

n Josh. xviii. 25.  
26. 1 Sam. x. 26.  
Is. x. 29. Hos.  
v. 8.

o 18. Gen. xviii.  
2-8. xix. 2, 3.  
Matt. xxv. 35.  
43. Heb. xiii. 2.

p Gen. iii. 19. Ps.  
civ. 23. cxviii.  
2. Prov. xiii. 11.  
xiv. 23. xxiv. 27.  
Ec. i. 13. v. 12.  
Eph. iv. 28.  
1 Thes. iv. 11.  
12. 2 Thes. iii.  
10.

q Gen. xvi. 8.  
xxii. 17

i 9. 21. ix. 27. xvi.  
25. Ruth iii. 7.  
1 Sam. xxv. 36.  
Esth. i. 10. Luke  
xii. 19. 1 Thes.  
v. 3. Rev. xi. 10.  
13.

k Heb. till the day  
declined.

l Heb. is weak.

m Heb. it is the  
pitching time of  
the day.

n Prov. xxviii. 1.  
Jam. iv. 13, 14.

o Heb. to thy tent.

V. 3, 4. Perhaps the Levite heard, that his wife repented, and was dejected under conscious guilt, and alarmed lest she should be made a publick example. He therefore went and spoke friendly and affectionately to her, and a reconciliation was speedily effected, at which his father-in-law rejoiced.—The Levite's choice seems to have been imprudent, and his affection inordinate; but in other respects his character appears consistent with his profession. (Note, xv. 1, 2.)

V. 12. This conduct of the Levite, in refusing to seek a lodging among idolaters, shews that he was very unlike

the Levite of whom we read in the foregoing chapters; and it was proper, that he should by his example protest against the disobedience of his people, in associating with the idolaters, and even contracting marriages with them.—Jerusalem appears to have been at this time almost wholly occupied by the Jebusites; and if any of Judah or Benjamin dwelt there, their number and influence must have been inconsiderable.

V. 13—17. *Marg. Ref.*

V. 18. Shiloh lay near to the Levite's habitation in mount Ephraim. Either his employment required his at-

the side of mount Ephraim; from thence *am* I: and I went to Bethlehem-judah, but I *am now* going to the house of the LORD: and there *is* no man that \*receiveth me to house.

19 Yet there is both straw and provender for our asses; and there is bread and wine also for me, and for thy handmaid, and for the young man *which is* with thy servants: *there is* no want of any thing.

20 And the old man said, 'Peace be with thee: howsoever, 'let all thy wants *lie* upon me; only \*lodge not in the street.

21 So he brought him into his house, and gave provender unto the asses: and \*they washed their feet, and did eat and drink.

22 Now as they were making their hearts merry, behold, 'the men of the city, certain 'sons of Belial, beset the house round about, *and* beat at the door, and spake to the master of the house, the old man, saying, 'Bring forth the man that came into thine house, that we may know him.

23 And <sup>b</sup>the man, the master of the house, went out unto them, and said unto them, Nay, my brethren, *nay*, I pray you, do not *so* wickedly; seeing that this man is come into mine house, °do not this folly.

24 Behold, *here is* my daughter, a maiden, and his concubine, °them I will bring out now, and \*humble ye them, and do with them what seemeth

good unto you: but unto this man do not \*so vile a thing.

25 But the men would not hearken to him: so the man took his concubine; and brought her forth unto them; and they 'knew her, °and abused her all the night until the morning: and when the day began to spring they let her go.

26 Then came the woman in the dawning of the day, and fell down at the door of the man's house where <sup>b</sup>her lord *was*, till it was light.

27 And her lord rose up in the morning, and opened the doors of the house, and went out to go his way: and, behold, the woman his concubine was fallen down *at* the door of the house, and her hands *were* upon the threshold.

28 And he said unto her, Up, and let us be going: 'but none answered. Then the man took her *up* upon an ass, and the man rose up, and gat him unto his place.

29 And when he was come into his house, he took a knife, and laid hold on his concubine, and <sup>k</sup>divided her, *together* 'with her bones, into twelve pieces, and sent her into all the coasts of Israel.

30 And it was so, that all that saw it said, There was no such deed done nor seen, from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt unto this day: <sup>m</sup>consider of it, take advice, and speak *your minds*.

\* Heb. the matter of this folly.

f Gen. iv. 1.  
g Jer. v. 7, 8.  
Hos. vii. 4-7.  
ix. 9. x. 9. Eph. iv. 19.

h 2. 27. Gen. xviii. 12. 1 Pet. iii. 6

i xx. 5. 1 Kings xviii. 29.

k xx. 6. 1 Sam. xi. 7. Rom. x. 2.  
l Deut. xxi. 22, 23.

m xx. 7. Prov. xi. 14. xiii. 10. xv. 22. xx. 18. xxiv. 6.

† xviii. 31. xx. 18.  
Josh. xviii. 1.  
\* 1 Sam. i. 3. 7.  
\* Heb. gathereth.  
5. Ps. xxvi. 9.

† 17. 23. Gen. xliii. 23. 1 Sam. xxv. 6. 1 Chr. xii. 18. Luke x. 5, 6. John xiv. 27. 1 Cor. i. 3.

† Rom. xii. 13. Gal. vi. 6. Heb. xiii. 2. Jam. ii. 15, 16. 1 Pet. iv. 9. 1 John iii. 18.

† Gen. xix. 2, 3. xxiv. 31-33.

† Gen. xviii. 4. 1 Sam. xxv. 41. 2 Sam. xi. 8. Luke vii. 44. John xii. 4, 5. 14, 15. 1 Tim. v. 10.

† xx. 5. Gen. xix. 4. Hos. ix. 9. x. 9.

† Deut. xiii. 13. 1 Sam. i. 16. ii. 12. x. 27. xxv. 25. 2 Cor. vi. 15.

† Gen. xix. 5. Rom. i. 28, 27. 1 Cor. vi. 9. Jude 7.

† Gen. xix. 6, 7.

† xx. 6. Gen. xxxiv. 7. Josh. vii. 15. 2 Sam. xiii. 12.

† Gen. xix. 8. Rom. iii. 8.

† Gen. xxxiv. 2. Marg. Deut. xxi. 14.

tendence at the sanctuary; or he purposed to offer sacrifices, suited to the circumstances of his family, before he returned home.

V. 19-21. Marg. Ref.—Job xxxi. 32. Notes, Gen. xviii. 3-8. xix. 1-3.

V. 22-25. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. xix. 4-9.) It seems the men finally refused the Ephraimite's daughter; but at length, attracted by the beauty of the Levite's concubine, they went off with her. They thought also of murdering the Levite; perhaps because he would not at first give up his concubine, and because he resisted their brutal violence. (xx. 5.)

V. 26-30. The justice of God was displayed even by the enormous wickedness of these men. Adultery was punishable by death; this woman having committed adultery was about to escape; but in this dreadful manner her iniquity found her out, and she was punished in kind:

(Lev. xx. 10. Notes, Num. xxxii. 23 :) yet this by no means implies, that she did not repent and find mercy. (2 Sam. xviii. 5.)—It had an inhuman appearance, thus to mangle the dead corpse of this unhappy woman: but it was intended to excite a more general attention, and a keener resentment against so horrible a crime, which called for a punishment proportionably severe. (Marg. Ref.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1-10.

Men are seldom fully aware of the consequences of yielding to temptation: and few sins are followed with such fatal and durable effects as adultery. But it becomes ministers, and indeed all Christians, to shew a readiness to forgive and be reconciled, without upbraiding those who have most inexcusably injured them; and to speak comfortably to the penitent, especially when in danger of "be-

## CHAP. XX.

Israel assembles at Mizpeh, and the Levite states his wrong, 1—7. The assembly resolve to punish the men of Gibeah, 8—11. The Benjamites, when required, refuse to deliver them up, and prepare for war, 12—17. By divine direction Judah goes first to fight with them; yet the Israelites are defeated twice with great loss, 18—25. They humble themselves before God, with fasting and sacrifices, and are promised success, 26—28. They employ a stratagem, and destroy all the tribe of Benjamin, except six hundred men, who flee to the rock Rimmon, 29—48.

**THEN** <sup>a</sup>all the children of Israel went out, and the congregation was gathered together <sup>b</sup>as one man, <sup>c</sup>from Dan even to Beer-sheba, <sup>d</sup>with the land of Gilead, <sup>e</sup>unto the LORD <sup>f</sup>in Mizpeh.

2 And the chief of all the people, even of all the tribes of Israel presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand footmen that <sup>g</sup>drew sword.

<sup>a</sup> 2. 8. 11. xxi. 6.  
<sup>b</sup> Deut. xiii. 12.  
<sup>c</sup> &c. Josh. xxii. 12.  
<sup>d</sup> 1 Sam. xi. 7, 8.  
<sup>e</sup> 2 Sam. xix. 14.  
<sup>f</sup> Ezra iii. 1. Neh. xvi. 1.  
<sup>g</sup> xviii. 29. 1 Sam. iii. 20. 2 Sam. iii. 10. xxiv. 2.  
1 Chr. xxi. 2.  
2 Chr. xxx. 5.  
<sup>d</sup> Num. xxxii. 1.  
40. Josh. xvii. 1.  
2 Sam. ii. 9.  
<sup>e</sup> 18. 26. xi. 11.  
<sup>f</sup> Josh. xv. 38.  
xviii. 26. 1 Sam. vii. 5, 6. x. 17.  
2 Kings xxv. 28.  
<sup>g</sup> 15. 17. viii. 10.  
2 Sam. xxiv. 9.  
2 Kings iii. 26.

“ing swallowed up of over much sorrow.” (Note, 2 Cor. ii. 5—11.)—External attractions are very deceitful, and often prove an occasion to the possessors, as well as to others, of much sin and misery, nay of final destruction: those therefore who are thus distinguished, instead of being vain, have peculiar cause to tremble; and should be doubly watchful against temptation, and instant in prayer for the preserving grace of God. (Notes, Gen. xxxix. 7—10.)—So much depends on the character and behaviour of the ministers of religion, that if they marry with improper persons from corrupt motives, they will be sure to find either a snare or an affliction.—Kindness is due to those who behave with affection in the several relations of life; but every man has his proper place and duty which require his attendance: pressing importunities may therefore be carried too far; and they very frequently are, and induce imprudent and prejudicial concessions. For it is always advisable to set about our work early; and what we call *time enough*, generally proves *too little*.

## V. 11—30.

How changeable are human affairs! Our brightest prospects are often unexpectedly clouded, and the deepest calamities suddenly overtake us. We should therefore learn to moderate our affections, to lower our hopes as to this world, and to stand prepared for the worst.—They who teach others, should put themselves to any inconvenience to enforce their precepts by their own example.—More inhumanity and villainy may be found among degenerate professors of Christianity, than among infidels: and in general, where we expect the most kindness, we meet with the greatest injuries, that we may learn to “cease from man.”—An unfeeling disregard to the wants of others generally accompanies sensuality and ungoverned lusts; and there are *numbers* who imitate the example of those, whose shameful crimes have been recorded in their punishment; to *one* who copies the examples of hospitality, integrity, and piety, mentioned with commendation in the Scriptures. (P. O. Gen. xix. 1—14.)—When men have cast off the fear of God, they are frequently given up to their own vile lusts, even to disgrace human nature, and to exceed the very beasts in brutishness: (Note, Rom. i. 24—27:) and Israelites especially, who rebel against the light, and grow hardened under the means of grace, will become as abandoned as the inhabitants of Sodom, and far more inexcusable.—When iniquity becomes generally triumphant, few will dare to protest against it; and it is safer to venture into a den of lions

than into such recesses of iniquity. Yet in the worst of times, there are some who venture scorn and reproach, in being kind to the servants of God for his sake; and who do not grudge the expense of hospitality: for while idleness and sensual lusts waste a man's substance, honest labour and frugality afford the means of being liberal. But such persons live as strangers in this world, and must expect to be abused by their wicked neighbours, except when an equitable government affords them benign protection.—In imitating the good actions of God's people, men are very liable to be betrayed into their faults, against which they need be doubly circumspect: and an unbelieving policy often induces them to make unwarrantable concessions; but committing sin to avoid danger will generally involve them in still greater difficulties.—The righteous Lord permits transgressors to execute his just vengeance on one another: and if the scene described in this chapter appears exceedingly horrible, what will be the discoveries of the day of judgment! Yet such is human nature! And though few believe the humbling truth, the seeds of all this wickedness are in every human heart! and if we have not committed such abominations in our lives, we owe the more gratitude to the Lord, for the restraints of his providence, or the influences of his grace. While therefore it behoves those in authority, to “consider, take advice, and speak their minds,” by what means crimes may best be prevented, or so punished, that others may “hear, and fear, and do no more such wickedness;” we may each of us consider, how to escape from the wrath to come, to mortify the sins of our own hearts, to resist Satan's temptations, and to avoid the pollutions that are in the world; and how we may best be prepared for meeting temporal calamities, and enabled to extract benefit from them.

## NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1, 2. No mention is here made of any judge, or great council of the nation; though it is generally thought that the council of seventy elders subsisted at this time. Each tribe also appears to have had some kind of internal government, to which the Levite sent his message; (xix. 29;) yet independent of the supreme court, which was or ought to have been held stately at the place of the sanctuary: (Notes, Deut. xvi. 18, 19. xvii. 8—13:) and by their united determination, the principal persons and the people were gathered together in arms, to the amount of 400,000 men. It must be supposed, that the Benjamites were summoned also, but they would not come;

<sup>h</sup> Prov. xxix. 3. <sup>i</sup> Matt v. 25 Luke xii. 58, 59. xiv. 31, 32. **3** (Now <sup>h</sup> the children of Benjamin heard that the children of Israel were gone up to Mizpeh.) Then said the children of Israel, Tell *us*, how was this wickedness?

<sup>•</sup> Heb. the man the little. <sup>i</sup> xxx. 13—28. **4** And <sup>•</sup> the Levite, the husband of the woman that was slain, answered, and said, 'I came unto Gibeah that *belongeth* to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to lodge:

<sup>•</sup> Gen. xix. 4—8. **5** And the men of Gibeah rose against me, and <sup>k</sup> beset the house round about upon me by night, *and* thought to have slain me; *and* my concubine have they <sup>•</sup> forced, that she is dead.

<sup>†</sup> Heb. humbled. Deut. xxii. 24. Eccl. xii. 10, 11. <sup>†</sup> xix. 20. **6** And I took my concubine, and cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the country of the inheritance of Israel: for they have committed lewdness and <sup>m</sup> folly in Israel.

<sup>u</sup> 10. xix. 23. Gen. xxxiv. 7. Josh. vi. 15. 2 Sam. xii. 12, 13. <sup>n</sup> Ex. xix. 5, 6. Deut. iv. 6. xiv. 1, 2. 1 Cor. v. 1. 6. 10—12. **7** Behold <sup>•</sup> ye *are* all children of Israel; <sup>•</sup> give here your advice and counsel.

<sup>o</sup> xix. 30. Josh. ix. 14. Prov. xx. 18. xxiv. 6. Jam. i. 5. <sup>p</sup> Seeon 1. b. 11. <sup>q</sup> xxi. 1. 5. Prov. xxi. 3. Eccl. ix. 10. **8** And all the people arose <sup>•</sup> as one man, saying, 'We will not any of *us* go to his tent, neither will we any of *us* turn into his house.

**9** But now this *shall be* the thing

which we will do to Gibeah, *we will go up* <sup>•</sup> by lot against it:

<sup>r</sup> Josh. xiv. 2. <sup>s</sup> 1 Sam. xiv. 41. <sup>t</sup> 2. 1 Chr. xxiv. 42. <sup>u</sup> Neh. xi. 1. <sup>v</sup> Prov. xvi. 33. <sup>w</sup> Jon. i. 7. Acts i. 28. **10** And we will take ten men of an hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and an hundred of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand, to fetch victual for the people, that they may do, when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, according to all the folly that they have wrought in Israel.

**11** So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, <sup>•</sup> knit together <sup>•</sup> as one man. <sup>•</sup> Heb. fellows.

**12** And the tribes of Israel <sup>•</sup> sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, What wickedness *is* this that *is* done among you? <sup>•</sup> Deut. xlii. 14. <sup>•</sup> xx. 10. Josh. xxii. 13—16. <sup>•</sup> Matt. xviii. 15—18. <sup>•</sup> Rom. xii. 18.

**13** Now therefore <sup>•</sup> deliver *us* the men, <sup>•</sup> the children of Belial, which *are* in Gibeah, that we may put them to death, and <sup>•</sup> put away evil from Israel. But the children of Benjamin <sup>•</sup> would not hearken to the voice of their brethren the children of Israel: <sup>•</sup> 2 Sam. xx. 21, 22. <sup>•</sup> xix. 22. Deut. xiii. 13. 1 Sam. xxx. 22. 2 Sam. xx. 1. xxiii. 6. 1 Kings xxi. 13. 2 Chr. xiii. 7. <sup>•</sup> Deut. xvii. 7. 12. xix. 19. xxi. 21. xxii. 21. 24. xxiv. 7. Eccl. xi. 10. <sup>•</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 25. 2 Chr. xxv. 16. 20. Prov. xxix. 1. Hos. ix. 9. x. 4. Rom. i. 32. Rev. xviii. 4, 6. <sup>•</sup> Num. xx. 20. xxi. 23. 2 Chr. xiii. 13. Job xv. 25, 26.

**14** But the children of Benjamin gathered themselves together out of the cities unto Gibeah, <sup>•</sup> to go out to battle, against the children of Israel.

and no doubt they were offended at the interposition of the other tribes. Mizpeh here mentioned (for there were several places of that name,) was very near Shiloh; and perhaps the encampment of so great a multitude might be more conveniently formed there than at Shiloh: but they "were gathered together before the LORD at Mizpeh," and not far from the tabernacle; yet it seems that Phinehas, the high priest, was applied to, not as a ruler or counselor, but merely in his official capacity, to consult the LORD by Urim and Thummim about such questions as they proposed to him: (Notes, Ex. xxviii. 30. Num. xxvii. 21 :) and indeed, considering his wisdom, zeal, and experience, he appears to have been greatly neglected by this new generation of Israel. (28. Notes, Num. xxv. 6—13. Josh. xxii. 12—33.)

V. 3—7. Marg. Ref. Notes, xix. 23—30.

V. 8—11. (Marg. Ref.) The abhorrence of the crime here expressed, and the determination of the Israelites to punish the criminals, were very proper; but they seem to have acted with too much precipitation and resentment. There were "with them also sins against the LORD:" the abomination of Gibeah was both an evidence and effect of national degeneracy; and it called for deep humiliation and lamentation, that such wickedness had been wrought in Israel, as well as for indignation against the criminals. They ought, therefore, to have begun with repentance and reformation; with solemn sacrifices, and earnest supplications. (Note, 26—28.) This was required in other wars, and much more in such a war as this. (Note, Deut. xxiii.

9—14.) No absolute resolution should have been made, till these things had been thoroughly attended to; or till enquiry had been made of the LORD, what he would have them to do on so melancholy an occasion. (Note, 18.) They were not commanded to levy war against any tribe or city in Israel, except for idolatry: (Notes, Deut. xiii. 12—18. Josh. xxii. 12—16 :) and they had attempted nothing against the idolatrous Danites; whose conduct, though less destructive to the peace of society, more immediately struck at the honour of God and the interests of religion; and more directly belonged to the injunction given by Moses. (Note, xviii. 30, 31.) Not attending to these previous duties and considerations, but going forth to battle under the guilt of their own unrepented sins; confiding in their superior numbers, and the goodness of their cause; and elated with self-preference, on account of their exemption from this crime, and their zeal to punish it; they met at first with severe rebukes: and the Benjamites were employed to chastise them, before they executed the vengeance of God upon the Benjamites, for their far more atrocious wickedness. These observations may help to explain the difficulty, which strikes the reader at the first perusal of this chapter; how it was, that with so good a cause, and such ardent zeal, they should be for a time unsuccessful, and suffer such heavy losses.

V. 12—14. The conduct of the Israelites was very equitable in this demand: but perhaps the rulers or elders of Gibeah ought previously to have been applied to, to deliver up all the criminals to justice. However, the refusal

15 And the children of Benjamin were numbered at that time out of the cities, <sup>a</sup> twenty and six thousand men that drew sword, beside the inhabitants of Gibeah, which were numbered seven hundred chosen men.

16 Among all this people *there were* seven hundred chosen men <sup>b</sup> left-handed: every one could <sup>c</sup> sling stones at an hair-breadth, and not miss.

17 And the men of Israel, beside Benjamin, were numbered <sup>d</sup> four hundred thousand men that drew sword; all these *were* men of war.

18 ¶ And the children of Israel arose, and went up to the <sup>e</sup> house of God, and <sup>f</sup> asked counsel of God, and said, Which of us shall go up first to the battle against the children of Benjamin? And the LORD said, <sup>g</sup> Judah shall go up first.

19 And the children of Israel <sup>h</sup> rose up in the morning, and encamped against Gibeah.

20 And the men of Israel went out to battle against Benjamin, and the men of Israel put themselves in array to fight against them at Gibeah.

21 And <sup>i</sup> the children of Benjamin

came forth out of Gibeah, and <sup>k</sup> destroyed down to the ground of <sup>l</sup> the Israelites that day twenty and two thousand men.

22 And the people the men of Israel <sup>m</sup> encouraged themselves, and set their battle again in array, in the place where they put themselves in array the first day.

23 (And the children of Israel went up, and <sup>n</sup> wept before the LORD until even, and asked counsel of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up again to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother? And the LORD said, Go up against him.)

24 And the children of Israel came near against the children of Benjamin the second day.

25 And Benjamin went forth against them out of Gibeah the second day, and <sup>o</sup> destroyed down to the ground of the children of Israel again, eighteen thousand men; all these drew the sword.

26 ¶ Then all the children of Israel and all the people went up, and came unto the house of God, and <sup>p</sup> wept, and sat there before the LORD, and fasted

of the Benjamites, and their protection of those who had committed this horrible wickedness, because they were of their own tribe, prove them to have been deeply corrupted, and (all their advantages considered,) as ripe for divine vengeance, as the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah had been. (*Notes*, Hos. ix. 9, 10. x. 9—11.)—Confiding in their own valour and military skill, they seem to have *first* prepared for battle, in this unequal contest with such superior numbers. (15. 17.)

V. 16. *Left-handed.*] Whether these men could use either hand, as some learned men suppose the original term to mean; (see *Robertson on* <sup>q</sup> *למאן*;) or only the left hand, as appears to be the more obvious construction, (*Notes*, iii. 15—19,) they would discharge the stones in a direction, against which their opponents were not upon their guard, and thus do the greater execution.

V. 18. This is the only transaction in this whole book, in which *express* mention is made of the tabernacle, ark, priests, and sacrifices; though they had been instituted in so solemn, authoritative, and particular a manner!—The Israelites, however, did not on this occasion enquire of the Lord, whether they should war against the Benjamites or not; or what reformation, humiliation, or sacrifices, should precede the lamentable service: but they took it for granted that they ought to go up, and that they were worthy to be employed and sufficient to succeed; and so they merely enquired which tribe should have the precedence. Accord-

ingly they received an answer to this question, which neither authorized their undertaking, nor promised success in it.—In every instance of this kind, the pre-eminence was uniformly given to Judah; with reference no doubt to the Messiah, who descended from this tribe. (*Notes*, i. 1. Gen. xlix. 8—10.)

V. 20—25. The people were much afflicted at the severe rebuke which they met with on this occasion, and affected with a sense of their sin, as having brought it upon them: and they accordingly made their enquiry more particular than before. But they were not duly humbled: and therefore, though the Lord commanded them to go up to battle, they were again put to the worst, and lost so many men, that the whole number slain in the two encounters amounted to many more, than all the fighting men of the tribe of Benjamin! This was a public rebuke for national crimes, and shewed, that though it was their duty to punish the offenders, they had not gone about it in the proper manner, and in a proper dependence on the Lord.—Their neglect of punishing idolatry in the Danites, while they were so zealous to punish the lewdness of the Benjamites, is mentioned by some Jewish writers as the cause of these disasters, and with great justice. (*Notes*, 8—11. Josh. vii. 1—12. 1 Sam. xv. 15.)

V. 26—28. At length the people were convinced of their error; and instead of murmuring, or questioning the divine authority of the answers which they had received,

that day until even, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before the LORD.

27 And the children of Israel <sup>p</sup>enquired of the LORD, (for <sup>q</sup>the ark of the covenant of God *was* there in those days ;

28 And <sup>r</sup>Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, <sup>s</sup>stood before it in those days,) saying, 'Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother, or shall I cease? And the LORD said, "Go up; for to-morrow I will deliver them into thine hand.

29 And Israel set <sup>x</sup>liers-in-wait round about Gibeah.

30 And the children of Israel went up against the children of Benjamin on the third day, and put themselves in array against Gibeah, as at other times.

31 And the children of Benjamin went out against the people, *and* were <sup>y</sup>drawn away from the city: and they began to <sup>z</sup>smite of the people, *and* kill, as at other times, in the high-ways, of which one goeth up to <sup>a</sup>the house of God, and the other to <sup>b</sup>Gibeah in the field, about <sup>c</sup>thirty men of Israel.

32 And the children of Benjamin said, They *are* smitten down before us as at the first. But the children of Israel said, <sup>b</sup>Let us flee, and draw them from the city unto the highways.

33 And all the men of Israel <sup>c</sup>rose up out of their place, and put themselves in array at Baal-tamar; and the liers-in-wait of Israel came forth out of their places, *even* out of the meadows of Gibeah.

34 And there came against Gibeah <sup>d</sup>ten thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and the battle was sore: but

they <sup>e</sup>knew not that evil *was* near them.

35 And the LORD smote Benjamin before Israel; and the children of Israel destroyed of the Benjamites that day <sup>f</sup>twenty and five thousand and an hundred men: all these drew the sword.

36 So the children of Benjamin saw that they were smitten: <sup>g</sup>for the men of Israel gave place to the Benjamites, because they trusted unto the liers-in-wait which they had set beside Gibeah.

37 And <sup>h</sup>the liers-in-wait hasted, and rushed upon Gibeah; and the liers-in-wait <sup>i</sup>drew *themselves* along, and smote all the city with the edge of the sword.

38 Now there was an appointed <sup>j</sup>sign between the men of Israel <sup>k</sup>and the liers-in-wait, that they should make a great <sup>l</sup>flame with smoke to rise up out of the city.

39 And <sup>m</sup>when the men of Israel retired in the battle, Benjamin began to <sup>n</sup>smite *and* kill of the men of Israel about thirty persons; for they said, Surely they are smitten down before us, as *in* the first battle.

40 But when the flame began to arise up out of the city with <sup>o</sup>a pillar of smoke, the Benjamites <sup>p</sup>looked behind them, and behold, the <sup>q</sup>flame of the city ascended up to heaven.

41 And when the men of Israel turned again, the men of Benjamin <sup>r</sup>were amazed: for they saw that evil <sup>s</sup>was come upon them.

42 Therefore they turned *their backs* before the men of Israel unto the way of the wilderness; but <sup>t</sup>the battle overtook them: and them which <sup>u</sup>came out of the cities they destroyed in the midst of them.

p 18. 23. Num xxvii. 21.  
q Josh. xviii. 1.  
1 Sam. iv. 3, 4.  
Ps. lxxviii. 60.  
61. Jer. vii. 12.

r Num. xxy. 7—13. Josh. xxii. 13. 30—32. xxiv. 33.  
s Deut. x. 8. xviii. 5.  
t Josh. vii. 7. 1 Sam. xiv. 37. xxiii. 4—12. xxx. 8. 2 Sam. v. 19—24. vi. 3. 7—12. Prov. iii. 5, 6. Jer. x. 23.  
u i. 2. vii. 9. 2 Chr. xx. 17.

x 34. Josh. viii. 4.  
2 Sam. v. 23.

y Josh. viii. 14—16.  
z Heb. smite of the people wounded as at, &c.  
a Or, Beth-el  
b xix. 13, 14. Is. x. 29.  
c Josh. vii. 5.

b Josh. viii. 15, 16.

c Josh. viii. 18—22.

e Josh. viii. 14. Job xxi. 13. Prov. iv. 19. xxix. 6. Ec. vii. 11, 12. 1a. iii. 10, 11. xiv. 11. Matt. xxiv. 44. Luke xxi. 34. 1 Thes. v. 3.

f 15. 44—46. Job xx. 5.

g Josh. viii. 15.

h Josh. viii. 19.

i Or, made a long sound with the trumpets. Ex. xix. 13. Josh. vi. 6.

j Or, time. Heb. with.

k Heb. elevation.

l 31

m Heb. smite the wounded. 32.

n Gen. xix. 29. Cant. iii. 6. Joel ii. 30. Rev. xix. 8.

o Josh. viii. 20.  
p Heb. whole consumption.

q Ex. xv. 9, 10. Is. xlii. 8, 9. xxxiii. 14. Luke xvii. 27, 28. xxi. 26. 1 Thes. v. 3. 2 Pet. ii. 12. Rev. vi. 15—17. xviii. 8—10.

r Heb. touched them.

s Hos. ix. 9. x. 9.

as unhumiliated hearts would have been prone to do, they blamed themselves alone: and by weeping, praying, fasting, sacrifices, and particular enquiries of the Lord, conducted the solemn business, as it should originally have been undertaken. (Notes, 8—11. 2 Sam. vi. 3—13. 1 Chr. xv. 12—14.) All the company seems at this time to have met at Shiloh, and to have kept a day of fasting and prayer, with great earnestness and solemnity. Thus their losses proved eventually blessings, by subserving the cause of true religion. Accordingly they received from the Lord a more particular answer, and a promise of success. In the

mean time the victories of the Benjamites increased their insolence, and hardened them to their destruction.

Phinehas. (28) Notes, 1, 2. xvii. 1.

V. 29—42. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Josh. viii. 7—28.—The LORD smote Benjamin. (35) Though the numbers of the Israelites were immensely superior to those of Benjamin; though their stratagem was well laid and executed, and the battle bravely fought; yet the inspired historian ascribes the victory to the Lord as entirely as if he had smitten the Benjamites by miracle. (Notes, iv. 15. Josh. x. 9, 10.)

Josh. viii. 20—22. 43 Thus they <sup>a</sup>inclosed the Benjamites round about, and chased them, and trode them down <sup>b</sup>with ease, <sup>c</sup>over against Gibeah toward the sun-rising.

44 And there fell of Benjamin eighteen thousand men: all these were men of valour.

45 And they turned, and fled toward the wilderness unto the rock of <sup>d</sup>Rimmon: and they gleaned of them in the high-ways five thousand men; and pursued hard after them unto Gidom, and slew two thousand men of them.

46 So that all which fell that day of

Benjamin were <sup>e</sup>twenty and five thousand men that drew the sword: all these were men of valour.

47 But <sup>f</sup>six hundred men turned, and fled to the wilderness unto the rock Rimmon, and abode in the rock Rimmon four months.

48 And the men of Israel turned again upon the children of Benjamin, and <sup>g</sup>smote them with the edge of the sword, as well the men of every city, as the beast, and all that <sup>h</sup>came to hand: also they set on fire all the cities that <sup>i</sup>they came to.

V. 43—48. It is stated before that the armed men of Benjamin were 26,700 (15): only 25,100 on any computation are mentioned as slain in this battle: (35. 44, 45:) yet no more than 600 survived (47). The rest, amounting to 1000 men, must therefore have been slain in the former engagements, or in the destruction of their cities: for it does not appear that any escaped except the 600 men. After this the Israelites proceeded to destroy the unarmed Benjamites, with all their women and children, and cattle, and houses, and cities. This indiscriminate slaughter and devastation cannot be vindicated; for none but Canaanites, and idolatrous cities in Israel, were to be thus punished. But the people being actuated by vehement indignation, had hastily devoted the whole tribe, by a solemn curse, to utter destruction: and the Lord was pleased to permit these dire transactions, as an awful example to future ages of his vengeance against those who commit such abominations, and those who countenance and protect others in them.—But yet it did not prevent the growth of ungodliness in Israel; so that “the battle in Gibeah against the workers of iniquity did not overtake them.” (Note, Hos. x. 9—11.)—It does not, however, appear that the Israelites attempted to appropriate any of the spoil: so that they were not actuated by mercenary motives. (Note, xxi. 16—18.)

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—25.

We are again called to contemplate the fatal effects of indulged lusts, and taught to mortify every sinful inclination.—Indignation against sin, zeal, promptitude, self-denial, unanimity, and resolution in bringing criminals to justice, are very commendable, when united with a careful investigation of facts and circumstances, that the innocent may not be involved with the guilty: yet repentance of sins, personal and national, with fruits meet for repentance, a dependence on the mercy of God in Jesus Christ for forgiveness and grace, and an application to him for direction and success, are indispensably necessary to ensure his acceptance and assistance.—Nature can abhor the crimes of others, some of them at least; but grace teaches us to loathe our own. Nature prompts to punish others with severity; grace inclines us to exercise severity against our own sinful propensities, and tenderness toward the persons of others.—If we attempt, however, to execute wrath upon offenders, or even to reprove and re-

form them, while we are under the guilt of unrepented and allowed sin in our hearts and lives; it is merciful in God to rebuke us sharply for our hypocrisy, and not leave us to be hardened through impunity: nor can we reasonably hope to be useful to others unless our own sins are pardoned. (Notes, Matt. vii. 1—5. Rom. ii. 1—3. 17—24.)—We should not judge of the final event of things, unless we can determine it by the divine law. And if we are baffled in our endeavours, though honestly meant and zealously persisted in, to serve the cause of God; we ought not to infer that we should desist, or content ourselves in our ill success: but we are reminded to enquire, whether we have begun our work in the proper manner and spirit; whether our private conduct do not blight our publick endeavours; whether we have not been precipitate in our measures; whether we have duly adverted to our own character as sinners, and are habitually exercising “repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ;” whether we have not failed of humility and tenderness towards others; and, by self-preference and self-confidence, provoked the Lord to leave us experimentally to learn what we are in ourselves, and what we can do without him. Many an honest and zealous endeavour, in a good cause, has attained but little success, for such reasons as these. We should therefore strictly examine ourselves, and be deeply humbled for our sins; praying earnestly, that God “would not condemn us, but “shew us wherefore he contendeth with us.”

##### V. 26—48.

Solemn times set apart for fasting and prayer are never more seasonable, than when we are constrained to lament the ill success, which has attended our labours to glorify God and promote his cause, whether as ministers or private Christians. When our failures have this effect, they will promote our success; our very mistakes will be over-ruled to teach us wisdom, and our weakness will prove an occasion of increasing our spiritual strength; Satan, and his most formidable agents will in due time be constrained to give ground; and whatsoever we attempt shall prosper. In the mean time we should thankfully accept of chastisement, and not despair of that success which we at first prematurely expected.—But it is very difficult to temper zeal with tenderness, and boldness with meekness and wisdom: impetuosity hurries us into unwarrantable excesses,

## CHAP. XXI.

The people lament over Benjamin; are in difficulty, having sworn not to give a wife to any of that tribe; and enquire after such as had not joined them, having sworn also to put them to death, 1—7. On that account they destroy the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead, except four hundred virgins, whom they give to that number of the remaining Benjamites, 8—15. The elders consult, how to find wives for the rest consistently with their oath; and by their advice they carry off the virgins who danced at Shiloh, 16—23. The people separate and return home, 24, 25.

**N**OW the men of Israel <sup>a</sup> had sworn in Mizpeh, saying, <sup>b</sup> There shall not any of us give <sup>c</sup> his daughter unto Benjamin to wife.

2 And the people came to <sup>a</sup> the house of God, and abode there till even before God, and <sup>a</sup> lifted up their voices, and wept sore;

3 And said, O LORD God of Israel, 'why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be to day one tribe lacking in Israel?

4 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the people <sup>a</sup> rose early, and <sup>b</sup> built there an altar, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings.

5 And the children of Israel said, Who is there among all the tribes of Israel, that came not up with the congregation unto the LORD? for they had made <sup>a</sup> a great oath concerning him that came not up to the LORD to Mizpeh, saying, He shall surely be put to death.

6 And the children of Israel <sup>a</sup> repented them for Benjamin their brother, and said, There is one tribe cut off from Israel this day:

<sup>a</sup> xx. 8. Jer. iv. 2

<sup>b</sup> 8. xi. 30. 31. 1 Sam.

xiv. 24. Ec. v. 2.

Mark vi. 23. Acts

xxiii. 12. Rom.

x. 2

<sup>c</sup> Ex. xxxiv. 12—

16. Deut. vii. 2,

3.

<sup>d</sup> 12. xx. 18. 23.

25. Josh. xviii. 1.

<sup>e</sup> 4. Gen. xxvii.

33. 1 Sam. xxx.

4.

Deut. xxix. 24.  
Josh. vii. 7—9  
Ps. lxxv. 1. lxxx.  
12. Prov. xix. 3  
Is. lxiii. 17. Jer.  
xii. 1.

<sup>g</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 34,  
35. Hos. v. 15.  
<sup>h</sup> vi. 21. Ex. xx.  
24, 25. 2 Sam.  
xxiv. 18. 25.  
1 Kings viii. 64.  
Heb. xiii. 10.

<sup>i</sup> l. 16. v. 23. Lev.  
xxvii. 28, 29.  
1 Sam. xi. 7. Jer.  
xlviii. 10.

<sup>k</sup> 15. xx. 23. 2 Sam.  
ii. 26. Hos. xl.  
8. Luke xix. 41,  
42.

or timidity stops short of proper decision. We ought therefore to watch carefully over our own spirits, and to pray continually to be preserved from this "strange fire" in the work of God: and the same considerations should induce us to make candid allowances for those, who are betrayed into similar or contrary mistakes.—But "evil pursueth sinners;" their triumphing is short, and increases their hardness and presumption: and how dreadful will be their case, when they shall see destruction coming upon them, without any possibility of escape! Hitherto there is space given for repentance, a refuge provided, mercy proclaimed, and a throne of grace erected: thither let sinners come, and plead the Saviour's name, and they shall yet be safe and happy. But "how will they escape, who neglect so great salvation?" All things will combine to hasten and enhance their condemnation; especially that of men who live under the light of the gospel. And all, who patronize and delight in the workers of iniquity, will as accomplices share their awful doom. (Note, Rom. i. 32.)

## NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1. The vehement indignation excited by the brutal conduct of the men of Gibeah, and the support given them by the tribe of Benjamin, induced the Israelites, without due consideration, to bind themselves by a solemn oath and awful curse, that none of them would give his daughter to wife to any Benjamite. (Notes, 19—21. xi. 30, 31. 1 Sam. xiv. 24—46. xxv. 21, 22. 39—42. Matt. xiv. 8—11.) They deemed those, who were capable of such atrocious conduct towards the wife of another man, or of vindicating it in others, unworthy to be married to any of the daughters of Israel; and thus they ranked them with the Canaanites, and other idolaters! Had this oath been rigidly adhered to, either the whole tribe must have been extirpated, or the survivors must have violated the law by marrying heathen wives. (Note, Acts xxiii. 12—22.)

V. 2, 3. When the anger and resentment of the people began to subside, and they had time for cool reflection; they bewailed the consequences of their victory, with every expression of vehement sorrow; and they seem even to have kept a day of fasting and prayer: yet it is evident that they did not properly repent of their own misconduct, or they would not have acted, as they afterwards did, to the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead. (Note, 9—12.) If it was likely, that "a tribe should be lacking in Israel," it might be justly imputed to their *un-commanded* and most unreasonable and cruel slaughter of the women, who could not be supposed to approve the conduct of the men of Gibeah, or refuse to give them up to be punished; and of the children, who had committed no fault, and ought not to have been put to death for the crimes of their parents. (Notes, xx. 43—48. Num. xxxi. 14—18. Deut. xxiv. 16.) In respect to the devoted Canaanites, and cities in Israel wholly given up to idolatry, the Lord himself had commanded the women, (who were as prone to idolatry as the men,) and the children also, to be slain: but the case of Benjamin was of a very different nature.

V. 4. As so great a multitude was assembled, and there were so many occasions for burnt-offerings, thank-offerings, and vows; it is probable that the brazen altar was found insufficient, and this was erected at Shiloh as a temporary addition to it for the present occasion. (Note, 1 Kings viii. 63—65.)

V. 5. They who, when summoned, refused to join on this occasion, were doubtless blame-worthy, and deserved punishment; but this did not warrant their brethren devote them to destruction by "a great oath." (1 Lev. xxvii. 28, 29.) They were far too backward tempting to extirpate the Canaanites, the devoted of God; and they neglected to punish the idolaters: yet without hesitation they consigned to destruction, as accursed of God, all such of their as should slight their authority! (Marg. F 1 Sam. xiv. 24—34.)

7 How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing we have <sup>1</sup> sworn by the LORD, that we will not give them of our daughters to wives?

8 And they said, What one *is there* of the tribes of Israel that came not up to Mizpeh to the LORD? And, behold, there came none to the camp from <sup>m</sup> Jabesh-gilead to the assembly.

9 For the people were numbered, and, behold, *there were* none of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead there.

10 And the congregation sent thither twelve thousand men of the valiantest, and commanded them, saying, <sup>n</sup> Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the children.

11 And this *is* the thing that ye shall do, Ye shall utterly destroy <sup>o</sup> every male, and every woman that <sup>p</sup> hath lain by man.

12 And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young <sup>†</sup> virgins, that had known no man by lying with any male: and they brought them unto the camp to <sup>p</sup> Shiloh, which *is* in the land of Canaan.

13 And the whole congregation sent *some* <sup>q</sup> to speak to the children of Benjamin that *were* in <sup>r</sup> the rock Rimmon, and to <sup>s</sup> call peaceably unto them.

14 And Benjamin came again at that time; and they gave them wives, which they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh-gilead: and yet so <sup>t</sup> they sufficed them not.

15 And the people <sup>u</sup> repented them for Benjamin, because that the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Israel.

16 ¶ Then the elders of the congregation said, How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing the women are destroyed out of Benjamin?

17 And they said, *There must be* <sup>v</sup> an inheritance for them that be escaped of Benjamin, that a tribe be not destroyed out of Israel.

18 Howbeit, we may not give them wives of our daughters: for the children of Israel have <sup>w</sup> sworn, saying, Cursed *be* he that giveth a wife to Benjamin.

19 Then they said, Behold, *there is* <sup>x</sup> a feast of the LORD in Shiloh <sup>y</sup> yearly, in a place which *is* on the north side of Beth-el, <sup>z</sup> on the east side <sup>†</sup> of the highway that goeth up from Beth-el to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah.

20 Therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards;

<sup>1</sup> 1. 18. 1 Sam. xiv. 26, 27.

<sup>m</sup> 1 Sam. xi. 1. 3. xxvi. 11—13. 2 Sam. ii. 5, 6.

<sup>n</sup> 5. Deut. xiii. 15. Josh. vii. 24. 1 Sam. xv. 3.

<sup>o</sup> Num. xxxi. 17, 18. Deut. ii. 34. <sup>p</sup> Heb. knoweth the lying with man.

<sup>†</sup> Heb. women, virgins.

<sup>p</sup> xx. 18. 23. Josh. xviii. 1. Ps. lxxviii. 60. Jer. vii. 12.

<sup>q</sup> Heb. and spake and called.

<sup>r</sup> xx. 47. Josh. xv. 32.

<sup>s</sup> Or, proclaim peace. Deut. xx. 10. 1s. lviii. 19. Luke x. 5. Eph. ii. 17.

<sup>t</sup> 12. xx. 47. 1 Cor. vii. 2.

<sup>u</sup> See on 6. 17.

<sup>v</sup> Num. xxvi. 56. xxxvi. 7.

<sup>w</sup> See on 1. xi. 36.

<sup>x</sup> Ex. xxiii. 14—16. Lev. xxiii. 2. 4. 6. 10. 34. Num. x. 10. xxviii. 16. 26. xxxix. 12. Deut. xvi. 1. 10. 13. Pa. lxxxi. 3. John v. i. vii. 2. <sup>y</sup> Heb. from year to year. <sup>z</sup> Or, toward the sun rising. <sup>†</sup> Or, on.

V. 9—12. Jabesh-gilead lay at a distance, beyond Jordan, on the borders of Ammon, and perhaps the inhabitants had not heard of the vow which Israel had made. (Note, 1 Sam. xi. 1—3.) But if they had been guilty of neglect, or disaffection to the common cause, they had not assisted the Benjamites: and yet when the people were lamenting the desolations of that tribe, they proceeded to treat those, who were incomparably less criminal, with equal rigour! They seem, however, to have considered themselves as engaged by their oath to destroy them utterly: yet they directed the detachment sent on this service, to spare the virgins, or unmarried women, of good character; probably with reference to the orders given concerning the Midianitish women. (Note, Num. xxxi. 14—18.) But if the vow would admit of this limitation, why could they not spare the other women and children, and innocent persons, and only punish the criminals? The women and children were not required to join the army, and were in no degree accessory to the crime of the men. It does not appear that they asked counsel of the Lord before they proceeded to action: and the habit of military executions, contracted in the wars of Canaan, in obeying the express command of God, had no doubt too

great influence on them in this transaction, which was entirely of a different nature. Indeed convenience, rather than justice or piety, seems to have induced them to spare the virgins, that they might extricate themselves from the difficulties in which their other rash oath had involved them; hoping, perhaps, that a sufficient number would be found.—The four hundred, here mentioned, seem to have been marriageable: and it is not certain, whether the female children were spared or not.—“The land of Canaan” (12) here denotes the country west of Jordan.

V. 16—18. The whole inheritance allotted to the tribe belonged to the survivors, and therefore wives must be procured them, that they might be replenished to occupy it. Thus the remnant of the Benjamites were unexpectedly advanced to great affluence, by the miserable destruction of their relations; and had it not been for the oath, many in the other tribes, would no doubt have readily contracted affinity with them. Hence it appears that the people acted conscientiously, as reverencing an oath, though they erred in judgment concerning it; being only bound to repent of having rashly entered into such a perplexing and unwarrantable engagement. (Marg. Ref.—Note, 1.)

V. 19—21. (Marg. Ref.) Sacred dances formed a part

21 And see, and, behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin.

22 And it shall be, when their fathers or their brethren come unto us to complain, that we will say unto them, \*Be favourable unto them for our sakes; because we reserved not to each man his wife in the war: for ye did not <sup>a</sup>give unto them at this time, that ye should be guilty.

v xi. 34. Ec. xv. 20. 1 Sam. xviii. 6. 2 Sam. vi. 14. 21. Ps. clix. 3. cl. 4. Ec. iii. 4. Jer. xxxi. 13. Matt. x. 17. Luke xv. 25.

\* Or, *Gratify us in them.* 1. Thiem. 9.—12.

z 14. Gen. i. 27. s vii. 13. Mark x. 6—8. 1 Cor. vii. 2.

a 1. 7. 18. Prov. xx. 25.

of the religious solemnities under the Mosaick dispensation: and as this feast was observed at Shiloh, it may be supposed that it was a religious festival, perhaps the feast of tabernacles. These dances, however, were of young women alone, without either men or married women.—The counsel and implied permission given to the Benjamites, were a mere *evasion* of the vow; and also gave a direct licence to fraud, violence, and the marriage of children without the consent of their parents: and if that might have been dispensed with, the Benjamites could have found themselves wives, without the others giving them their daughters.

V. 22. *To each man his wife.*] In this diminished state of the tribe, when every Benjaminite could have maintained several wives, and when the restoration of it seemed to require this measure, the elders only devised how to procure one for each man; whence it appears, that polygamy, though connived at, was not generally practised or countenanced. (Note, Gen. vii. 7.) Neither did any one propose sending them to the neighbouring nations to procure wives; by which it is probable, that marriages with them were seldom contracted at that time.

V. 23. Thus the remains of the tribe began to increase; and it is thought by many, that Ehud was raised up from this tribe to be the judge of Israel, after it had been thus diminished.

V. 25. Notes, xvii. 6. xviii. 7—10.

#### PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

##### V. 1—15

When the passions are vehemently excited, those measures appear needful, which are afterwards perceived to be unreasonable and unlawful; and therefore, when we at all suspect this to be our case, we should be sure to proceed with great caution and deliberation, if we would not make work for bitter repentance. This danger attends all contests, publick and private; and a good cause often becomes the occasion of great crimes, as the excess of zeal carries men beyond all the bounds of equity and humanity.—Well might the politick Romans refuse a triumph to the commander who conquered in civil war; in which the common interest is weakened, and the common enemies exult, whatever party acquires the ascendancy. Such un-

23 And the children of Benjamin did so, and took *them* wives according to their number, of them that danced, whom they caught: and they went and returned unto their inheritance, and <sup>b</sup>repaired the cities, and dwelt in them.

24 And the children of Israel departed thence at that time, every man to his tribe and to his family, and they went out from thence every man to his inheritance.

25 In those days *there was* <sup>c</sup>no king in Israel: every man did *that which* <sup>d</sup>was <sup>e</sup>right in his own eyes.

c xvii. 6. xviii. 1. xix. 1. d xviii. 7. Deut. xii. 8. Ps. xii. 4. Prov. iii. 5. xiv. 12. Ec. xi. 9. Mic. ii. 1, 2.

natural contentions are generally conducted with the most pertinacious fury, and envenomed resentment, through the depravity of the human heart and the subtlety of Satan. (Note, Prov. xviii. 19.)—But this enemy is most of all gratified, when he can excite divisions and contentions in the church, by which the truth is disgraced, the weak and prejudiced are stumbled, and the enemies of religion alone rejoiced. Yet many persons of apparent godliness use greater asperity against their brethren, who are not exactly of their mind, than against the avowed opposers of all religion! But contests thus managed end in bitterness; and the combatants will ere long weep over the effects of their own success.—Nothing can be more absurd, than solemn oaths and vows made in the heat of passion: many have by them entangled themselves in inextricable perplexity; and been thus induced to add one crime to another, or to use the most disingenuous evasions and equivocations. Of all things, such solemn and important engagements require the most cautious reflection on future probable consequences.—Our penitent confessions, and devotional exercises, are too often succeeded by relapses into sin, for want of simply seeking direction from God and depending on him to uphold us.—Even necessary justice should be executed with deep concern: and men would not be forward in inflicting vengeance on the less guilty, while more atrocious criminals were spared, were they not more ambitious of dominion for themselves, than zealous for the glory of God.—Even lawful employments may induce habits, which will be apt to influence the conduct in concerns of another nature, and with very bad effect: we should therefore seek for self-knowledge, keep a strict watch over our hearts, and daily consult the word of God as the rule of our duty.

##### V. 16—25.

When even great offenders are exceedingly cast down, they should be treated with gentleness, and preserved, if possible, from temptations to despair and total apostasy: (Note, 2 Cor. ii. 5—11 :) and every act of apparent severity should be connected with evident disinterestedness.—Too often the very ordinances of God degenerate into a mere form, and carnal mirth supplants holy rejoicing; but those scenes, which the dissipated and sensual most delight in, expose them to unthought-of consequences, and give Satan

and designing men their utmost advantage against them : all our cheerfulness should therefore be tempered with reflection and watchfulness.—Children, who marry without the consent of their parents, are in general very culpable ; and those are still more deeply criminal who entice them to do so : yet when the matter cannot be remedied, it is commonly the parent's duty and wisdom to be favourable, and to make the best of it.—That men can be so absurd, as to counsel others to acts of treachery or violence, and to countenance them in such evils, from a sense of duty, forms a striking proof of the blindness of the human

mind when left to itself, and of the fatal effects of an ignorant or erroneous conscience.—Our troubles in this world may be succeeded by seasons of comfort, and end in our advantage ; but they who are cut off in their sins, sink into evil, only evil, and that for ever.—Finally, we should be thankful for good magistrates, to restrain the violence of wicked men : but the fear and love of God, if we are Christians, will deter us from “ doing what is right in our own eyes,” except as they are opened to behold the excellency of his most holy law, and as our hearts are so renewed as to delight in obeying it.

END OF VOL. I.







